The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Journal 2007

A collection of scholarly works by participants in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

Through subtle shades of color, the cover design represents the layers of richness and diversity that flourish within minority communities.

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Preface

It is with great pleasure that we put together the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) *Journal*, a collection of original research from undergraduate students throughout the United States and Cape Town, South Africa. The MMUF's Program main objective is to increase the number of minority students and students with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities who will pursue Ph.D.s in the arts and sciences. The MMUF *Journal* highlights the path to academia of many talented undergraduate students through their original research.

Since 1988, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has appropriated over $50 million for the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship and its supporting programs. Students at 34 colleges and universities and the 39 members of the United Negro College Fund participate in the program. The MMUF Program is the centerpiece of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's efforts to ensure the full and equal participation of minority groups in higher education.

The MMUF *Journal* is a collection of essays by Fellows who participated in the Program during the academic year 2006–2007. Fellows are encouraged to submit works showcasing their academic achievements, mainly, the culmination of research conducted under the supervision of their Faculty Mentor.

This year we have a diversity of articles that highlight the work that students have been conducting with the guidance of their advisors. The essays range from Mexican *corridos* [revolutionary folk songs] by Alejandra Cunningham to the practice of skin bleaching in Africa by J. Konadu Fokuo. The nations in which students conducted their research are also quite diverse: Mexico, Africa, Haiti, Japan, and the United States. In addition, the time periods also range from the 16th century to today. This large spectrum of topics shows the active interest of young scholars in pursuit of original knowledge, but also the strong academic support that the MMUF Program provides. The MMUF *Journal* is the forum where these scholarly highlights are disseminated.

One of the greatest pleasures of selecting the work of these students was reading the articles. It highlights that beyond trying to achieve diversity in academia, students are raising questions about the world in which they live. Some are questioning systems of oppression that continue to exclude communities, and others are asking how a country could better serve its citizens. What these questions show is what underrepresented students are thinking and the critical questions they are asking. The result is these original papers. The types of questions asked by members of underrepresented groups are one of the many positive qualities that diversity brings to academia. MMUF students are truly on their path to obtaining a Ph.D., and the MMUF *Journal* is a way to support that path.

We hope you enjoy the articles submitted by the students.

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For more information regarding the MMUF Program and its mission, visit www.mmuf.org.

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Loving My Blackness:
Racial Passing and the Dark Skin Perspective

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Essence Caleb plans to continue working with SOTAC Magazine *and Northwest Corridor Community Development Corporation as a journalist. During the summer, she attended the Institute Recruitment of Teachers. Ms. Caleb plans on pursuing a doctoral education in English.*

Abstract

In this work, I have applied the term "the passing figure" to *The Bluest Eye*'s Pecola, a character within Toni Morrison's novel. This character is of dark skin but represents a distinct sense for the want and attempt to racially pass. I have demonstrated how the character Pecola is analogous to the character of the standard passing narrative. I do this by drawing seamless comparable examples of psychological, social, and emotional behavior—the only contrast being skin color. I claim that *The Bluest Eye* needs to be categorically juxtaposed as a passing narrative and want to demonstrate that the idea and action of passing was not limited to the light-skinned blacks.

I am a dark-skinned female who has been raised in a society which demonstrates that physical appearance means more than measurements of personality and intelligence. I have always felt physically handicapped because of my outer shell. Growing up in a predominately white area has always made my dark skin plainly obvious to the passerby, and though my family tried to instill in me a sense of black pride, how could it be authenticated when no one around me looked like me? It is quite hard to love my blackness in a community where white is normalcy and everything else is perceived as abnormal and sinful. My quest was for nothing but one of acceptance: to play kickball with the rest of my classmates or play tag without someone being scared to touch me. As a child I learned that my skin color was unchangeable but there were alternative methods I could do to feel liked, to feel wanted, to be accepted. I could modify the way I thought and behaved and be someone I was truly not. I was passing.

Racial passing is perceived as a phenomenon of solely skin color; however, passing should not be associated with such a mere physical component. The passing figure should be coupled with psychological and social elements. In the novel *The Bluest Eye* there is a female character who embodies the elements of a passing figure. In the traditional passing narrative, the passing figure is a racially classified black person who phentoypically looks white; however, the ingredients of passing successfully do not rely singularly on skin color; hence, the façade of the passing figure cannot be limited. The novel *The Bluest Eye* exemplifies a nuance form of the literary passing narrative and epitomizes on a literary social cultural realism; illustrating a character that embodies a passing figure as a dark-skinned black individual demonstrates that the pursuit for a normalized American racial identity was not colorblind.

Reading *The Bluest Eye* as a passing narrative and allowing dialogics to play an imperious role in the process will allow the sentiment of the dark-skinned individual to emerge. Dialogics is: "the study of the way meaning is constructed out of the contending languages within any culture to try and unify languages within an official or unity language, which is undermined by the endless changing conditions of society, which generate new languages and new relations between them" (Hitchcock preface). Dialogics of the oppressed applies dialogics to an oppressed group. Defining oppressed as "the voices of the marginal, the subaltern, and the dispossessed (Hitchcock 1), [t]he oppressed are here taken as those who are socially, economically, or culturally marginalized, subordinated, or subjugated in a myriad of ways, but whose singular mark lies not in the oppression itself but in their capacity to end it" (Hitchcock 4). Both Bakhtin and Hitchcock would recognize the rhetorical power of Morrison as one of the finest examples of dialogics of the oppressed in sentiment and action. Morrison uses her novel's main character, as Bakhtin and Hitchcock would agree, as an agent of the "unheard voices generated in the less-recognized areas of society" to overturn the unitary attitude of passing figures. People experience and epitomize society to ourselves and to others not solely by one point of view or "language" but by numerous, diverse, and sometimes variant perspectives of "languages." *The Bluest Eye* is a novel that does not succumb to the sole language of the mundane components of the normal passing narrative; it uses voice or lack of to adhere to the idea of dark-skinned passing figures in American society.

Through this conscious crossing of the color line has developed standard passing literature. The *standard* passing narrative can be classified as a literary narrative about a character, represented as the passing figure, that personifies a variation of the following characteristics in the subsequent order: a belief of social oppression because of his/her racial classification and a conflicting perception of self, finishing with an ultimate refusal to live as a categorically defined black individual or a later desire to live in the commune that

was once viewed as oppressive. Alone, the physical characteristics of the passing figure are not enough to label her/him a passer—psychological and social parameters play a pivotal role in the crossing of the color line.

I was passing to be accepted into a community that deliberately denied me entrance because of the dark color of my skin. As a young, female child, economics and politics were not my incentives to pass, and obtaining a right of entry relied on my exterior; no, my face would never phenotypically look white but white features equaled beautiful and thus was my motivation. Truly believing that something was wrong with me, bleaching creams became my new best friends. I cursed my wide hips and full lips, those physical handicaps that exhibited blackness, and embraced European standards of beauty. *The Bluest Eye*'s Pecola yearned for blue eyes, the Eurocentric feature that she believed would title her beautiful. Pecola's ideal concept of beauty lay in faces like Shirley Temple: "We knew she was fond of the Shirley Temple cup and took every opportunity to drink milk out of it just to handle and see sweet Shirley's face" (Morrison 23) or Mary Jane:

> Each pale yellow wrapper has a picture on it. A picture of little Mary Jane, for whom the candy is named. Smiling white face. Blonde hair in gentle disarray, blue eyes looking at her in a world of clean comfort. The eyes are petulant, mischievous. To Pecola they are simply pretty. She eats the candy, and its sweetness is good. To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane.   (Morrison 50)

Without blue eyes, Pecola considered herself ugly, and she is affirmed that conviction by the community in which she lives and the house in where she resides. Society, for centuries, has polluted our minds with negative stereotypes of black people like mammy dolls and minstrel faces while simultaneously embracing people who look like Shirley Temple and Mary Jane. Pecola's inability to look like the images she is constantly exposed to and forced to believe are beautiful is extremely damaging to her self-perception and to her perception of race; "as long as she looked the way she did, as long as she was ugly, she would have to stay with these people. Somehow she belonged to them. Long hours she sat looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike" (Morrison 45). Pecola's sentiment on being "ugly" is equated with the darkness of her skin and the stereotypes and negativity that preside with it. The ugliness that Pecola exhibits within

The Bluest Eye is not just in comparison to the obvious distinction of color between her and her white counterparts but simultaneously between herself and "these" people—her peers and family members whose brown tones do not harmonize with her own dark skin; the color complex of the African-American community.

The color caste system of this country has always positioned dark-skinned individuals at the bottom. Being black within the United States is already a strenuous task, yet, being a dark-skinned black proves to be even more challenging. Individuals of darker hues are constantly reminded of their distinguishing features that show an ancestry of slavery and a perceived lacking of miscegenation or good blood. Many people do not want to be singularly associated as being an African and while blacks today have to emphasize the "American" in African-American for normalcy on their status quo, dark-skinned blacks have to compensate for an alluded physical handicap. The word "American [even now] means white, and Africanist people struggle to make the term applicable to themselves" (Gerald, Gerald and Weissberg 47). This quintessential longing for American identity is still sought by the majority of the black population, yet the desire of it has risen for many dark-skinned blacks who fall short of being accepted, not just by whites but by too their own people.

Passing figures exhibit a want for the normalcy that is attributed to being white so that they can be accepted into American society; the singular idea of acceptance is the underlining definition of passing. It is important to understand that the physical act of passing does not imply the meaning of passing; the meaning is not physically defined but determined by psychological perceptions and social behavior. Passing truly means: the acting on a desire to disaffiliate any communal ties to a group considered inferior and/or oppressed so that the individual can be perceived as "normal" by the definition of the society in which one resides and take advantage of such "normalcy." Reject the notion that racial passing is *only* a want to be white—racial passing, moreover, is a want for white privilege and the action an individual takes to retrieve it while simultaneously rejecting their own classified race. Passing is being written about as a "phenomenon;" however, the phenomenon is not that a black person is living as a white person—that is a "trick" on society, as the protagonist of James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of An Ex-Coloured Man* so easily explains. What makes passing such a "phenomenon" is that it can be represented in a myriad of ways. Passing is Irene

Redfield, a character in Nella Larsen's *Passing*, who occasionally posed as white to have a sip of tea at the Drayton (Larsen 5)—Passing is Emma Lou, a character in Wallace Thurman's *The Blacker the Berry*, who minded being too black and did everything she could to alleviate the unhappy condition of her color (Thurman 21). That is the marvel—that blacks of various hues can exhibit the meaning of passing. If no one ever questions the meaning of passing and how it affected a generation of *all* black people then half of the phenomenon is missing. The inability to look the part has no weight on the ability to think it, feel it, and act it. Passing was a step for some light-skinned blacks to claim an American identity; when will dark-skinned blacks be able to tell their story?

Let me begin my story. When I think of what it means to be a, before I think of bi-racial individuals or phenotypically looking white people, I think of myself. Reflecting back on my adolescence, passing meant that I disassociated myself from those closest to me because they were categorically defined as black. For a long time I loathed my sister because she was light-skinned and my parents for giving her something that they did not share with me. When I entered into elementary school, I realized that being light-skinned meant nothing because being white was the prize and that loathing I had for my parents turned into this extreme hatred that was unexplainable. I cried numerous nights because my parents met, fell in love, and had me. I couldn't even bear my own existence yet I could never complete acts of suicide, which that I am thankful for today. But I was an angry child, vicious and bitter. When I got to school I would emulate the white children; I wanted to prove that I had this *whiteness*. Passing meant that in the classroom I was more interested in learning about European thinkers, inventers, and philosophers than having to talk about issues of Africa, slavery, and racism while other black children called me "charcoal" and "an oreo." Pecola, furthermore, justifies her ugliness with the constant ridicule she receives from her schoolmates whom name call her "Black e mo Black e mo" (Morrison 65) and sees the darkness of her skin being the crisis of why she has to call her mother Mrs. Breedlove while the white child her mother cares for calls her Polly (Morrison 108). Pecola and I, as young dark-skinned black females, have felt imprisoned within our exterior appearances and share conflicting perceptions of self, an element that is mandatory in the passing figure of any narrative. As passing figures, Pecola and I embark on the exact same psychological and emotional avenues as characters from *standard* passing narratives such as Rena Warwick from Charles

Chesnutt's *The House Behind the Cedars* and Angela Murray from Jessie Fauset's *Plum Bun; A Novel Without A Moral*.

Scholar Juda Bennett who agrees that Pecola is undeniably the passing figure within Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* offers her justification:

> Through the dark-skinned Pecola, Morrison reconstructs the passing figure as its visual opposite. Yet although Pecola hardly meets the physical qualifications of light skin and "good" hair, she does possess the key emotional characteristics: a desire for white privilege and an increasing disassociation from the black community. Ensuring that we do not miss her point—that Pecola is a passing figure despite her inability to [physically] pass for white—Morrison introduces "a high-yellow dream child" named Maureen Peal [61]. It is the light-skinned Maureen who reveals Pecola's connection with the traditional passing figure, Peola, a character from a Fannie Hurst [*standard* passing] novel.   (Bennett 207)

It is quite obvious to identify a novel's passer in *standard* passing narratives, even without the physical description of the character. Similarly, it is just as easy to identify the passing figure in *non-standard* passing literature. How then can the term "the passing figure" be applied to many distinctive characters within texts rather loosely, yet the novels themselves cannot be juxtaposed as passing narratives? People often get caught up in discussing what passing is without discussing what passing means and the two are related, yet distinctly different. If psychological affects and social behaviors did not play an imperative role in the livelihood of the passer then all light-skinned blacks would pass. As ludicrous as it sounds, if psychology and society were not such essential elements within the life of the passing figure then there would be nothing to separate those light-skinned individuals who did pass versus the ones who did not. Everyone within this country would like white privilege; however, everyone is not willing to compromise their own cultural beliefs, psychological perceptions, and behavior to attain it. The meaning of passing is the act and the desire of wanting this normalization and a constant yearning to do anything to achieve it.

What must be addressed is what the novel is trying to tell us about dark-skinned individuals being labeled as passing figures and how it uses dialogics to make the point. *The Bluest Eye* embarks on a literary social cultural realism by explaining to its readers that dark-skinned individuals are placed in the physical limelight of being the visual opposite

of the standard passer and their ability to tell society how they feel about it is being overlooked. Pecola is doing something that I once was never able to do; she is making her voice heard! Conversely, the actual voice of Pecola is never heard. Pecola is explaining how she feels being a dark-skinned black girl in America and her rite through passing; nevertheless, never does she tell her own story. "Much of the critical discourse on the novel [*The Bluest Eye*] has focused on the relationship between voice and empowerment, and on the problematics of a narrative that silences its dispossessed protagonist" (Moses 623). Throughout the entire novel Pecola's story is being revealed, yet she is never the voice revealing it; her story is entirely narrated by Claudia, her brown-skinned counterpart. The framework of this narrative makes perfect sense in speaking about the passing discourse as it is related to society. What exists is a character who is unable to share her story and whose voice is ultimately oppressed. *The Bluest Eye* mimics reality in that the voices of dark-skinned individuals who exemplify the meaning of passing have yet to be able to tell their stories and voice their feelings and affections. "Culture identities are formed and informed by a nation's literature" (Gerald, Gerald and Weissberg 39); however, our literature has been trying to tell us something about our culture that many people are just too blind and timid to examine. In the heist of it all, the voice of the dark-skinned individual has been silenced by improper technical definition of the word passing and disregard from the literature altogether. Dark-skinned blacks represent the ultimate oppressed; seemingly, our singular mark lies not in the oppression itself but in our capacity to end it. By examining this text as a passing narrative, Pecola does just that and begins a voice of empowerment.

My voice is now empowering. Society does not easily, openly, allow me to do so, however, I need to be able to not only share my experience as a passer but also suggest to others readings where my experience is exemplified. I am offering a new reading of passing narratives. Let Pecola speak to you; let me speak to you; so that we, as a society, can begin to understand the components of passing and the sentiment of the dark-skinned black. When we are seen in comparison, ideological likeness begins to emerge in both *non-standard* passing narratives and *standard* passing narratives. As dark-skinned blacks we have this quest to gain a whole integrated identity, one that we have to look and work hard for to achieve because of our caste position within the United States. It is real that dark-skinned blacks mimicked the behavior of light-skinned blacks and tried to pass. Being oppressed and cut off, not only from what

the normalcy of society is perceived to be, but from our own traditional community is an extremely difficult task to deal with. The extent to which people would go to be accepted did and does not matter by hue; thus racial passing can no longer be seen as a complex of just color. Literature has made it possible that the passing figure can be a dark-skinned individual and literature truly does accord reality.

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Corrido Revolucionario: The Making of Gender through Music

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ment of industrial capitalism in Mexico. Taking as a lens the
German car industry Volkswagen, she wants to explore transfor-
mations in labor and gender relations and in landscapes. She is
currently an Anthropology Ph.D. student at the Graduate Center
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Abstract

This paper is about the music from the Mexican
Revolution and its relationship to gender constructions. The
genre of the corrido has played an important role throughout
Mexico's history as a nation-state. During the revolutionary
period, these sung narrations conveyed a sense of community
among the masses while at the same time providing a
medium of cultural identification. Using primary sources in
the form of audio recordings as a form of oral history as well
as drawing on secondary sources, I explore the corrido rev-
olucionario as a window into the social structures of the time.
I suggest that while the *corrido revolucionario* shaped a national
community, it at the same time constructed subjectivities
with implied masculinities and femininities.

It is time for *La Hora Nacional*, a Mexican national
radio broadcast that among other things plays *corridos* (revo-
lutionary songs).[1]

> *Vengan a oir estos versos*
> *con muchisima atencion,*
> *de don Francisco I. Madero,*
> *de Carranza y de Obregon.*
> > (Mendoza 1956: 75)

> *Come and listen to these verses*
> *with much attention*
> *of Francisco I. Madero*
> *of Carranza and of Obregon.*

The themes that the *corridos* touch upon link listeners to a his-
torical past and keep historical memory alive. These *corridos*
have helped to shape a national identity over time. But how is
this national identity constructed? What conceptions are
implicit in the *corridos*? These questions deserve our attention
as the *corridos revolucionarios*, through weekly Sunday night
broadcasts, are still embedded in the national imagination.

Mexican *corridos* have a long history and have played
an active role in the construction of the Mexican nation-
state. They are and have been a means to express and trans-
mit feelings and stories about national political events and
cultural issues. *Corridos* can be discussed in terms of an oral
story-telling tradition that lies between the border of history
and fiction, between history and memory (Chamberlain
2004: 29).[2] The themes that the *corridos* touch upon vary
from random encounters with people to the drama of battles
and betrayals between generals. Ruiz states that *corridos* are a
forum in which moral and ethical questions about family and
relationships are posed (1993: 54). Their long history has
infused *corridos* with an aura of tradition and authority that
conveys a sense of truth.

This paper focuses on the genre of the *corrido revolu-
cionario*, which narrates events during the Mexican
Revolution on a national, regional and personal level. This
genre "neatly encapsulated [...] personal and communal
view[s] of reality" (Ruiz 1993: 63). During the revolutionary
period, these narrations were more popular in the northern
part of Mexico but they traveled with the revolutionary
armies throughout the country. I want to suggest that the
corridos revolucionarios wove an "imagined community"
among those who sang and heard the songs (Anderson
1996). The verses of the *corridos* produced familiar, unifying
images in a convoluted period, thereby creating "a world
conjured up by the [singers] in [their audience's] minds"
(Anderson 1996: 26). To explicate what I mean by this
Mexican revolutionary imagined community, I will use
Anderson's notion of the "sociological organism" to describe
the meaning of the lyrics of the *corrido revolucionario*. These
lyrics permitted "a hypnotic confirmation of the solidity of a
single community, embracing characters, [singers] and
[audience]" (Anderson 1996: 27).[3]

The study of the *corrido revolucionario* adds another
perspective to how events unfolded during the Mexican
Revolution; it is the perspective of the thousands of name-
less people who participated in turning the country upside
down in order to transform the status quo. The songs that
were composed during this historical upheaval provide a
window into the social structures of the time; they offer a
glimpse into the lives, perceptions, and values of the masses

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[1]   The radio show is still being broadcast in 2007.

[2]   The tradition of *corridos* can be traced to colonial times, when they were
      used as a form of protest with an ironic touch. Later they were sung to
      tell of events such as the war of Independence in 1810 and the United
      States invasion of Mexico in 1847 (Mendoza 1956: 10–11).

[3]   Anderson refers to the "sociological organism" to explain Jose Rizal's
      novel *Noli Me Tangere* which, right in the beginning, evokes images that
      are familiar for the Filipino readers. These images "mov[e] calendrically
      through homogenous, empty time [which] is a precise analogue of the
      idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving
      steadily down (or up) in history" (1996: 26).

of ordinary Mexicans.[4] Therefore, while this genre's function was ostensibly telling and informing, its power lay in "configuring a sense of identity by telling the stories that communities have told as true expressions of their character in both a metaphorical and a historical sense" (Chamberlain 2004: 28).

Taking a close look at the lyrics of the *corridos*, one can see the fusion of national cultural identity with a masculine sensibility. In listening to the songs, one notices the contrasting portrayal of women and men. The man's constructed subjectivity is charged with power, and his authority is emphasized. This dominant representation of men is juxtaposed with a female subjectivity, which is generally constructed with the opposite qualities. Women are depicted in *corridos* as weak, dependent and unreliable. Thus, while *corridos revolucionario*s were constructing a national community, they also constructed subjectivities with implied masculinities and femininities. What are the idealized gender roles in these *corridos*? How did *corridos* imagine, portray, and shape subjectivities? And what are the implications of these shaped subjectivities in the project of the nation-state? I now turn to explore the "national imagination […] through a sociological landscape of a fixity that fuses the world inside the [*corrido*] with the world outside" (Anderson 1996: 30).

La Adelita

En lo alto de un abrupta serrania
Acampado se encontraba un campamento
y una moza que valiente los seguia
locamente enamorada de un sargento.
Popular entre la tropa era la Adelita,
La mujer que el sargento idoloatraba
Porque ademas de ser valiente, era bonita
Y hasta el mismo coronel la respetaba.
                              (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 107)

In the high sierras
a young woman who valiantly followed
the soldiers camped
Madly in love with the sergeant.
Popular among the troops was Adelita,
the woman the sergeant adored
Because she was not only valiant but beautiful
So that even the colonel respected her.

Women participated in the Mexican Revolution as the backbone of the insurgent armies. From commanding battalions to cooking for the soldiers, these women called *soldaderas*

played a crucial role in the upheaval. Most of these women came from the *mestizo* and indigenous lower classes of both urban and rural areas from different parts of Mexico (Salas 1994: 95). However, in most of the verses of the *corrido revolucionario* women are depicted as being dependent on men; they are barely acknowledged as powerful participants of the Mexican Revolution in their own right.

La Adelita is one of most famous songs in the genre of *corrido revolucionario*. It is still sung by women and men who celebrate Mexican patriotism. *La Adelita*'s role as part *soldadera*, part lover is what many praise as a "very beautiful" expression. It is the image of a woman romanticized by the *corrido* singers and by their audience. Yet, in the *corrido*, her role is limited to being a sergeant's lover. Adelita is respected by a high ranking officer because she is brave and pretty. Adelita is only part of the revolutionary army as a character who waits for her lover when he goes off to battles and who, in case of his death, would cry and pray to God for him. Why then is Adelita romanticized and why is it that she, a passive character rather than a *soldadera*, so strongly captures the national imagination?

At the same time that Adelita is portrayed as a lover and brave, her male counterparts are depicted as active participants of the Mexican Revolution. Throughout *La Adelita* the male subjectivity is represented as mildly authoritarian: men kindly respect Adelita for her courage, and her lover would follow her wherever she may go. Adelita is thus *not* allowed to be with another man. The verse about the sergeant following her everywhere is the refrain that is most often sung and praised nowadays as a beautiful love song. What the listeners of this *corrido* emphasize is the sergeant's persistence in following Adelita everywhere, which is not perceived as controlling but as a proof of love.

The romance between the sergeant and Adelita goes beyond merely adding the love component to the history of the Revolution; Adelita's transformation into a love object also points to the problem that women's participation posed to Mexico's patriarchal society. Herrera-Sobek argues that Mexican society "could not readily accept the fighting woman as reality was presenting her […] therefore [she was] rarely if ever the subject of heroic *corridos*" (1994: 103). Instead, women's involvement in the Revolution had to be presented in a way that did not challenge the authority of the male revolutionaries: women were "neutralize[d] by making [them] a love object and thus presenting [them] in a less threatening manner" (1994: 104). But the neutralization of the *soldadera* takes place not only in the romantic realm.

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[4]   Among other things, they served as a medium to transmit to the illiterate masses the latest happenings in battles, cultural values, and conceptions about women's and men's roles.

Soldaderas also fulfill other roles in the national imagination such as the treacherous woman[5], the prostitute, and the woman who does not obey morals or the norms of conduct.

Corridos about women who disobey men contain a high dose of moral values prescribed by male authority. In some cases, violating limits is punished with the woman's own death. Herrera-Sobek suggests that a closer examination of the *corridos* shows "the ideological constructs on which images are based: they are socializing agents designed to instruct, coerce, and frighten rebellious women into 'proper' behaviors" (1993: 72). The stories told in the *corridos* are cautionary tales suggesting what could happen to women who dare to challenge male authority. Yet at the same time, as Herrera-Sobek argues, "the very need to structure such *corridos* indicates that Mexican women were not as submissive and passive as we have been led to believe: If they had been, there would be no need for such songs" (1993: 73).

The (mis)representation of women's revolutionary roles in *corridos* reflects larger patterns of discrimination against women. Salas argues that women were eliminated from the ranks of *campesino* armies when those armies were transformed into a modern military machine (1994: 93). The Secretary of War called *soldaderas* "the chief cause of vice, illness and disorder" and banned women officially from the military in 1925 (qtd. in Salas 1994). Faced with such discrimination, *soldaderas* did not organize politically to protest their exclusion from the modernized military; they lacked the necessary clout. Salas suggests that at the same time as this transformation was taking place, "male-constructed renditions of the *soldaderas* in Mexican popular culture distorted women's activities in battle and recast them as prostitutes, self-abnegating patriots, or Amazons subdued to male romantic prowess" (1994: 93). During the *Porfiriato*, the *criollo* elite constructed their own gendered images of *soldaderas* "as symbols of primitive backwardness and servility" and "as shameless prostitutes" (Salas 1994: 94). Thus, women from the middle and upper class who had the voice to contest the patriarchal rationality of the army and could "have provided leadership [instead] showed a strong bias against the '*peladas*' of the lower classes and held the firm conviction that soldiering was a 'male' activity" (Salas 1994: 94).

The *soldaderas*' status as "backwards" was echoed and confirmed by sociologist Julio Guerrero who suggested in 1901 "that the *soldadera* was part of the disorganized, unpredictable, irrational 'other' [that] ought to be eliminated from any military establishment that aspired to modernity" (qtd. in Salas 1994: 95). As Salas points out, Guerrero's indictment was "prophetic of post-revolutionary elite thinking" (1994: 95). During the 1920s and 1930s, women were excluded from the post-revolutionary redistribution of land; they only had a share as mothers, wives and daughters. In this way, revolutionary land reform helped to reinforce the pre-revolutionary patriarchal system of Mexican society (Vaughan 1994: 106).

Conclusion

The *corrido revolucionario* has been a medium for cultural identification across classes, generations and genders. As a historical source, these songs reveal as much through their silences about female agency as through the themes they emphasize. In this paper, I analyzed the implications of the unequal gendered subjectivities in the cultural construction of the nation-state. Although the (mis)representations of women did not begin with the *corrido revolucionario*, I argue that the conceptualization of women and men in these songs shaped and re-created pre-existing assumptions of gender and class. While the Revolutionary period brought a rupture with the status quo, this rupture did not undermine Mexico's patriarchal society. Herrera-Sobek suggests that the one-sided representation of women in the *corridos* had concrete material impacts. Not only has the role of women who fought and died been ignored in official Mexican histories, in the post-revolutionary period, few women received government pensions in contrast to the men who were rapidly recognized as soldiers of the revolution (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 115).

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, conservative elite groups argued that "submissiveness was the national quality of women" (Cano 1998: 108). Even though women belonging to elite groups "fought for a large sphere of action and for women's right to independent decision" (Cano 1998: 108), representation of the ideal Mexican woman as mother, wife and daughter prevailed. Women who argued for equality did not question the idea of innate

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5   Throughout Mexican history, one finds stories of betrayal. But the paradigmatic story of treason and betrayal is *La Malinche*, who was the mistress and political advisor of Cortez and whose help was crucial for the conquest of the Aztec Empire. As Herrera-Sobek suggests, "seared in the Mexican mind is the image of a woman betraying her nation, her people" (1993: 54). Thus the conception of the image of female traitor has a long history, and this image has been re-created over and over throughout Mexican culture.

gender differences or the necessity of differentiation of male and female social roles (Cano 1998: 110). Most accepted that woman's "nature" was modest, sentimental, elegant and intelligent yet not in a noticeable way. These assumptions helped to define the Mexican nation as a masculine community in which women were subordinate by virtue of their "weak soul and eternal infancy" (Cano 1998: 112). As these assumptions were elite assumptions, they ignored the reality of the majority of Mexican women, who were poor, indigenous or *mestizo*, and thus perceived as being "naturally" backward. Erasing the histories of the *soldaderas* has been part of the process of taming the radical implications and potential of the Mexican Revolution and bringing the unruly poor into the "civilized" community of modern nationhood. To this day, Mexican pop culture and media play a powerful role in perpetuating negative and romanticized representations of women and in buttressing a masculinized notion of Mexican nationality.

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Modelling the Oceanic Circulation around the South-West Indian Ridge, South of Africa

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Jonathan V. Durgadoo was born in 1983 in Mauritius, a small island in the Indian Ocean, where he grew up. After high school, he moved to Cape Town, South Africa, to pursue his tertiary education in computer science. He describes his first two years in Cape Town as very pivotal on many levels. Most importantly, he came to the conclusion that computer science on its own was not fulfilling enough, and therefore he decided to shift to applied computing with a focus on ocean and atmosphere science. He is now a graduate student in physical oceanography, potentially aiming at following an academic career.

Abstract

Mesoscale features that originate at the South-West Indian Ridge characterize the oceanographic setting around the Prince Edward Islands. These features retain nutrients around their edges and have been shown to be a preferential foraging ground for birds and mammals living on the islands. Moreover, it is agreed that the Southern Ocean is very vulnerable to climatic changes that have been observed globally. The present study broadly looks at the effect of this change in climatic conditions on the genesis of the features at the ridge. The article is aimed specifically for earth scientists or applied mathematicians and more generally for anyone interested in environmental conservation.

The South-West Indian Ridge (SWIR) region of the Southern Ocean is an area where disturbances in the mean flow have been acknowledged to be dominant and crucial in sustaining the marine ecosystem of the Prince Edward Islands. Eddies (vortices of the order of 100–200 km in diameter) shed at the ridge travel in a northeastern direction past the islands. These eddies have been extensively studied over the last decade with hydrographic, satellite, drifter and float data. To date, however, only two simple model experiments have been undertaken in the vicinity of the SWIR. This study proposes to explore the use of the Ocean Circulation and Climate Advance Modelling (OCCAM) model outputs. The model's representation of the dynamic nature of this region needs to first be assessed.

The Southern Ocean, encompassing an area of approximately 20.3 million km², is the world's fourth largest ocean. The quasi-permanent band of low pressure around the Antarctic continent and the band of high pressure in the subtropics work in synergy to produce the strongest winds on Earth. These winds drive the eastward flowing Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC), which is part of the deep transport of the global conveyor belt. Circumpolar flowing, the

ACC is not obstructed by any land mass and provides a critical link in the transport of heat and freshwater across the three major ocean basins. The current is made up of frontal bands where abrupt changes in water properties take place. Three major fronts are identified in the ACC (Figure 1). The Subtropical Convergence demarcates the northern boundary of the ACC. The Subantarctic Front (SAF) and the Antarctic Polar Front (APF) lie within the ACC and carry the bulk of the current (Budillon and Rintoul, 2003). The latter two fronts exhibit very stochastic behavior in time, due to their interaction with prominent bathymetric features.

The Southern Ocean is made up of large deep abyssal plains separated by ridges and plateaus. South of Africa, the South-West Indian Ridge (SWIR) separates the African plate from the Antarctic plate (Figure 1). This ridge is made up of multiple composite deep fractures and centered at 50°S, 30°E. The Andrew Bain Fracture Zone is of particular importance because of its direct influence on the APF (Pollard and Read, 2001). The Prince Edward Islands, southern-most territory of South Africa, rise above the ridge at 46.7°S, 37.7°E.

Figure 1: Bottom topography (depth in meters below sea level) of the African sector of the Southern Ocean south of 30°S used in OCCAM at ¹/₁₂° resolution. The South-West Indian Ridge (SWIR) is made up of a series of fractures, with the Andrew Bain Fracture Zone (ABFZ) being the most conspicuous—an important gap, channeling the ACC. The average position of the three major fronts associated with the ACC is also shown: the Subtropical Convergence (STC), the Subantarctic Front (SAF) and the Antarctic Polar Front (APF).

Surveys around the SWIR prior to 1989 were sparse, with most studies undertaken in the direct vicinity of the Prince Edward Islands, where an enhanced marine productivity was observed (Allanson *et al.*, 1985). A few transects available revealed the position of the Southern Ocean fronts with respect to the islands (Lutjeharms and Valentine, 1984). The structure of the ACC in that region was known, and the temporal and spatial variability of the fronts were acknowledged.

Past Study

Initially, various hypotheses have been put forward to explain the enhanced biological productivity observed in the close proximity of the islands. Boden (1988) suggested an "island mass effect," where nutrient-rich runoff from the islands is contained between the islands. The Von Kàrmàn vortex street theory was also proposed (Allanson *et al.*, 1985). Later surveys revealed the presence of an anti-clockwise eddy between the islands favoring retention of nutrients in a Taylor column (Perissinotto and Duncombe Rae, 1990).

The second Marion Offshore Ecological Survey (MOES-II) undertaken in April 1989 was an attempt to resolve the obfuscation. MOES-II provided the first quasi-synoptic view of the general environment around the Prince Edward Islands both up- and downstream (46–47.5°S; 37.5–40.5°E). Results from the survey confirmed the meandering behavior of the SAF (Ansorge *et al.*, 1999). It was established that the oceanographic conditions upstream of the islands were different to that downstream (Perissinotto *et al.*, 2000). A warm eddy, resulting from the instability of the meandering SAF, was observed downstream of the islands. A repeat survey, the Marion Island Oceanographic Survey II (MIOS-II), was carried out eight years later, covering a wider geographic region (46–48°S; 36–42°E). Not surprisingly, the oceanographic conditions were different from MOES-II. However, eddies were still present downstream of the islands. These recurring eddy activities triggered much interest, especially with respect to the meridional exchanges of water masses and associated plankton activities. The increased biological activity observed in the direct vicinity of the islands was found to be closely related to these eddies (Ansorge *et al.*, 1998). Water masses trapped within these eddies were either of Subantarctic (for warm eddies) or Antarctic (for cold eddies) origin, thereby raising questions about earlier conjectures.

Satellite altimetry provided evidence that the SWIR region was one of high mesoscale variability, the Prince Edward Islands lying in the northern border of that region (Ansorge and Lutjeharms, 2003). Positive anti-clockwise (southern hemisphere) sea surface height anomalies were found to correspond closely to warm-core eddies, while negative clockwise anomalies corresponded to cold-core eddies. Because of the inherent advantage of satellite remote sensing to provide a continuous dataset, it was possible to look at the trajectory and decay of the anomalies as well as determining their origin. The anomalies were found to be generated at the SWIR, roughly centered at 50°S, 30°E,

corresponding to the axial position of the Andrew Bain Fracture Zone (Figure 1). Once formed, these eddies were observed to follow a northeastward direction, along the eastern flank of the ridge until about 47°S where they drift pass the islands. Thereafter, the anomalies decay while moving eastwards in the Enderby Basin. Comprehensive hydrographic data was, however, not available to make any significant posit. Nonetheless, it was clear that eddies observed during MOES-II and MIOS-II were occurring, not as a result of the islands' interaction with the ACC but because of the ridge that lies upstream.

The Dynamics of Eddy Impact on Marion's Ecosystem (DEIMEC) programme started in 2002 with the aim to hydrographically validate results obtained from satellite altimetry. Under the programme, four surveys were undertaken (2002–2005) during austral autumn (April/May) on board the South African supply vessel, the *MV SA Agulhas*. The physical setting of the SWIR region, as well as its biological variability, was investigated. Altimetric products were used prior to each survey to locate potential sea surface height anomalies. Results that permeated from the programme were nothing short of outstanding. The SAF and APF were observed to be highly variable, at times merging to form an intense double front, or even fragmenting into multiple branches. Detailed hydrographic characterization of cold- and warm-core eddies was achieved and the close correlation between sea surface height anomaly and temperature fields was unequivocally established. Latest results further suggest that the enhanced mesoscale variability associated with the ridge could have a profound climatological impact, not only for the islands downstream, but for the global heat and salt budget (Ansorge *et al.*, 2006).

The Way Forward

The SWIR region clearly stands out in a relatively quiescent surrounding. Grey-headed albatrosses from the Prince Edward Islands have been tracked, and there is evidence that these birds feed on the edges of eddies that are generated at the ridge (Nel *et al.*, 2001). The ecological dependence on these transient mesoscale features is, therefore, profound.

Numerical models have proven to be an effective way of studying physical processes in the ocean. To date, two simple model studies have been undertaken in the vicinity of the SWIR. Gouretski and Danilov (1993) presented results of the first regional simulations of the flow at the SWIR. They initiated five jets between 49.5°S and 51.5°S at 22°E, four of

which showed a sharp southward excursion and meandering east of the ridge. They further noted that the deflection of the jets were in response to bottom velocities varying between 1–8 cms[-1]. Craneguy and Park (1999) have shown, in their model study, that these bottom velocities are sufficient to produce high spatial variability of the Subantarctic and Antarctic Polar Fronts in this region.

In response to an average warming of the Southern Ocean by 0.17°C observed by Gille (2002) since the 1950s, Weimerskirch *et al*. (2003) postulated a system shift from observations of the behavior of Subantarctic top predators. It is likely that this suggested shift in the Southern Ocean regime would have an impact on the structure and intensity of the ACC frontal systems, which could in turn have an adverse effect on the distribution of zoo plankton usually associated with the fronts. Recent study reveals that over the last 50 years, sea surface temperature at the Prince Edward Islands has risen by 1.4°C (Mélice *et al*., 2003). The sensitivity of eddy generation in response to this increase in sea surface temperatures and potential system shift remains to be investigated. Lack of long-term oceanic observation in the SWIR region precludes such study.

In an attempt to address these questions, this study proposes the use of the Ocean Circulation and Climate Advance Modelling (OCCAM) model outputs. The eddy resolving $\frac{1}{12}$° OCCAM global ocean model, developed at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, UK (Coward and de Cuevas, 2005), provides a comprehensive long-term dataset allowing such hypothesis to be further explored. However, prior to using any numerical model to predict oceanic response to various climatic changes, it is vital to ensure that the model correctly represents the status quo. This is even more important for a localized study, such as the SWIR region, where the flow of the ACC is so variable. This in turn allows predictions to be made with an acceptable degree of confidence after appropriate simulations are carried out.

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Acknowledgements

How Fiction Informs History:
Women in the Modern Civil Rights Era (1954–1965)

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Abstract

Using Alice Walker's *Meridian* and Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters*, this paper explores how fiction informs history, specifically regarding the Modern Civil Rights Movement and Black women. Snapshots into the lives of actual movement participants, juxtaposed with the aforementioned texts, seek to spark a new conversation about Black women's roles and ways in which strong, courageous, and charismatic Black women were at the forefront of enacting progressive change in the Movement.

The 1950s and 1960s were a time of struggle and sacrifice to gain equality and basic human rights in America for those who were underprivileged, oppressed, and ill treated. These people happened to be those who were in the minority, namely Blacks. There were many attempts in the United States to help minorities gain equal rights and reach autonomy such as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and the Niagara Movement. These movements were formed to obtain various levels of equality for minorities and had small impacts, but the Modern Civil Rights Era encompassed a larger Movement that shook America and provided protection laws and jobs for a country caught in the clutches of Jim Crow.

Aldon D. Morris, author of *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, defines the Modern Civil Rights Movement as "the black movement that emerged in the South during the 1950s …" (ix). It is important to contextualize this period because the fight for civil rights has been in progress since Africans set foot on American shores. Nonetheless, the term Modern provides a focus, beginning in 1954, with the activities of Rosa Parks and JoAnn Robinson, to the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Between these years, much was happening in terms of mobilization and movement in minority communities. Work was done by both men and women in this effort to eradicate oppression and gain equal opportunity. It is ironic, however, that history does not place much emphasis upon this shared workload between men and women, when in most cases it was women that were in the forefront of organizing and preparing.

Using the lens of fiction, with works from Alice Walker and Toni Cade Bambara, this paper will highlight the roles of black women, within the Modern Civil Rights Movement. Fiction has often served as that medium for history that gives women their honor and tells many stories about the way in which the Movement affected their lives and ultimately provided a positive effect for the United States of America and encouragement for women abroad. To show how fiction can inform truth and tell stories about the lives of some women, this paper will, along with the fiction, provide snapshots into the lives of actual participants Fannie Lou Hamer and Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, participants in the Modern Civil Rights. The narratives in brief acknowledge the thousands who not only worked as receptionists, cooks, and wash women, but trailblazers, leaders, and remarkable individuals.

The Importance of Women in the Modern Movement

Women were pivotal in obtaining equal rights, but their contributions are often lost. Scholar and Professor Dr. Vicki Crawford, in the opening pages of her article "Beyond the Human Self: Grassroots Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movements" best states this argument. She indicates that:

> Beyond the major influence of black women in the civil rights movement … few studies document the roles and contributions of these women to the struggle for equality and social justice in America. With few exceptions, most accounts of this period focus on male leaders and the organizations that they led. Very little is known about the countless black women who were the backbone of … the struggle. (13)

Here one is forced to come to terms with the fact that women have been marginalized, downplayed, and not allowed to take their rightful place in history. Women, those who have been the most underrepresented, are definitely important to discuss in order to more accurately reflect the contributions that they have made to society. Crawford, however, does not mention the involvement of white women, which will addressed because they too aided in the struggle. Nonetheless, the novels of both Alice Walker and Toni Cade Bambara give women humanity and autonomy and provide a type of framework for understanding the history of a portion of the Modern Civil Rights Era.

Alice Walker's *Meridian*

Alice Walker's *Meridian*, set in the American South during the 1960s, is a candid story about a woman whose vision, leadership, and action provide the community with what they need in order to survive. In the beginning of the novel, Walker provides a narrative catalyst by adding several definitions of the term Meridian. As a noun, Meridian means the highest point of power, prosperity, splendor, etc.; zenith; apex; culmination; b. the middle period of one's life, regarded as the highest point of health, vigor, etc.; prime. As an adjective, Meridian means of or at noon or, especially, of the position or power of the sun at noon.

These definitions set the tone of the novel and give key words to galvanize readers and create a framework for the life of the female protagonist. Thus, as one reads the novel, it becomes clear that the protagonist, Meridian, embodies a staunch faith in human equality and goes from town to town, and city to city, into houses to actually talk with citizens about trying to address their basic needs like food, water, heat, etc. This novel portrays her as a grassroots individual, one who simply had a drive to enact positive social change. Meridian could actually be transformed by her experiences and her memory of them. Rudolph Byrd, Professor of American Studies at Emory University, reasons that:

> [Meridian's] spirit of self-sacrifice and her knowledge of what is essential for others and for herself [is what makes her admirable]. It is this special knowledge, the knowledge of her condition (for Walker this is the supreme accomplishment of the Civil Rights Movement) that sustains her and separates her from others who have not achieved this kind of maturity, this kind of authority. (372)

Meridian's ability to posses this knowledge ultimately makes her stand out as a black woman who is capable of learning. Walker humanizes women with this character, and provides useful commentary about black women's involvement and their strength in the movement. The following passage is a testament to Meridian's courage. Walker writes:

> It was Meridian who had led them to the mayor's office, bearing in her arms the bloated figure of a five-year-old boy who had been stuck in the sewer for two days before he was raked out with a grappling hook. The child's body was so ravaged, so grotesque, so disgusting to behold, his own mother had taken one look and refused to touch him … when [Meridian] was up again they came to her and offered her everything … Instead [of their offers] she made them promise they would learn, as their smallest resistance to the murder of their children, to use the vote. (209)

This passage suggests that, in a time when she could have been glorified for her efforts, Meridian was determined to let justice prevail, and to make something good out of the death of the young child. The readers are allowed to see the bravado of Meridian and the extent to which she was dedicated no matter what costs. Meridian is a story that captures the essence of what it means for women to be strong, independent, and fully capable of handling events that may seem daunting.

In history, Meridian's actions within the community can be paralleled to that of the great Fannie Lou Hamer. Described as a humorous, humble, and courageous person, Activist Fannie Lou Hamer was born in Ruleville, Mississippi, and was the last of 20 children. She committed her life to making the world better for people of color, namely through securing the vote for Black Americans, and being an advocate for all poor people. Hamer was the co-founder and an activist for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). She was also a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)[1] and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)[2]. In 1964, the MFDP challenged the all-white Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention. Hamer spoke in front of the Credentials Committee in a televised proceeding that reached millions of viewers. She represents countless women who stood to induce positive social change.

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[1]   The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was developed by Activist Ella Baker. It was composed of mainly college students who were dedicated to obtaining equal rights for all. They conducted many methods to mobilize people for change. One of the most famous was Freedom Summer.

[2]   The Southern Christian Leadership Conference is an organization dedicated to civil disobedience and specifically, in the 1950s and 60s, the organization worked tirelessly to eradicate ill treatment of all disenfranchised people.

Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters*

Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters*, set in Clayborne, Georgia, gives a similar critique about women in the Movement. The protagonist, Velma Henry, is a person who has worked so hard during her life that she has made herself sick. The novel begins with a healer woman, Minnie Ransom, asking Velma, "Are you sure, sweetheart, that you want to be well?"(3) With this, we are forced to see that being well carries consequences, penalties that Velma had fallen subject to. During her well days, Velma worked as an organizer and activist for the rights of Black people through an organization that can be compared to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Velma's ability to multitask and touch the many facets of organizing proved to be remarkable for the cause. It was when Velma had to miss work that a co-worker noticed that she was a major asset to the Movement. Bambara writes:

> Things had seemed more pulled together when Velma had been there … Velma had run the office, done the books, handled payroll, supervised the office staff and saw to it that they were not overlooked as a resource people for seminars, conferences and trips, wrote major proposals and did most of the fundraising. (92)

Here, it is evident that Velma did much in terms of working and trying to make a positive impact in her community. The responsibility that she took on, however, had a tremendous effect on the way in which she was able to function physically due to stress and overexertion. The cause of this physical handicap is what is explored throughout the novel. On many other occasions, flashbacks of portions of Velma's life are explained to provide an explanation for the way in which she arrived in the beginning of the novel with the healer woman, Minnie Ransom. The way in which she participated in the movement had psychological effects upon Velma. Bambara alludes to this claim by noting that "Not all wars have casualties, Vee. Some struggles between old and new ideas, some battles between ways of seeing have only victors. Not all dying is the physical self" (219). This passage suggests that new vision is what is needed to take place; that a new mode of thinking needs to be adapted in order for change to be evident as a result of the Movement.

Bambara also makes evident the role that family played in encouraging or not the family members that were apart of the struggle. Velma's husband, Obie, wanted her to be more family oriented, but when she was done with work, Velma would be tired. The novel suggests that:

> [Velma was] restless, lips swollen, circles under her eyes, and spellbound … every since he had demanded more of a home life, she'd been a stew, threatening to boil over and crack the pot all right. Or maybe that cracking had begun years earlier when the womb had bled, when the walls had dropped away and the baby was flushed out. How long would it take this woman, his woman? Two years living with her before he learned to identify … (94).

This serves as a larger critique on the way in which the Movement affected some of its women workers, most of whom, on top of the work, had jobs and families to please and care for. Bambara's novel shows Velma's ability to cope with the stresses of the movement, and reiterates that being well gives a lot of responsibility to the activists, meaning that the worker must give time, energy, and essentially their life to the cause. Although Velma was able to bounce back from her lapse, some women succumbed to the pressures and stresses of being a woman in the Movement, motherhood, family, and friends. This is exactly what happened to activist Ruby Doris Smith Robinson.

Ruby Doris Smith Robinson was born April 25, 1942, in Atlanta, Georgia. As a Spelman College alumna, she was heavily involved with the Atlanta student movements, Freedom Rides, and an effective leader with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee until her sudden illness and death in 1967. Described as a dedicated mother, wife, and friend, she was an assertive, brash, and courageous woman. Smith Robinson represents the many women who were dedicated to the cause through hard work, but who paid the ultimate price as a result. One can only imagine what she could have accomplished had overwhelming circumstances not contributed to her untimely death.

Alice Walker's *Meridian* and Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters* truly speak to the ways in which fiction informs history. The writings of these women provide narratives that not only articulate truths, but provide alternative ways for readers to learn about a history that is often forgotten. Women were essential in helping ill-treated people in America gain justice and equality. The writings of Walker and Bambara, juxtaposed with the lives of actual women in the movement, show ways in which this investigation of how literature informs history has just begun. What can be noted at this point, however, is the unwavering fortitude and charisma of women who paved the way for progressive and positive social change.

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The Lighter Side of Marriage:
Skin Bleaching in Postcolonial Ghana

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The existence of social hierarchies in which skin tone is an important factor has been repeatedly documented in various cultures in both journalistic and scientific literature. In the United States, Brazil, Mexico, and West Africa, for example, individuals of lighter skin tone are more likely to be employed in higher status occupations and are more socially upwardly mobile when compared to darker-toned individuals (Arderner 1954; Hunter 2002; Rahman 2002). Such preferences also appear as an important factor in the construction of social relations, and lighter skin has been found to be a quality that is valued in the contemporary marriage market (Hunter 2002; Rahman 2002). The use and popularity of artificial skin lighteners to achieve the desired skin tone is among the most significant markers of these hierarchies.

The present study looks at the role of lighter skin as a form of social capital in Ghana, a country that has known extensive use of skin lighteners, predominantly by women. Building on the conclusions of Hunter (2002), Rahman (2002) and Robinson (2004), this analysis assumes first, that skin color (especially lighter skin tone) plays an important factor in the definition of beauty and attractiveness for Ghanaian women; second, it takes as a given that there exists a basic link in Ghanaian culture between skin tone and perceived attractiveness. In contrast to earlier studies, however, which tend to limit their inquiry to notions of beauty alone, this investigation has focused on the way in which a particular class of Ghanaian women perceive the relationship between lighter skin and success in the marriage market. Through a series of interviews with women in this sample, this research confirms that many Ghanaian women's feelings about their beauty and attractiveness are, in fact, partially determined by the lightness of their skin but also skin tone shapes their perceptions of their own heterosexual marriage "marketability" and hence the desirability of skin bleaching.

Skin bleaching is defined as the purposeful lightening of the skin, most commonly through the use of lightening agents such as mercuric soaps and hydroquinone cream. These agents contain mercury and hydroquinone, which prevent the production of melanin in the skin. The lack of melanin production causes the skin to appear lighter. The practice of skin lightening has been practiced by Ghanaian women (and men, to a far lesser extent) for over 40 years. The practice is believed to have started after World War II. After World War II, skin bleaching was heavily practiced among *ashawo ye* (prostitutes) as a way to attract European costumers (Teddy 2002). Ghanaians, however, began to appreciate the lighter complexion of the biracial child, and

by the early 1970s the biracial child had "gained acceptance and recognition" in the coastal tribes of Ghana (Teddy 2002). More and more Ghana women were marrying Caucasian men or Lebanese men and having biracial children. As these children's complexions gradually became "an influential and major determinant of beauty," skin bleaching became necessary to be considered beautiful (Teddy 2002). By the 1980s, skin bleaching had gained "purely aesthetic recognition" and social advantages (Teddy 2002).

Popular culture of the 1980s praised lighter skin tones and encouraged the spread of skin bleaching across genders and into all socioeconomic classes of women, so that by the late 1980s and 1990s, skin bleaching was no longer solely practiced by prostitutes. Indeed, in August of 1998, a local Ghanaian newspaper, the *Weekly Spectator*, reported, "the practice [of skin bleaching] has moved from disreputable women to teachers, police women, nurses, junior or senior civil servants, businessmen/women, politicians and even people in the media." The music industry also helped lighter skin tones gain high status and became a sign of respect, recognition, good living and a source of confidence (Teddy 2002). Several songs perpetuated the concept of wanting the Ghanaian *me broni* (my white lady). Local expressions also placed social value on lighter-skinned women, as in"*oba koko mbodam*" (a lighter-skinned woman doesn't lose her composure), "*oba koko die esumu ekora, a wobe hu no*" (even in the dark, you can make out a lighter-skinned woman) and "*koko kata otan so*" (lightness covers ugliness) (Teddy 2002). These local expressions are examples of the way the Ghanaian culture of that time encouraged skin bleaching and established the value of being of lighter complexion. Lighter skin tones were equated to desirability, beauty, and higher status. These social benefits of lighter skin tones led darker-skinned Ghanaians to resort to skin bleaching to enhance their complexion, while at the same time causing lighter-skinned women to bleach as well to "retain" their lighter skin tone.

At the same time, the process of skin bleaching was not without its costs, which became more and more clearly known as time and medical research progressed. Skin bleaching is done by applying strong medicated soaps or abrasive chemicals on the body. After washing off the soap, skin-lightening crèmes are then applied. These crèmes usually contain steroids, phenols or hydroquinone. Hydroquinone, researchers Findlay and DeBeer found, acts as an effective bleaching act; however, chronic use of the agent on the skin ultimately causes the diseases exogenous or endogenous ochronosis (1980). Endogenous ochronosis occurs when the

skin due to sun exposure "becomes darker with scattered fixed black papules containing a pigmentation colloid, even the ear cartilage develops a darkening on the outer surface" (Teddy 2002). The darkened look of the skin is identical to the look of exogenous. Exogenous ochronosis is a localized blue-black hyperpigmentation. Both types of ochronosis are induced by the hydroquinone, retinoid or phenols found in bleaching crèmes. The agents in these crèmes cause a deposition of pigment in the skin which causes formerly bleached skin to appear darker. The skin becomes atrophic or loses its ability to renew itself due to the destruction of the collagen and elastic fiber which gives suppleness and tone to the skin (Teddy 2002). The skin also develops straes as the skin is losing elasticity. The lost of elasticity also allows for more rapid formation of wrinkles and the growth of superfluous hair on the face of the bleacher. The skin bleacher is also believed to have a nauseating smell. This smell is believed to be as a result of the alternation of the bacterial flora on their skin. This alternation makes them more susceptible to skin disease such as ringworm, tineas and pyodermas (Teddy 2002).

Given these consequences, what motivates Ghanaians to engage in this practice? Teddy (2002) sought the root causes of skin bleaching in Ghana culture and concluded that it was the Ghanaian definition of beauty that was driving women to bleach their skin. Teddy interviewed 50 men and women in the Greater Accra Region. Her data indicated that skin bleaching was considered a "bad practice" (40%), "not beautiful" (78%), and 86% of her participants responded that they would not encourage skin bleaching. At the same time, however, her sample believed that lighter skin tones were more beautiful (54%) and preferred them to darker tones (42%). When darker tones were preferred, it was because darker hues were perceived to "bear natural beauty" (Teddy 2002).

Robinson (2004) also examined the practice of skin bleaching among Ghanaian women and argued that this phenomenon of skin bleaching was rooted in a locally determined, "(dis)empowering" heritage of bodily commodification practices in Ghana: slavery, prostitution and fashion. Robinson, having interviewed numerous Ghanaian market women, found that skin bleaching was believed not only to boost the careers of the women themselves but also the careers of their husbands. Robinson also looked at an 1965 article published in the *Sunday Mirror*, entitled "How do you back your ambitious husband?," in which the author focused on how women could play a crucial role in their husband's careers, claiming "today, big business organizations everywhere tend to take an avid interest in the wives of their

up-and-coming men." The 1965 article even goes so far as to claim that men without "good" wives can "flounder" in the lower ranks of the business. Because of contemporary standards of beauty, a woman bleaching her skin would constitute a fashionable wife and, according to this article's logic, enhance her husband's career. Finally, Robinson found that women gained monetarily through gifts. One of Robinson's interviewees explains, "People just give you gift(s) for looking nice." In short, lighter skin for women, Robinson found, functions as a form of social capital, and has therefore acted a strong incentive, historically, to bleach. Yet, although Robinson suggests that modernity and historical practices of bodily commodification offer possible answers to "why" women bleach in Ghana, her investigation fails to examine closely *which* women are bleaching and what concrete social benefits result from bleaching for these women. I thus build on the foundations laid by Robinson's work by looking closely at the issues of marriage and social status.

In this study, I define status as both relational (Weberian) and highly positional and structured (Lintonian) (Borocz 1997) in order to take account of the complexity of Ghanaian society. In the Weberian context, status is dynamic, historically and culturally sensitive, and strict binary categories do not exist. This definition therefore allows me to look at status not only in economic or financial terms but rather also in terms of positions of cultural prestige such as chieftaincy. In the Lintonian sense, status is operationalized as a single measure located along a one-dimensional scale, a scale that usually uses prestige and occupation as a basis (Borocz 1997; Roksana 2002).

Interviews were conducted in Ghana among 30 educationally disadvantaged (secondary school education or less) female traders between the ages of 21–54. The interview data revealed that Ghanaian women think that lighter-skinned women are considered more beautiful and more attractive to Ghanaian men. Many women interviewed believe that Ghanaian men found lighter-skinned women more beautiful than darker-skinned women, responding:

> Ghanaian men find the lighter-skinned women more beautiful.   (Interview 14 2006)

> Men like the lighter-skinned one, then the Black (dark) one. Men like lighter-skinned women. They say 'look at that light-skinned girl, almost like a white person.'   (Interview 4 2006).

Interviewees likewise believed that Ghanaian women generally bleach so they could attract men for marriage with their bleached-lighter complexion.

Sometimes if you really want to marry a particular man you have to bleach. (Interview 14 2006)

Lighter-skinned women tend to attract more men by virtue of their lightness. So if they are at marrying age, they get more men coming to court them earlier and quicker than darker-skinned women.
(Interview 16 2006)

Darker-skinned women look at themselves and realize that they need to bleach to be beautiful. Just so men can call them beautiful. (Interview 17 2006)

Even the wealthy men tend to marry the lighter-skinned women. Because they are walking with a lighter-skinned woman … it is just beautiful.
(Interview 18 2006)

Some interviewees also reported that some married women are made to bleach by their husbands. As one individual put it: "Some [husbands] even want their wives to use creams to be light" (Interview 4 2006). Interviewees likewise believed that husbands demanded that their wives bleach "because they want their wives to be beautiful" (Interview 4 2006).

As in the interviews conducted by Robinson, interviewees commented on the effects of skin bleaching on marriages. While some husbands discouraged the practice, others encouraged their wives to bleach either explicitly (as above) or through particular behaviors. An interviewee who is a former bleacher recounted her experience:

When you talk to a lot of women, they will tell you that the reason they bleached is just like my story, my husband started cheating on me with this light-skinned girl. So I decided I needed to be light so I started bleaching. That's what they say. I, for instance, if it wasn't for my husband cheating on me with a light-skinned girl I would have never started bleaching, but I had to stop because I was ruining my face, especially the skin of my face. So I left him to do whatever he wants. […] Yes when I became lighter he stopped cheating for a little while.
(Interview 24 2006)

Although interviewees believed that lighter-skinned women received no social privileges over darker-skinned women, they did indicate that lighter-skinned women are more likely to marry wealthier Ghanaian men.

Within the particular segment of Ghanaian female society studied here, there appears a belief that lighter skin tones are more desirable to a Ghanaian man. Being lighter for Ghanaian women promotes perhaps a higher sense of self-esteem and personal attractiveness. Lighter-skinned women are therefore provided with a false sense of superiority as their skin tone is considered the most attractive to the opposite sex. For darker-skinned women this perception may lead to self-hatred, a devaluation of one's self-worth, low self-esteem and a false sense of inferiority (Hunter 2002; Rahman 2002; Robinson 2004). This perceived need to be lighter in order to be considered beautiful by a Ghanaian man causes darker-skinned Ghanaian women to believe that skin bleaching or being of a lighter skin tone is necessary to ensure their personal beauty and support a sense of self-worth. Being of a lighter skin tone also serves as a form of social capital in the marriage market as lighter-skinned women get married earlier and tend to marry wealthier men than their darker-skinned counterparts. These findings therefore present evidence that there is a link between skin bleaching and success in the marriage market, a link that explains—at least in part—the perceived need to bleach in the Ghanaian community.

Skin bleaching is not a practice imposed on the Ghanaian community by the Western world. Although Ghana's interaction with Europeans, Black Americans, and biracial individuals has encouraged the practice of skin bleaching, it is Ghana's long-standing social structure that maintains it. Socio-cultural ideals of beauty and marriage indicate that dark-skinned Ghanaian women must bleach in order to be considered beautiful and subsequently benefit from the institution of marriage. The social benefits of being of a lighter skin tone are constantly reinforced by Ghanaian society, and it is this social utility that actually promotes the practice of skin bleaching. Because Ghanaian culture deems marriage as a vital component in the completion of the Ghanaian person (Osei-Kofi 1974) and it has come to be a sign of maturity and responsibility in Ghanaian culture, Ghanaian social practices effectively mandate that all its citizens marry, and particularly its women. In pursuing this goal, Ghanaian women of the lower classes, this research has shown, believe that lighter skin is a vital asset and are still prepared, despite the consequences for their health and long-term appearance, to bleach in order to be on the lighter side of marriage.

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A Desi Arnaz Paper:
The Erasure of Blackness from the Constructed Latino

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Teresa Gonzales, a native of the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago and alumnae of Harold Washington Community College, completed her undergraduate degree in Latin American Studies at Smith College, where she was an Ada Comstock adult student. Currently, she is a Ph.D. student in Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley interested in examining the commodification of culture, race, and ethnicity in transnational contexts.

Abstract

This paper explores the construction of an umbrella "Latino" identity and the erasure of blackness from this construction by focusing on the television show *I Love Lucy* and the character of Ricky Ricardo. I chose to analyze the first season of the show in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the character before the show gained popularity. I look specifically at episodes that portray Ricky's otherness through music. This demonstrates the relationship between the African history and influence on Cuban culture and Desi Arnaz's incorporation of this influence into his character, Ricky. Furthermore, in adding to the creation of a unified Latino identity by blurring and erasing otherness, the *I Love Lucy* show also aided in the erasure of national boundaries. This can be seen in such episodes as "Be A Pal," where Cuba becomes a conglomeration of all of Latin America.

The popularity of Latino music from the 1930s through the 1950s in the United States created a rise in Latino visibility within the media; through radio, cinema, and television. This representation, however, adhered to a Europeanized "Latin look," which favored lighter-skinned musicians, entertainers, and actors. The prevalence of this U.S.-Hispanic ideal in the media aided in forming an umbrella Latino identity that erases otherness, specifically blackness, from this construction. This is especially true with television, in which these images reach a larger audience over a longer period of time. The character Ricky Ricardo from the *I Love Lucy* show demonstrates this effect, especially since at this time only 3% of television characters were Hispanic (NCLR 14). "[His] TV character has been the single-most visible Hispanic presence in the United States over the past [50] years" (Pérez Firmat 1). Desi Arnaz used his success as a musician to create a Latino musical representation that raises questions of cultural and musical authenticity. Desi's "Cuban-ness" transitioned to a "Latin-ness" as he played the African-derived conga drum, incorporated elements of Santería into his repertoire with "his"

song *Babalú*, and used musical styles from other areas of Latin America, such as Mexico. This "Latin-ness," however, ignored the African history that influenced his performance.

The *I Love Lucy* show first aired on October 15, 1951 and gained an immediate popularity among U.S. audiences, making television history on a number of counts. It reached over 10 million homes within the first season, incorporated a multi-camera setup which used film instead of kinescope images that was designed and implemented under the direction of Desi Arnaz, and featured a multi-ethnic household. During this time, Latino characters were played by lighter-skinned individuals and were typecast as lazy, sinister, inferior, impoverished, and hyper-sexual. The *I Love Lucy* show broke with presenting these stereotypes by showcasing a successful Latino, played by Desi Arnaz, in a lead role. The show's portrayal of Ricky Ricardo, however, simultaneously upheld the ideal stereotypes of a Europeanized "other," while breaking certain negative "Latin" stereotypes. Both Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball hoped to create a sitcom where jokes would not be made at the expense of another's difference. Lucy, however, was granted license to tease Ricky about his "otherness," such as his accent, use of Spanish when he was excited, and his use of "bad" English (Arnaz 230).

Desi Arnaz had minimal connection to Latin American or even Spanish Caribbean music and knew relatively little about the music he was hybridizing or its African roots (Roberts 82). The musical emphasis placed on his character by the *I Love Lucy* show's producers, creators, script writers, and himself (due to his past experiences as a musician and entertainer), however, created a new space for the dissemination of a type of Latin music that could be packaged and sold to audiences as authentically his own. Desi Arnaz appropriated African rhythms he had heard in Cuba in order to solidify himself as an authentic Cuban musician, while at the same time adding to the erasure of Afrocubans from the visual landscape of the media. The image of a white Latino playing Afrocuban rhythms aided in imprinting a white "Cuban/Latino" stereotype and a unified identity into the minds of the show's viewers.

Desi's portrayal of a Cuban/Latino male allowed for the expansion of what Frances Negrón-Muntaner calls an "ethnic/cultural agency." The term Latino opens up a larger space for those of Latin American descent to occupy within the United States. When the images that are being propagated to dominant society only represent a small portion of those identified as Latino, however, the social identity which

is then constructed and imposed upon the group becomes limiting. Latinos that are neither too dark nor too light equal the ideal (Negrón-Muntaner 230) and are transitioned into U.S. media as of Latin descent, not Cuban, or Mexican, or Chilean. Nowhere in Ricky Ricardo's orchestra are there representations of Afrocubanos or even a less Europeanized musician. While agency may be expanded spatially, cultural and ethnic agency becomes limited. Accepted (white) representations are then disseminated, and one Latin look, sound, and cultural history takes the place of representing a diverse people, bounded by a similar language. The indiscriminate grouping of Latin Americans and U.S. Latin Americans under one umbrellaed term expands this ignorance by creating one identity for "Latinos" to associate with and for non-Latino viewers to associate U.S. Latinos and Latin Americans with.

This umbrellaed Latin-ness can be seen in "Be A Pal," episode 3. Lucy attempts to create a version of Cuba for Ricky because she thinks he misses his childhood in Havana and his family. She decorates the apartment with an assortment of what she believes are Cuban furnishings: a live donkey, caged chickens, palm fronds, and bundles of fruit, especially bananas. The décor takes on a fusion of tropical, Mexican, and agrarian. Lucy assumes that Ricky's emotional distance towards her is a reflection of his yearning to be "back" in Cuba. When Ricky first enters the apartment, Ethel is hunched over asleep and dressed in drag; wearing a serape, sombrero, tattered pants, and a huge handlebar mustache. This image displays the lazy, lower-class, impoverished and emasculated status of her character. She uses an exaggerated "bad" English, drawing out her sentences, using the wrong pronouns, and leaving out key words. While Ethel appears as the negative stereotyped Latino, Lucy makes her appearance dressed as the Portuguese-Brazilian samba singer, Carmen Miranda, complete with fruit hat and lip-synching *Mama Eu Quiero*. Lucy attempts to combine the image of the caregiving mother with that of lover in order to reignite a lost passion within her marriage. This scene becomes a battleground where culture and gender are inverted, confused and forced under one title to make it easier for U.S. consumption; different Latin American customs and U.S.-gendered stereotypes of these areas become Cuban.

The scene ends with Ricky telling Lucy that "if [he] wanted things Cuban [he'd] have stayed in Havana," and the reason he married Lucy was because she was so different from anyone he knew in Cuba. He doesn't want a "typical" Cuban wife, nor does he want Lucy to act as his mother.

Strangely, Ricky doesn't mention the eclectic mix of non-Cuban articles that Lucy used to create a little Havana. Ricky identifies as Cuban, yet he does not point out the distinctions between a Mexican serape, a Brazilian samba singer, and Cuba. He allows U.S. culture, including his white wife, to ignore national and cultural differences. This blind acceptance of Lucy's grouping of all Latin Americans demonstrates for the viewer Ricky's rejection of not just Cuba but all of Latin America as it is represented; tropical and impoverished. On the other hand, Lucy becomes his ideal; because of her lack of "Latino-ness," she does not need to take on the role of hyper-maternal or hyper-sexual. She is different from anyone he knew in Cuba, precisely because she does not fall into these stereotypical Latina roles. Her difference lies in her white American-ness. Ricky's/Desi's light skin and his relationship with Lucy grant him a level of access to U.S. white culture and the ability to transcend certain ethnic/cultural boundaries. U.S. audiences are able to accept his "otherness" because it is represented as comedic, while he is represented as aspiring to whiteness.

Visually, Desi's "Cuban-ness" or "Latino-ness" is undetectable due to his light skin tone. His darkness/otherness is signified through his body language, the movement of his hips when dancing, and the way in which he plays the drums with seeming abandon. He has an accented English, which Lucy and other characters in the show tease him about either blatantly or through feigned misunderstanding. This thread runs throughout the show, for example, when Ricky mispronounces English words, such as "jins" instead of "jinx" and "dunt" instead of "don't." Lucy makes note to either mimic him, correct him, or ask him to explain. Although he is a struggling musician, he is neither a criminal, a domestic servant, nor a janitor. This is where Ricky seems to deviate from the "typical" Latino stereotype, as he is not boxed in by a lack of education, nor is he stuck in a lower-status occupation. His relation to white Americans is one of joviality and seeming equality. The intellectual traits assigned to people of color within the media (Gutiérrez & Wilson II 74), however, do make their appearance in Ricky's character, with "poor" speech patterns and as comedic foil to Lucy's antics. He has married a white woman, which places him slightly higher on the social ladder. He is not a sexual predator, therefore stepping out of the role of the promiscuous Latin lover to white women. His occupation also lends him a sense of importance, with a fan base and recognition by his peers, the Mertzes, and his wife. Yet his otherness keeps him in a subaltern position in relation to the rest of the cast.

One of the major components of Ricky Ricardo's repertoire was his use of Miguelito Valdes's song *Babalú*, which was recorded by Miguelito in the 1940s with Xavier Cugat (Leymarie 186). The song's lyrics are quite different in English and Spanish, yet both are invocations to the orisha Babalú-Áye, the god of disease and healing. The orisha's history, importance, and role in Santería are not mentioned in the English version of *Babalú*. The song only makes references to "ancient jungle rites" and "jungle drums," calling attention to the African roots and African-ness of the music, while never actually acknowledging the historical significance or its roots in African religion.

These same intonations also appropriate a culture by a white Latino. The minority "other" status of Ricky/Desi lends an air of authenticity for U.S. audiences, yet becomes a slap in the face to Afrocuban musicians who have been denied a space within the realms that Desi operates. The "African" has become lost and forsaken under the hyper-sentimentality of catchy popular music. Through attempting to present the music as authentically his own, Desi, the show, and the network erase the "African" roots. The music becomes presentable to television audiences because of the white, musical representation by Ricky Ricardo and his Orchestra. The song goes on to chant to the "Voodoo Goddess of love ... Great Babalú." Desi Arnaz plays on the U.S. audience's ignorance of Afrocuban religiosity, by invoking a seemingly "arbitrary" orisha and random images of "natives" and "dusky warriors." The Spanish version of the song lends more of an air of authenticity, due partially to the language and word usage, and due to the images of orisha worship. The song unfolds more like an incantation or prayer than the romanticized English version. The performer/singer of the Spanish version describes an orisha worship and prayer. The song can be seen as a way for Desi/Ricky to ask for the orisha's help in achieving success, as an entertainer and orchestra leader, and in making sure that Lucy loves Ricky/Desi.

The first time viewers witness *Babalú* performed is in the pilot episode of the *I Love Lucy* show. Midway through the pilot, we witness a jam session with Ricky and his orchestra practicing his famous song. The scene opens up with a 15-person orchestra playing, the focus on the percussive instruments; two conga drums, a regular drum set, and maracas. Drums are used widely in Santería to invoke deities. There is a two-way communication between the god and the individual, with the individual speaking and honoring the orisha through music. All of the band members have European features and are light-skinned, with the exception of the musician on the Brazilian cabasa who we only see for a few seconds. As they practice the number, Ricky gazes upwards while he drums frantically to the beat. While seemingly only a shot of a rehearsal, to one knowledgeable of Santería the scene comes across as an invocation to the orisha, as the television audience's attention is drawn to Ricky gazing upward and drumming on the tumbadora, screaming "Babalú-Áye" repetitiously. Desi/Ricky may be using this scene as a form of exoticism and to show his shameless ability to use religious practice as entertainment. On the other hand, he may have been using this scene as an offering to Babalú-Áye. It is hard to know, since he never makes mention of the religion in his autobiography nor does he wear signifying beads or colors.

Arnaz used his influence as an entertainer and the United States' recognition and popularity of Afrocuban music to his advantage. The ignorance Desi shows in regards to African influence and the appropriation of music becomes problematic as he is unable to view his own privileged history. Unlike Celia Cruz's famous line "Azucar," which contains the "history of Cuba's plantation culture, the economics of slavery, and the racial and gender dynamics from which Cuban national identity and popular music emerge" (Aparicio, 363), Arnaz's *Babalú* falls short, as his white, privileged history does not connect with the marginalized Afrocuban history of Santería. The *I Love Lucy* show used Ricky Ricardo as the front man to create a space where the Latino other was explored and demystified. Lucy's and Ricky's grouping of all Latinos under one category created an identity which ignored the specific history of a marginalized people. This silencing is especially true in Ricky's character as an "authentic" Cuban musician who denies the African root of his performance. Ricky's/Desi's appropriation of a "music which has served as a means of real and symbolic empowerment for those who would otherwise have no voice" (Moore 4) questions his space within the United States. At the same time, his construction of a unified Latino blurs the distinction between the actor Desi Arnaz and the character Ricky Ricardo. His attempt to ignore the African presence and erase cultural and ethnic distinction led to an erasure of Desi, as he becomes simply Ricky Ricardo, Lucy's lover.

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Brujas, Curanderas, and *Hechiceras*:
Women and the Inquisition in Colonial Mexico
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Abstract

Over the years, historians have attributed many things as the source of gender roles in Latin America, from economics to maize and tortillas. As in the rest of the world, Latin American women consistently earn less, vote less, and have limited power. In the early '70s, Evelyn Stevens famously argued that women have just as much power as men, due to the phenomenon of *marianismo* that reveres women for their spirituality. Despite claims such as this of a 50/50 power divide, women actually do have far less power and control of their lives than men, which can be traced to one main source. In the colonial era of Latin America, Spanish missionaries ostensibly attempted to convert all the indigenous peoples to Christianity, but this conversion had a lasting influence. To this day, gender roles are in great part based on the initial colonial structure established by the Catholic Church in Latin America. The stoic suffering of indigenous nuns served as an example for all women of endurance and virtue, while Spaniards treated indigenous men as immature children. After examining Inquisition documents from 16th-century Mexico, I noticed several trends in the portrayal of women. In my paper, I argue that religion, more specifically the Catholic Church, has had the greatest impact on gender roles in Latin American society.

Across Latin America, women live as second-class citizens in a male-dominated world. Although great strides have been made in recent years and women can now vote and divorce their husbands, they still do not have nearly as much power as men, and their place is still considered by many to be in the home. Various scholars have attempted to explain this gender inequality that has persisted in such severe form years after other countries gave women more rights. Although pre-Columbian indigenous populations were also patriarchal societies, as were virtually all societies of the time, the problem was rapidly and severely exacerbated after the rival of the Spaniards. Women in early colonial Latin America were not only seen as inferior because of their gender, but also because of their skin color.[1] Indigenous men at first did not fare much better, but as colonialism reached its height, women were firmly entrenched in the home. Many factors contributed to this, but as Inquisition testimonies show, no other colonial institution did more to secure the domestic status of women as the Catholic Church. By examining Inquisition documents from 16th-century Mexico, a clear picture emerges of what behavior was expected from women, and this portrayal reveals important information about the status of women in colonial Mexico. Only 50 years after the Spaniards had arrived in the New World, gender roles were already firmly established and women knew that their place was in the home.

In early colonial Latin America, men far outnumbered women, but women were overrepresented when it came to Inquisition trials in Mexico: "Of seventy-one individuals who appeared before the Inquisition in Mexico between 1613 and 1806, for example, forty-seven (66 percent) were women."[2] The Inquisition in the New World also differed from the infamous Spanish Inquisition, and so different groups were targeted in the Americas. After a controversial beginning involving Fray Diego de Landa and the Mayans of Yucatán and a troubling incident with Fray Juan de Zumárraga and a native cacique dying at the stake, jurisdiction in the New World belonged to the bishops and not much was recorded about the trials. However, in 1569, the Spanish crown decided to begin the Inquisition once again in the New World to deal with the problems of heresy and apostasy.[3] Indeed, these issues were two of the Church's largest concerns in the New World, given all of the recent conversions. Thus, the Inquisition had only barely been established once more in the Americas before the trials analyzed in this paper took place in 1572.

Women, Gender, and the Catholic Church in Latin America

In 1973, Evelyn Stevens famously claimed that Latin American women had just as much power as men but are simply "not yet ready to relinquish their female chauvinism."[4] She wrote that because of *marianismo*, the cult

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[1] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 15.

[2] Ibid., p. 155.

[3] Roberto Moreno de Arcos, "New Spain's Inquisition for Indians from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century," *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, eds. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 29–31.

[4] Evelyn P. Stevens, "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo," in *Confronting Change, Challenging Tradition: Women in Latin American History*, ed. Gertrude M. Yeager (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994), p. 15.

of feminine spiritual superiority, women were seen as "semi-divine, morally superior to and spiritually stronger than men."[5] Others have supported this hypothesis and describe how the Virgin Mary was "the model for all female behavior, combining sexual purity, perfect motherhood, stoic suffering, and sacrifice."[6] However, in her research, Stevens fails to adequately address how the role of women in Mexico was first established by the Church, and instead simplifies gender relations as stemming from the concepts of *machismo* and *marianismo*. Another scholar, Arnold Bauer, actually attributes the role of women in Latin America as originating with Mesoamerican society's dietary reliance on "the tortilla with its extraordinarily heavy kitchen labor."[7] According to him, the popularity of corn tortillas, and the labor-intensive process required to make them, ensured that women would remain in the kitchen all day.

However, theories aside, in 16th-century Mexico, women did not have any power at all outside the home, not even in spiritual matters, as Stevens claimed. They could not teach Catholic doctrine, for as Fernando Valdés stated in 1537: "It is certain what the ancients said, that the jewel which makes a woman prettiest is the padlock of silence on the doors of her lips for all conversation, and particularly for the mysteries of holiness and so she is not to be a teacher of the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures."[8] Countless documents reiterate this sentiment and describe how women were "morally fragile and prone to error,"[9] and thus men and the Church were entrusted with the task of regulating their conduct. The writings and documents of the Church in colonial Mexico provide us with documentation of how women were treated at this point, and what their status in society was. Writings from 17th-century nuns in Puebla, and their subsequent beatific biographies, reveal the slow transformation of the Church to allow women to take part in the religion, and how the Church shaped what was model behavior for women. At first, indigenous and *mestiza* women were not even allowed in convents, so while nuns were expected to provide the ideal image of a woman, only lighter-skinned women could be an example of a holy woman.[10] This color-based discrimination is established very early on and can be observed in the documents that were examined for this project.

These accounts of Puebla nuns also illustrate what sort of decorum and bodily behavior was expected from women. The nuns would practice self-flagellation, wear shirts made of hair, and put on spiked belts that cut into their skin and left flea-infested open wounds. They were not allowed to show pain as a result of this "mortification of the flesh," however, for showing pain was a sign of weakness. Thus, some bodily reactions were associated with evil, while women who restrained their pain were considered virtuous and religious.[11] The expectations of these nuns helped contribute to what society expected of a model, virtuous, and faithful woman. These nuns lived in 17th-century Puebla, yet the image of an ideal woman was already in place in Mexican society, due in no small part to the Catholic Church.

The "modern" Inquisition that began in the 15th century in Spain illustrates the anti-Semitism rife in Spanish society at the time, as estimates claim that the vast majority of those tried by the tribunals were *conversos*, or recently converted Jews and their descendants.[12] However, things changed in the New World with Fray Juan de Zumárraga's inquisition of "Amerindian sorcerers, bigamists, and heretics" and his relentless pursuit to punish those who practiced idolatry.[13] While he was eventually removed from his position for excessively harsh punishment against new converts, the Mexican Inquisition continued to try people accused of domestic infractions, such as bigamy, as well as witchcraft and superstition.[14]

The Trials and Evidence

The records available from the Inquisition in the New World reveal much about what societal expectations were already in place. This set of Inquisition testimonies originates from Zacatecas, Mexico and the trials begin in 1572. By focusing on a limited time and region, a clearer picture emerges of the particular politics of the cases and women involved, and one can better compare the findings with what other research has revealed. While men were usually accused of bigamy and other sorts of crimes, "the vast majority of women called before the Inquisition were *curanderas* (folk healers), practitioners of traditional medicine, or *hechiceras* (or *feiticerias*), women adept at casting spells."[15] These women usually used witchcraft to control men in

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[5] Ibid., 4.

[6] *Women of Colonial Latin America*, p. 6.

[7] Arnold J. Bauer, *Goods, Power, History: Latin America's Material Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 33.

[8] Mary E. Giles. *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 10.

[9] *Women of Colonial Latin America*, p. 6.

[10] Rosalva Loreto López, "The Devil in Seventeenth-Century Puebla Convents," *The Americas*, Oct. 2002, Vol. 59, No. 2, p. 184.

[11] Ibid., 192, 198.

[12] *Women in the Inquisition*, 2: "... records clearly demonstrate that the target of the Holy Office was the *conversos*: of those tried by the Barcelona tribunal from 1488 to 1505, and in Valencia from 1484 to 1530, it has been calculated that 99.3 percent and 91.6 percent, respectively, were *conversos*."

[13] Ibid., 211.

[14] Ibid., 213.

[15] *Women of Colonial Latin America*, p. 155.

some way, and as historian Ruth Behar explains, sexual witchcraft was often employed, primarily by indigenous women or women of mixed backgrounds.[16] The methods they used during the 16th century blended European beliefs with indigenous folk remedies, and as time passed and slavery grew, African methods were also used.[17] In this essay, I will focus on two of the most "popular" women in these records to examine how they are portrayed in the documents, and will also look at what can be revealed about concepts of ethnicity. As previously mentioned, society judged women based on the color of their skin as well as their gender, and while *mestiza* and indigenous women enjoyed greater freedom in some ways, they also occupied a much lower place in society.[18]

These documents, obtained from the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, repeatedly illustrate how even in witchcraft and other heretical matters, women were still limited to the domestic sphere. In Behar's piece, she focuses on sexual witchcraft in 18th-century Mexico, but she states that women's magical power has its roots in 16th-century Spain,[19] and these witchcraft practices must have been replicated in 16th-century Mexico. In these documents, several women are implicated, but a few are accused multiple times. Usually, these women are of *mestiza* or indigenous backgrounds and are fairly well-known in the community, so various people would approach them for help with their domestic problems, such as issues with lovers or spouses.

One such woman, Doña María Pimentel, is first testified against on May 18, 1572, although the actual "crime" took place 14 years previously.[20] In this case, Doña María is seen "one night with an image and two lit candles in the mouth of an oven and she had half of her body in the mouth of the oven" as she prepares for her witchcraft.[21] On May 20, another man comes forward to describe how she became involved in sending dreams to determine if one really loved a fiancé.[22] The theme of the oven is repeated by another witness:

> Another, he says, and testifies that being at the house of this witness's parents 14 years earlier, Doña María Pimentel was staying there because of a matrimonial disagreement and this witness heard her say certain

prayers between ten and two at night […] at the mouth of an oven, kneeling with two lit candles and an image that he understands was of Saint Martha because the prayer he heard her say was to Saint Martha and that she told this witness to kiss and guard it and this witness and the said Doña Maria went at night for some Indians in order to take the peyote ....[23]

An important element in this tale of witchcraft is not only that Doña María was exploring some form of witchcraft, but also that she was praying to a saint. In Spain and Europe, the Inquisition targeted *conversos* and *moriscos*, or recently converted Jews and Muslims, for retaining some of their old beliefs. This testimony shows how the Inquisition was following a similar tactic by targeting Indians whom they perceived to still hold old beliefs. While she was reciting a Catholic prayer to a saint, she was doing so in a very untraditional place, and followed this by seeking out Indians to take peyote.

Another popular woman in the testimonies, Lucia de Paredes, wife of Gregorio Nuñes, makes her first appearance when one man describes how he saw her speaking words in an unknown language in an attempt to find a slave who had run away with a sieve and a pair of scissors. He also describes how she would provide powders for himself and his father to bathe in or sew into their shirts for protection.[24] Yet another man testifies against Lucia de Paredes and his testimony contains this revealing paragraph:

> He heard his mother say at this said time that she had given him in a *caeste* (basket?) of chiles [and] some powders that she said she had been given to her by an Indian named Marina in the Barrio of San Juan so that he would forget a woman with whom this witness was involved and that this same Indian had told his mother that she herself had given other powders for the same woman whose name is Juana Ramirez so that he would love her well ....[25]

This statement reveals much about the customs and politics that surrounded witchcraft in colonial Zacatecas. Lucia de Paredes claims that she was given the chiles from an old Indian woman, and in this way, she shifts the blame from herself to an indigenous person who would already be seen

[16] Ruth Behar, "Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism, and Women's Powers: Views from the Mexican Inquisition," in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p. 179.

[17] *Women of Colonial Latin America*, p. 155.

[18] Ibid., p. 154.

[19] Ibid., p. 155.

[20] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 143.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 145.

[23] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 146.

[24] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 145.

[25] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 146.

as more suspect by the town and by the Inquisition. Also, although he was the one who needed help, his mother made the arrangements with Lucia to solve his love problems. While other scholars have uncovered similar findings, the details and methods of witchcraft are often overlooked.

Lucia de Paredes and the Indian woman that she consulted with did not use potions or spells, but often used ordinary household items. Much as Doña María Pimentel developed her magical solutions in the oven, other *curanderas* and *hechiceras* operated in the location that was most familiar and available to them, the home—or, more specifically, the kitchen. Some days after this last confession, Lucia herself came to confess to the Tribunal, and she stated that after her son was taken from the Church and held prisoner,

> Ana Diaz, a woman who lives in Zacatecas, advised her to search to find someone who takes the peyote to see if her son would be in danger. She says that a woman named Magdalena de Ortega that is now in Mexico [City?] said that she would look for an Indian woman that takes it .... In the same way, she said that it has been twelve years, little more or less, her husband giving her [a] bad life … that a *mulata* named Paula de la Cruz that has died asked her for some money to go to some Indians that would give a remedy so that her husband wouldn't give her [a] bad life, and so gave a [certain amount] of silver to this said *mulata* so that she would go and she brought her some powders. Which, the said powders, she gave to eat to her husband and some other people.[26]

This paragraph, coming from Lucia's own memories, once again demonstrates how several themes are quite common in popular thought, even in the 16th century. Indians and those of mixed blood were naturally more suspect as a result of their backgrounds, and they were thought to be able to help the more elite women with their witchcraft. Secondly, when women did attempt to use these remedies, they used the kitchen to do so, given that they were limited to the domestic sphere.

There are countless documents available from Inquisition trials and testimonies, but these particular documents are especially valuable because of their early date. The Inquisition had only been reestablished a few years earlier, and the Church was still struggling to convert all of the indigenous people of Latin America. However, society had already established its own strict rules and castes, and these are reflected in the way women interacted with each other in these documents. Moreover, while indigenous women in

Mexico had lived in patriarchal societies, they also experienced more opportunities to escape the home and would often participate in rebellions and insurrections. However, with the arrival of the Spaniards, women were restricted to the home and all sorts of aspects of their lives were regulated by men, because in the view of the Catholic Church, women were far too spiritually and emotionally weak. Many things have changed in Latin America, but it has been a long struggle for women to gain more power outside of the home. As these documents and other research show, the Catholic Church greatly influenced what constituted an ideal woman, and established these expectations from the very beginning. More than any other institution, the Catholic Church regulated what women could and could not do, and these rules have endured for centuries. The Church's idealized vision of the Virgin Mary hardly represented most Latin American women, but that was the model that was entrenched in popular society, and remains the model that can still be seen today.

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[26] Archivo General de la Nación, Inquisición, Tomo 128 exp.6 folio 147.

The Emergence of the Zapatista Movement:
An Analysis of Political Leadership Development

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Paola Gutiérrez is a senior at Queens College, CUNY. Upon completion of her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, she would like to attend graduate school to pursue research on indigenous social movements in Mexico and Colombia. Her primary interest lies in theories of social movements and the historical development of contemporary social movements in Latin America in relation to globalization. Her long-term goals include teaching and conducting research at the university level.

Abstract

This paper describes the history of indigenous people in Mexico by studying their active roles in the Zapatista Movement. It describes the development of political leadership movements by answering questions such as "Why are the Zapatistas considered leaders?" and "How have Zapatistas been able to attract thousands of followers to fight for their cause?" The specific themes of this paper are Traditional Roles and Responsibilities, Contact and Conquest, Colonialism, Globalization, and Resistance movements. The goal of this paper is to provide an overview of the historical, geographical and cultural experiences of indigenous communities, including their history and their struggles as individuals and as a group.

In Latin America, various indigenous social movements have recently emerged. However, it is very rare for people to recognize the existence of these groups. There has been only one group that has influenced, attracted, and inspired other people and groups and that is the Zapatista movement. This group of revolutionaries' indigenous leaders have been able to call the attention of the international community, as well as the attention of other indigenous groups. James Burns said that the heart of a leader is the followers; they are the ones who maintain the leader and keep the movement alive. If there are no followers, there cannot be a leader.

According to James Burns, leadership over human beings is exercised when a person with certain motives and purposes mobilizes, in competition or in conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers. A leader is the one who induces followers to act for the attainment of certain goals which represent the values and the motivation, wants, needs, aspirations, and expectations of both leaders and followers (1978 18–19). In this paper, I explain why the Zapatistas are considered leaders and why they have been able to attract thousands of followers to fight for their cause.

Zapatistas as Revolutionary Leaders

What is a revolutionary leader? A revolutionary leader always wants a complete and pervasive transformation of an entire social system—the birth of a radical new ideology, a reconstruction. Leaders must be dedicated to the cause and be able to demonstrate their commitment to it by devoting time and effort, risking their lives, undergoing imprisonment, exile, persecution, and continual hardship in order to address the wants and needs of the population. In times of revolutionary leadership, there is always a conflict. Moreover, there must always be a value and a transcending purpose that can raise the social and political consciousness of both leaders and followers (Burns 1978 201).

The Zapatista movement of Chiapas is a social movement of the Mayan Indians who live in Chiapas, the highlands of southern Mexico. They are cultivators, landless wage laborers, artisans, and a small minority of intellectuals who have a deep commitment to social justice. The Zapatista movement is a civil rights movement that fights for equality among all people. It is also an indigenous rights movement of the native people who acted to govern their territories and manage their own resources. It has also been called a cultural revolution and an indigenous justice movement (Popke 2004 10).

The indigenous people's lands were taken away from them when the Spanish came to Mexico; sometimes, the Spanish even took their lives. When Mexico finally obtained its independence from Spain, power remained in the hands of the elite, whose background was Spanish, and this left the indigenous people without any power. Over time, we have seen that this power structure has not changed; the indigenous people continue to be excluded from everyday politics and decision-making processes. They do not even have enough security and stability in their own lands because the Mexican government has maintained control over their territory and resources. Many of these indigenous people have had to leave their land and migrate to new frontiers (Brysk 1997 80).

The Indians of Chiapas have been dehumanized and they have been refused many of their constitutional rights. They have suffered from hunger, lack of access to health care, poverty, loss of agricultural land, and racism. The Indians are often forced to suffer injustices and infractions of natural human rights. The result has been that indigenous people are tired of being exploited by the government. Therefore, a group of indigenous people from Chiapas, called the Zapatistas (EZLN), decided to rise up on January 1, 1994, the same day that the North America Free Trade Agreement

(NAFTA) took effect. They demanded autonomy from the government, legal recognition of the Indians in Mexico, demilitarization, and the redistribution of agricultural lands (Brysk 1997 85).

In support of their cause, the indigenous people began an armed uprising against the government of then-president Carlos Salinas. The rebellion started also because the neo-liberalists were keen to intensify their exploitation of Chiapas' strategic reserves of natural, mineral, and human resources. Global market-oriented structures and institutions undercut self-determination, depriving communities of the power to set priorities and to negotiate the terms of access and distribution of benefits (Ballesteros 2001 15).

Their rebellion was sparked by the implementation of neo-liberal policies that were threatening the last vestige of indigenous autonomy: access to collective property of land. The land held in collective property is not only important because it is the basis of the economic survival of communities, but also because it gives the people autonomy. This land constitutes the material basis for indigenous traditional forms of collective democracy. In addition, the rebellion emerged in response to the great gap between the wealth of natural resources in Chiapas and the poverty of most of its population, particularly in its indigenous areas. Also, privatization and the removal of barriers to foreign investment would privilege global market forces over local priorities (Sholk 2001 505).

The Zapatistas have raised important questions regarding the future of the indigenous people in Mexico. They are still fighting against a feudal landscape dominated by *Ladinos*, cattlemen, and powerful governmental officials. The Zapatistas set out to mobilize against an unjust economic system and its manifestation in anti-democratic politics. Their demands involve efforts to democratize the Mexican government by including more indigenous participation in the decision-making process. They have also demanded education, better access to health care, a less corrupt judicial system, and resource management. They also want constitutional legal recognition of their full existence as people and the inalienable right to self-determination, expressed as autonomy, within the framework of the Mexican state. They have demanded the recognition of the indigenous normative system in the building of a pluralistic legal system; the recognition of their differences and their capacity to govern themselves according to their own vision; the recognition of their social, political, and cultural rights, which include equal rights for women; the demilitarization of the indigenous

zones of the country; and an end to the harassment of indigenous organizations, social movements, and their leaders (Couch 2001 450–55).

Having as a background the Zapatista movement, what can we say about revolutionary leadership? We say that it is passionate, dedicated, single-minded, ruthless, self-assured, courageous, tireless, and usually humorless. It is committed to conflict; it is committed to a social change. It needs a collective leadership to survive—leadership that is frustrated by oppression, wide failure, and discontent. The leader's ultimate goal is to reform or transform the status quo.

The heart of a leader is his followers:
Why has the Zapatista Movement attracted so many people?

Since the beginning of the insurgency, the Zapatistas have inspired other social movements that have expressed similar demands for social justice and greater participation in decision-making bodies. They highlight the unique character of the Zapatistas' practice of dissent. In particular, this includes the Zapatistas' decision to maintain independence from political parties, experimentation in self-government, and disillusionment with existing forms of representation. The Zapatistas have shown that there are alternative channels for effecting social change. Their demands immediately resonated with thousands of people around the world.

Rather than seeking power for themselves, the Zapatistas want people to create new spaces for dialogue where the dignity of each person would be upheld. Their strategy is not to seize power but to democratize power in every sphere of society. Therefore, joining the Zapatistas has appealed to many because of the Zapatistas' ability to mobilize around class and ethnic identities, cutting across religious lines, and offering participatory opportunities to women who did not fit traditional gender roles (Olesen 2004 255–257). As *Subcomandante* Marcos has said, "In sum, we are an army of dreamers, and therefore invincible. How can we fail to win, with this imagination overturning everything? Or rather, we do not deserve to lose ...." (Olesen 2004 259).

Zapatistas were one of the first people to show that resistance to the neo-liberal transformation needed to be globalized. The Zapatistas have had a strong international resonance and support that has helped them to prevent the Mexican government from destroying them. They have attracted the attention of the international community for their emphasis on the social-political rather than the military struggle. They believe that political organizations, democracy,

and civil societies do not need to be destroyed; they just need to be made more inclusive (Olesen 2004 261).

The Zapatistas are well-known for taking their struggle outside of Mexico, through international encounters such as the 1996 intercontinental meeting in Chiapas against neo-liberalism with 3,000 participants from around the world, as well as through the Internet, which has facilitated other people's ability to learn about them and to understand their struggle (Olesen 2004 265).

Since the implementation of NAFTA and the uprising of the indigenous people in Mexico, the Zapatistas' rebellion made the case that citizenship, not clientele-ism, was essential to the democratization of Mexico. The demands for recognition of effective citizenship rights had broad appeal to other sectors of Mexican society, including indigenous people outside the state of Chiapas. Since the implementation of NAFTA, the indigenous community has gained political and social rights. For example, the signing of the 1996 San Andres Accords on Indigenous Rights and Culture established the creation of the National Indigenous Congress as a significant new social and political actor within the Mexican government (Falk 1993 44). The San Andres Accords also enhanced indigenous autonomy, cultural rights, and access to land. The Mexican government has held the National Indigenous Congress since 1996, to facilitate discussion and campaigns against militarization and commercial mega-projects in indigenous territories (Falk 1993 47). These gains have been accompanied by the phenomenal increase in international non-governmental organizations, transnational social movements, and other associational networks on a global scale. These gains have brought concepts such as global civil society and cosmopolitan citizenship to the Mexican people, which have affected the way Mexican people think about their rights as citizens and their relations with the state (Falk 1993 47).

The Zapatistas have been able to achieve so many goals because they have the main element to succeed in a revolution: being able to attract people to fight for their cause. They have been able to recognize the needs and desires of its people as well as other people, which has helped them to gain support both inside and outside of the group.

Conclusion

The indigenous people of Mexico have not had a voice, history, or rights of their own. Most of the time, they have been treated by historians as passive agents of history.

They have been denied by the government the possibility of being political agents, and they have been treated by the Mexican people as a non-existent group.

On January 1, 1994, the Mexican people heard "enough is enough" from thousands of indigenous people from Chiapas who were tired of being faceless, abused, repressed, and discriminated against. The Zapatistas' mission is to reclaim their status and to change the political, legal, and economic infrastructure of Mexico. They want a fairer legal system, a more inclusive government, and fairer economic policies. As *Subcomandante* Marcos says, "We are no longer unmentionables. We, the forgotten, have a name, and now that we have a name, we hope that tomorrow we will have a face."

The Zapatistas have founded a new type of revolutionary movement, one that is very appealing to the international community. It is a movement that goes beyond borders. They have situated their struggle in a global context and even though the conflict is not finished and the military is still harassing thousands of indigenous people, the Zapatistas have gained what many other indigenous people have not: a voice and a face in the political, economic, and social infrastructure of the Mexican government and in the international community.

They have become subjects of their own history; they are now the protagonists of the history of Chiapas. As protagonists, they have come to know themselves better, have become more aware of their identity, have created greater unity, and have generated more pride. They are considered leaders because they have motives, purposes, and desire for a social change. They have acted for the attainment of certain goals which represent the values and the motivation, wants, needs, aspirations, and expectations of their followers. And, especially, they are leaders because they have the most important element in leadership: followers.

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Langarm—The Social Dance and Music
of the Coloured People of South Africa

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Cape Town with a BMus. degree. His research interests include
documenting the local musical practices of Cape Town. Glenn is
currently a Ph.D. student in Ethnomusicology at the University
of Pennsylvania. This paper is based on the opening and closing
chapters of his senior treatise, which is an ethnographic report
examining the social dance and musical practices associated
with the coloured people of Cape Town, specifically looking at
the changes the genre has undergone since the post-war era,
and the contributing factors.*

This paper investigates *langarm*[1] music and dance, a
social and musical practice associated with the so-called
coloured people of South Africa. It is important to note
that when I use the term coloured here, it is not in a
derogatory sense, but rather it is a term that is central to
my research, and is a means of distinguishing my research
community from other groups in South Africa. The
coloured people of South Africa are a marginalised group
of people who are considered to be of mixed-race descent.
The issue of coloured identity is a rather complex one, and
there is a certain ambiguity and fluidity in people's percep-
tions of what it means to be coloured. To add to this
already complicated issue, there are various communities
of coloured people who occupy distinct geographical loca-
tions in South Africa. These different locations act as iden-
tity markers that allow coloured groupings to distinguish
themselves from each other. For example, coloured people
who have been born and raised in Cape Town would con-
sider themselves "Cape Coloured," and uniquely different
from coloureds in other parts of South Africa. These
unique differences are primarily based on dialects of lan-
guage, as well as social and cultural practices. The term
"coloured" is still used in the post-Apartheid era as a means
of distinguishing between ethnic groups. Higher education
institutions use the term for statistical purposes to record
the nature of the student intake. The members of the
group under study refer to themselves as coloured and I
feel it would detract from my study if I were not to use the
term. In spite of this, I once again must point out, that my
use of the term coloured is not discriminatory or used
derogatively. I am aware that the term has a negative con-
notation in the United States of America, but the reader
must keep in mind that it is used here in a South African
context to distinguish within the broader framework of
what it means to be "black," a term which is inclusive of
African, Indian and Coloured groupings.

Throughout this paper I will use the term *langarm* to
refer to the genre under study. This Afrikaans word is the
local term that has been applied to this genre of social dance,
particularly social ballroom dance. The term *langarm*
became inclusive to refer to the accompanying dance music
as well as the actual dance event. Although *langarm* is popu-
lar in most urban areas of South Africa, particularly the
Western Cape and Eastern Cape regions,[2] I have restricted
my research to the music of the dance bands of the coloured
townships of Cape Town since there may be localized differ-
ences in various communities in South Africa. Also, because
of the large scope of the genre of *langarm*, this paper will
simply attempt to provide a broad overview of the develop-
ments that have occurred, and will highlight a few of the sig-
nificant changes which the genre has undergone since the
post-war era. An in-depth examination of these changes and
their causes and effects, therefore, falls outside of the scope
of this paper.

Cape Town has a history of slavery, and as a result, is
part of a broader Creole culture. The slaves at the Cape came
from various countries, particularly East Africa (Madagascar,
Mozambique) and Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia), and brought
with them their own musical practices, flavours, and instru-
ments. A Creole culture emerged, and has been adopted by
the coloured people of the Cape, somehow infusing some-
thing of their own, to suit local conditions. This in turn led
to social and musical practices which would later become
indigenous to the Cape. Highlights of these musical practices
include the *Coon or Minstrel Carnival*, the Malay choirs or
nagtroepe (night clubs) as they are locally known, Christmas
bands, and dance bands. It is the latter, the dance bands, and
their music, with which this paper is concerned.

Naturally, recreational dance and dance bands are
common to many cultures around the world. These musical
practices at the Cape can be traced back many centuries,
suggesting that *langarm* as a genre, though it may not have
been called that then, has its roots in the period of slavery
and evolved into its current form. In historical descriptions
of Cape Town circa 1800, there is almost always mention of
groups that made light music—mostly dance music (Martin
1999:59). At the Cape, dance was a passion for many, but
such social occasions were usually divided along class and
racial lines. Those who could not attend the parties and balls
hosted by the rich at their homes and farm mansions went to
taverns, smuggling houses, and "rainbow balls." The "rain-
bow balls" (Coplan 1985) were mixed-race social occasions
which were specifically intended to facilitate contact across
the divide of class, race and gender.

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[1] Pronounced "lung-u-rim."

[2] See Coetzer 2005.

English country dances became popular with whites at the Cape as early as the 1730s and slaves enjoyed performing them at "Rainbow Balls" modelled on the social occasions of the wealthier masters.

(Coplan 1985:11)

This then suggests that *langarm* evolved into its current form from these social dance practices, and although *langarm* as a genre was not exclusive to the coloured community, its origins in slave culture and British colonialism at the Cape, are possible reasons for the localization of it amongst coloured people. During the 20th century, *langarm* remained an exclusively coloured subculture in the Cape as a result of Apartheid.

In his book *Coon Carnival: New Year in Cape Town: Past and Present* (1999), Denis C. Martin mentions that musical life in the Cape has always been vibrant. As early as the 17th century, wealthy burghers kept slave orchestras whose members had learned to play various musical instruments of European origin by simply memorizing the tunes they heard. They played marches and dances on all sorts of instruments, from violin and flute to bassoon and French horns.[3] At the same time, the slaves also made music on their own indigenous instruments which they either recreated here or had managed to bring along from their native countries. We can assume that local Khoi[4] instruments were also incorporated into these dance bands since there is evidence of interaction between the Khoi and the slaves, particularly those from Asia.

During the pre-1930 period, the bands were made up of various western classical and indigenous instruments. Dance bands were also significantly influenced by military bands, but the introduction of brass instruments would only occur during the post-war era.

Usually, dance bands were made up of a group of men playing instruments which were easily available, or instruments obtained through past military service or religious activities—such as trumpets, violins and banjos.

(Layne 1995:93)

The various instrumental ensembles of dance bands have also changed over the past number of decades. Brass bands gradually replaced the predominantly string bands in the 1950s and 1960s. By the mid 1960s it was standard for bands to have at least one saxophone.[5] Today it is compulsory for a dance band to play the leading melody on a saxophone for it to be considered an authentic *langarm* band. A typical dance band is usually made up of five or six individuals, and instruments include: drum-kit, bass guitar, rhythm guitar, lead guitar, keyboards and saxophone or trombone. Some dance bands will also include a vocalist, though this practice only occurred in the post-war era, as *langarm* music prior to this was purely instrumental

As mentioned earlier, a *langarm* is a social dance event, and, historically, the dance form which dominated was ballroom—even though it was not strict ballroom dance.[6] Let us therefore consider the various dances associated with *langarm*. Traditionally,[7] the five standard ballroom dances were danced at a *langarm* event. These are as follows: waltz, quickstep, tango,[8] slow-foxtrot, and swing-waltz. In all of these dances, couples dance across the dance floor, usually on the outskirts, and they all move in an anti-clockwise direction.

While *langarm* may have its roots in ballroom dancing, some of the Latin American dances are also part of the repertoire. The five standard Latin dances are samba, cha-cha, rumba, *passo doble*, and jive.[9] Of these five Latin dances, only the samba and jive are part of the *langarm* repertoire. It is quite uncommon for a band to perform a tango and any of the remaining three Latin dances. The ballroom and Latin dances, which were essentially European and American[10] dance forms, were for the most part imitated, even though they were not imitated strictly in the social dancing. Other dances that are also considered part of the *langarm* genre, and which essentially makes *langarm* uniquely different from overseas practices is the inclusion of localized dance forms such as the *vastrap* and square.

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[3]   Desai 1983:23 in Martin 1999:58.

[4]   Indigenous people of the Western Cape of South Africa.

[5]   Though there is evidence of bands using a saxophone as early as 1944 in photographs displayed in the District Six Museum in Cape Town.

[6]   Coetzer in her article on *langarm* in Grahamstown describes *langarm* as a "watered-down" version of strict ballroom dancing (Coetzer: 2005).

[7]   I say traditionally, because this is no longer the case. Of the five ballroom dances, only four have remained part of the existing repertoire, since for at least the past 15 years, the tango has not been danced at social *langarm* events.

[8]   Note that the ballroom tango is different from the Argentinean tango. In the ballroom tango, each beat is strong, whereas in the Argentinean tango, only the first and fourth beats are strong.

[9]   The jive is originally a North America dance but has traditionally been grouped with the Latin American dances since it falls outside of the ballroom repertoire.

[10]   I use the term collectively here to refer to both North and South America.

Perhaps the most prominent of these localized dances is the *vastrap*, which has a fast tempo. The *vastrap* is both a couple's dance and can be danced on one's own in the style of "loose dancing."[11] The dance steps may be described as a sort of shuffle all around the same area, as couples do not move across the dance floor when dancing a *vastrap*. Instead, the *vastrap* includes a movement known as a *passie*. *Passies* are comic dance movements, and the purpose is to entertain a group of people dancing in a circle. The *vastrap* looks like an extremely "watered-down" version of the quickstep. It is not uncommon for the patrons at a dance event to form a group circle when a *vastrap* is being played. In this case, no partners are in the *langarm hold*, and each member of the circle shuffles loosely. Each member of the circle then has an opportunity to go to the center of the circle, and do his or her *passies*.

Music used for a *vastrap* comes from well-known Cape Minstrel medleys, to emphasize the *ghoema*[12] rhythm which is often used in vastrap songs. Dance bands will often perform songs with a *ghoema* rhythm, specifically for loose dancing. In short, the *ghoema* rhythm may be described as a strong ostinato rhythmic pattern, and may be grouped as two or four beats in a bar. It is performed quite fast and lively. I provide a few examples of the *ghoema* rhythm. The first is the basic rhythm associated with the *ghoema* sound, and the latter two are variations.

These and similar rhythmical patterns have become emblematic of the Cape, as it is included in many local musical practices. Traditionally, this rhythmical pattern accompanies most Minstrel songs, but dance bands will also incorporate it into a song which lends itself to this rhythm. At a *langarm*, the dance floor is almost always full when a *vastrap*, or any other song, is accompanied by this rhythm.

Another dance form which coloured people localized was "square dancing," often referred to as "the square." The music which accompanied square dances sounds very close to the music of the Afrikaaner *sokkie/sakkie* genre, though the term *sopvleis* (soup meat) was used to denote the style of music associated with square dancing. There are eight various square dances, each with its own name, and each with its own set of steps. They are as follows: quadrille, commercial, d'alberts, lancers, caledonians, pageant quadrille, coronation quadrille and second set. The square required four couples to dance together in a group. Even though in the post-war years square dancing was undoubtedly the most popular dance, it no longer forms part of the *langarm* repertoire.

Popular music, whether Euro-American or local, still remains a fundamental part of the repertoire of *langarm*. Local music is particularly significant since it has developed a new form of "loose dancing," which locally is referred to as *losskud* (loose shake). It is quite common to see *losskud* at a present day *langarm* event, as this seems to be more popular amongst the younger patrons.

Boudina Coetzer correctly describes *langarm* as not just a ballroom by-product but a distinctive South African fusion of different local and foreign styles. She asserts that it is a genre in flux, adapting to new social regulations and tastes and proactively using this to create a "neo-traditional" style (Coetzer 2005).

Valmont Layne, in his article titled *Square Roots at the Cape* (2003), aptly describes the complexity of a discussion about dance in South Africa. Though he is specifically speaking of square dancing, I will extend it to include *langarm*, since square dancing was part of the *langarm* repertoire, and his comments are particularly relevant to *langarm* as a genre.

> This is folk music in the simple sense that it is the music and dance of ordinary people and in the sense that it served a real social purpose. This is African dance in the sense that it is located on this continent, and in the sense that it is indigenous to this area. It is African dance also in the sense that there are as yet unexplored links with the dance forms of indigenous peoples and slaves at the Cape. Finally, it is in indigenous in the sense that it is a music

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[11] By "loose dancing," I mean that there are no structured or required steps, and the dance does not require that people pair up with a partner, so there is also no formal hold required for the dance, as is the case with strict ballroom dancing.

[12] Also spelt *ghomma*. The *ghoema* is actually a drum. The wooden body is built like a small barrel. Slats are joined with glue, a springbok skin is nailed on the rims at one end of the body and the other is left open. The sound of the instrument depends upon the way the slats are assembled, and the manner in which the skin has been dried (Martin 1999:21). The *ghoema* rhythm is a specific rhythm associated with the drum.

> which has been creolised and vernacularised …
> in other words, ordinary people have shaped it in
> their own image and have given their own social
> and cultural meanings which continue to change
> with time and circumstance.

I fully agree with the views above and will further add that the purpose of *langarm* as a genre is to provide entertainment, with the role of the dance band and musicians specifically directed towards pleasing their audiences. This principle, along with other contributing factors, will always ensure that the genre undergoes changes. These changes, though not always welcomed by all the patrons, are perhaps necessary, in that it guarantees that *langarm* will remain a social practice associated with a particular group or ethnicity, and so prevent it from dying out. Studies such as the one I have conducted are significant in that they not only document the musical practices, which are considerably lacking in scholarly writing, but also so that future generations can reflect on their heritage and the role of music therein, as an expression of identity.

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Ambiguously Eluding the Monster: Representation and Authority in Gwendolyn Brooks' "We Real Cool"

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The Pool Players
Seven at the Golden Shovel

We real cool. We
Left school. We
Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We
Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We
Jazz June. We
Die soon.
　　　　—Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool"

When Langston Hughes spoke of the monster that continues to haunt writers from marginalized groups, Gwendolyn Brooks was still toddling around in diapers. "The Negro artist," Hughes wrote in 1926,

> works against an undertow of sharp criticism and misunderstanding from his own group and unintentional bribes from the whites. 'O, be respectable, write about nice people, show how good we are,' say the Negroes. 'Be stereotyped, don't go too far, don't shatter our illusions about you, don't amuse us too seriously. We will pay you,' say the whites.
>
> (Hughes 161)

Decades later, Brooks' poetry tackled the same monster, which had grown larger and slipperier with the passage of time. Writing about black people for a mixed readership, Brooks had to be especially careful about the way she represented her subjects.

As Edward Said points out in "Orientalism," throughout history, texts have functioned as ways of understanding concepts that are "unknown and threatening and previously distant" (272). For white readers in the late '50s, Brooks' poems allowed a glimpse into a black culture that had been held at a distance by decades of slavery and segregation. Although Brooks' poems might have bridged some racial gaps, their roles as cultural intermediaries opened some dangerous doors, allowing white readers to feel closer to understanding the entirety of "black culture" simply by reading poetry written by a black woman. Said pinpoints this problem when he notes that the very distance between the reader and the subject matter often imbues texts with "a greater authority than the actuality it describes" (273).

Kwame Anthony Appiah elaborates on these ideas, noting that although the concept of race may be a social construction, the idea of race has played an immense role in the way people view and understand one another. As Appiah points out, throughout history, one of the most popular ways of evaluating other races has been through the literature they have produced. When viewed as a crucial part of interracial dialogue and understanding, language becomes immensely powerful, transforming into the "sacred essence" of a nationality or group (284).

It may be natural to trust a text about unfamiliar subjects, but this type of faith in the authority of a text can be immensely problematic. Rooted in the thin soil of the confidence that a text can impart knowledge/understanding of an entire racial/ethnic group, this faith brings forth often bitter fruits of shallow understanding and stereotypes. Of course, this problem is not one encountered by every author. When, for example, a straight white man writes something, few readers view the text as something which can help them understand all of the straight white men in the world. When, however, an author from a marginalized group writes something, their representations become ways of understanding the experiences of an entire "other" (racial/ethnic/sexual).

Stephen Greenblatt's essay "Culture" elaborates on some of these problems. "Something happens to objects, beliefs, and practices when they are represented, reimagined, and performed in literary texts," Greenblatt notes, "something often unpredictable and disturbing. That 'something' is the sign both of the power of art and the embeddedness of culture in the contingencies of history." (231) W.J.T. Mitchell echoes this idea, noting that literary representation "can never be divorced from political and ideological questions … [it] is precisely the point where these questions are most likely to enter the literary work" (15). By refusing to view literature as an insular realm and focusing on the sociopolitical nature of representation, these critics provide a rich context in which to view Brooks' work.

Like hundreds of writers before and after her, Gwendolyn Brooks struggled with Hughes' monster, trying to figure out how minority groups could be represented in literature without being essentialized or appropriated by the mainstream. Actively engaged with the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s, Brooks was intensely concerned with race-relations and interracial dialogue. Her political involvement and association with the Black Arts Movement (which attempted to define a "black aesthetic") forced Brooks to consider questions of representation, and, as she notes in her autobiography, the idea of a monolithic "black aesthetic," while helpful in promoting black authors, troubled her greatly. Rather than using her position as the first African-American recipient of the Pulitzer Prize to

make definitive statements about the "black experience," Brooks used her descriptions of unique scenes from daily life to allow only diverse glimpses into African-American society, thereby refusing to cater to or reinforce mainstream society's perceptions of a monolithic black experience. Her subtlety and seeming contradictions allow her poems to elude "whole" readings, producing instead an interpretive vertigo which draws attention to the limitations of representation and authority.

Like W.J.T. Mitchell, who insists that "representation is always *of* something or someone, *by* something or someone, *to* someone" (12), Brooks undermines the idea of an authoritative and complete representation. Poems like "We Real Cool" follow this pattern, deriving their subversive power from a refusal to allow immediate understanding. On one level, the poem's immediacy and direct tone captivate the reader, pulling the reader into a relationship with the pool-players and the author. On another level, however, Brooks refuses to pinpoint the exact nature of these relationships, preferring to imbue them with a certain ambiguity.

It is precisely this ambiguity which awakens the reader: rather than unwrapping neatly packaged representations to enjoy and understand, the reader is forced to grapple with multiple levels of representational ambiguity and fill the poem's gaps with his or her own interpretations. This very act of interpretation, which varies from reader to reader, stands as a testament to the flexibility and non-authoritative nature of the text. The uncertain nature of the relationship between the author and the pool-players adds to the reader's own uncertain connection with the pool-players and the author. An examination of the various representative relationships in "We Real Cool" allows us to understand the ways in which the poem refuses to serve as a solid representation of any racial experience or ground for racial stereotype.

The Pool-Players and the Author

In her poem, not only does Brooks refuse to instruct the reader on how she should feel about the pool-players in the poem, but she also leaves her own relationship with them open to interpretation. Is she one of them or a distant observer? Does she approve or disapprove of their lifestyle? By refusing to give concrete answers to these questions, Brooks imbues every facet of the author-subject relationship with a deliciously frustrating ambiguity. The array of possibilities disorients the reader, allowing the poem to evade capture and easy digestion.

The very first word of the poem, a seemingly uncomplicated "we," hints at the importance of the speaker's identity, yet the speaker's identity is never pinpointed. In a way, by corroding the barrier between the author and the pool-players, the word "we" adds an authoritative tone to the poem, hinting that Brooks herself may be one of them. At the same time, the word also emphasizes the solidarity of the pool-players, suggesting that Brooks might just be an observer, an outsider writing about what she sees and hears.

This ambiguity is heightened by the poet's refusal to condone or condemn the pool-players' lifestyle. In a way, the poem seems celebratory, almost anthem-like. Its terseness and brevity convey a sense of confidence; the fluid rhythm and conversational diction imbue the poem with a sense of swaggering bravado, making the players' lifestyle seem romantic and desirable. This appeal is heightened when the poem is considered in the context of the late '50s. Set against the racism and oppressiveness of mainstream institutions, the pool-players' rebelliousness takes on an entirely new dimension. By eschewing mainstream institutions like school, the players could be refusing to participate in a structure that propagates values with which they don't agree. As they "strike straight" (4) and "sing sin" (5), they seem active, independent, in control, and rebelliously alive.

This feeling of solidarity and confidence, however, is dissolved by the poem's final line, in which the players "die soon" (8). Drawing attention to the destructive nature of the players' lifestyle, this final line could be read as a condemnation of the players' recklessness (as evidenced by the poem's inclusion in several educational texts). On another level, however, it could be read as a critique of the sort of society which marginalizes black youth, forcing them to the dangerously slippery bottom rungs of the social ladder. Yet another interpretation could view the final line as transforming the pool-players and their lifestyle into a culture of martyrdom, hinting that their defiance of mainstream expectations is something to aspire to. Readers could even view the ending as a lighthearted dismissal of concrete consequences (death is much more distant and inconceivable than unemployment or incarceration; the pool-players could be delighting in hyperbole).

Ultimately, it doesn't really matter which interpretation a reader chooses. The mere existence of so many interpretations stands as a barrier to a complete understanding of the author-subject relationship. This barrier is heightened by Brooks' style, one which is at once romantic and realistic. Highly alliterative and rhythmic, the poem's use of language

gives it an irresistible aesthetic, so much so that early critics accused Brooks of being a pure aesthete and only "pretend[ing] to talk of things and of people" (Littlejohn 89). "The inlay of her works," David Littlejohn wrote in 1966, "the *precieux* sonics, the lapidary insets of jeweled images can, in excess, squeeze out life and impact" beyond the realm of aesthetic experience. As the players "jazz June" (7) and "thin gin" (5), their destructive behavior is aestheticized and romanticized.

This tension between romantic and realistic representations also plays a key role in the relationship between the subject matter and the reader, especially if the reader is not black. Brooks' lyrical skill makes it tempting for the reader to dwell on the poem's surface, swallowing it as an aesthetically pleasing snapshot of urban black youth. Although she doesn't try to minimize the "otherness" of the pool-players, Brooks makes it very difficult for the reader to figure out the exact nature of this otherness, instead forcing each reader to establish unique relationships with the players.

The Pool-Players and the Reader

As the second line of the poem points out, the players have "left school"; their lives are lived outside of the constraints of mainstream institutions. The combination of this alternative lifestyle with the poem's deliberately anti-formal dialect and the repetition of the word "we," emphasizes the pool-players' otherness. By aestheticizing this otherness, Brooks comes dangerously close to some of the problems described by Brodhead in "Why Could Not a Colored Man?" Just as his character Uncle Julius serves "one group's life up as the stuff of another group's entertainment" (205), Brooks serves up the pool-players' unique lifestyle for her readers. Unlike Uncle Julius, however, Brooks refuses to allow her audience completely into their world. The poem's abrupt ending leaves the reader with more questions than answers. The ambiguity created by this brevity is precisely what keeps the pool-players from slipping into the "consumable otherness" (Brodhead 206) which marks much of Chesnutt's work.

Although Brooks' audience is more diverse than Uncle Julius' (upon publication, "We Real Cool" was devoured by readers of all races), her position as one of the few black women publishing poetry at the time forced her to be very aware of the impact her representations might have on her readers. Although early critics claimed that there was a problematic disconnect between Brooks' "white style and black content" (Baker 43), Brooks, like Chesnutt, was confident that

"if forms of literary expression can be found in a dominant culture, they can still be used in the interest of subjugated peoples" (Brodhead 195). Rather than letting fear stop her from representing pool-players and other marginalized people, Brooks attempts to create a connection between her audience and subject matter without allowing a complete understanding.

As Stanley Fish points out, readers read differently based on their connections to different interpretive communities. Brooks seems aware of these interpretive communities (which included white academics), and depicts the pool-players in a way that eludes a whole reading by any specific interpretive community. In an autobiography published a decade after "We Real Cool," she directly addresses this issue, insisting on the impossibility of understanding black people by reading texts by black authors. Noting that an "understanding of the new black is an exceptional Doctorate which can be conferred only upon those with the proper properties of bitter birth and intrinsic sorrow," Brooks refused to simplify the "new black experience" for critics and other "professional Negro-understanders" (Brooks 84–85).

This refusal to produce easily understandable, consumable representations of "others" brings an analysis of "We Real Cool" right back to the dilemma of the reader, who is simultaneously invited in and nudged away by the author. As Brooks denies the reader a complete entrance into the pool-players' world, it is easy to feel as though she is pushing the reader away with a polite "sorry, you'll never understand this world." At the same time, the vividness and verbal power, the ambiguity and brevity, of the poem all hint that Brooks wants the reader to try, and that she has enough faith in the reader to let him or her fill the poem's gaps with his or her own unique interpretations. Even as she represents a scene from African-American life, therefore, Gwendolyn Brooks resists the monster—the dangers inherent in representation—by denying her reader completeness, certainty, and judgment, and by never allowing her poem to assume "an authority greater than the actuality it describes."

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Who's Listening? How Young Mothers Deconstruct Social Identities through Literacy

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Abstract

This paper was written for an Education Seminar taken last fall titled, "Social and Cultural Perspectives in Education." One of the requirements of the course was to submit a response based on the reading for a particular week. This paper is a critique of Wendy Luttrell's research methodology in *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds*. Although Luttrell is thought of as engaging in groundbreaking and revolutionary research, I argue she did not do enough for the young mothers she worked with. Luttrell studied them, but she did not provide them with any type of knowledge base or critical frame that may have incorporated the larger social and political influences affecting their situations.

Our voice is our most powerful form of resistance—it is our only form of resistance. Without the ability to articulate what is wrong with our present condition, revolutions would be a non-entity. Change happens when people step up to the political microphone and tell the world how they live and experience inequality. When people are heard, they feel empowered. Common goals and familiar experiences organize people around a collective purpose and vision. When marginalized groups advocate for equality, they embody a formidable force because their cause is justified by virtue of their human rights.

Young mothers who articulate their life experiences embody the forgotten hopes and expectations of their communities. Their friends, family members, daughters and sons are integral components of their collective mission to transform their neighborhoods, playgrounds and communities into the havens their ancestors fought and prayed for. For far too long, negative stigmas have shaped the public imaginary with demoralizing stereotypes of young mothers. Such denigrating labels have silenced young mothers causing many to internalize negative conceptions about who they are and what they represent. Nevertheless, while many may not feel entitled to uphold their cause in the face of public scorn and degradation, young mothers still engage in discourses that expose the injustices undermining their lived experiences.

In *Pregnant Bodies Fertile Minds*, Wendy Luttrell provides a group of young mothers with the opportunity to step up to the microphone and voice their personal struggles and concerns. Luttrell organized art and writing workshops that provided a safe space for the Piedmont Program for Pregnant Teens to speak their minds utilizing different forms of literacy. Luttrell does not claim that she "gave" the PPPT girls a public voice. However, Luttrell's use of art and writing projects created an atmosphere that enabled young mothers to affirm their identities and challenge the dominant images that misrepresent them in society. Many were also able to challenge cultural scripts that framed their outlook on their life experiences and personal struggles.

Nevertheless, as much as Luttrell accomplished over the course of her research project, her work stopped short of providing the young mothers with a broader social critique or opportunities of social action. Such a sociopolitical framework could have informed the PPPT girls how to be advocates and agents of social change in their communities.

Stigma Wars

According to Luttrell, the most prominent image of the teen mother in American society is the black, urban and impoverished female who is also likely to be the daughter of a young mother. She is also failing in school (or is on the verge of dropping out), has low self-esteem, resides in a low-income community wrought with drugs, violence, and all forms of social deviance, and now faces the daunting demands of motherhood (Luttrell 2003 5). Such representations speak to an array of discursive frameworks that have produced and substantiated stigmas of young mothers.

Luttrell identifies the "wrong-girl" frame as the most popular discourse that condemns young mothers' misguided motivations for having a child. This representation reveals a flawed image of a young woman whose motivations for having a child are distinct from older women's. These "flawed" teens are implicated for having babies for the purpose of fulfilling an irreconcilable need in their lives. The need to "receive unconditional love from a dependent object or to possess a love object to ward away depression" are two of the most prominent characterizations that corroborate the "wrong-girl" stigma (Luttrell 2003 27). Within this framework, teenage mothers possess individual flaws and shortcomings that promote attitudes, behaviors and actions that increase a young woman's likelihood for having a child. Attributing personal weaknesses to young mothers validates the belief that teenage pregnancy is something that

"happens" to specific girls who are predisposed to making decisions that inhibit their life opportunities. In effect, young mothers are portrayed as perpetrators of their own plight who make the wrong decisions when desperately seeking solutions to personal conflicts and difficulties.

The wrong-family discursive frame reveals another stigma that is commonly attributed to young mothers. Young mothers are perceived to come from dysfunctional families that are affected by myriad social and economic problems. Luttrell argues that the wrong-family frame conflates racialized and socioeconomic characteristics such that young mothers are perceived to come from the "wrong-black family" or families that are "welfare problems." Recent constructions of wrong families have shifted away from the black "wrong-family" model to the "welfare problem" model. Welfare reform legislation and the Personal Responsibility Act fuse the wrong-girl and wrong-family frames by targeting young women under 17 who have children out of wedlock. The Act emphasizes that these young mothers are more likely to go on public assistance, to spend more years on welfare, once enrolled, and are least likely to finish high school. These mothers are also more likely to have children that are of "low birth weight, low cognitive attainment, experience more child abuse and neglect and have reduced chances of growing up to have intact marriages (Luttrell 32 2003)." Such ideologies feed into the culture of poverty myth that focuses on individual's inherent shortcomings as the instigator of economic, moral, and social destitution. Welfare dependency is correlated to myriad negative characterizations that typecast welfare recipients as people who are unable to fend for themselves and who perpetuate the social ills plaguing their communities and livelihoods. In this way, "dependent citizens" are perceived to possess limitations that prevent them from governing themselves in socially productive ways.

Theorists who focus on class inequalities and oppression identify with the wrong-society frame. Feminists introduced this framework to problematize the "choice-making discourse" that emphasized the individual agency of young mothers. Proponents of the wrong-society frame take the focus away from the individual mother and examine how a young woman's environmental influences shape the decisions she makes over the course of her life. Luttrell affirms that such choices are often determined by socioeconomic factors such as "a girl's access to material resources, opportunities for sex, birth control methods and delivery systems, as well as the distinct cultural meanings associated with

sexuality and motherhood (Luttrell 30 2003)." Rather than affirming that these girls make "good" or "bad" choices, feminists highlighted the lack of resources and systemic inequalities that strongly limit the decisions young mothers make. Luttrell asserts that the environmental influences and circumstances under which choices are made and the unequal distribution of power between men and women constrain young mothers' life choices (Luttrell 30 2003). To ignore these critical factors is to neglect the how and why young women negotiate the decisions they make.

The final framework Luttrell discusses focuses on how young mothers reject negative stigmas that wrongly portray and oversimplify their lived experiences. The stigma-is-wrong frame illustrates how young mothers oppose representations that label them as "victims, childlike, welfare abusers or morally tainted" (Luttrell 31 2003). These characteristics speak to a dominant image of young mothers as inadequate and ill-equipped to be good mothers. The belief that young mothers are "bad mothers" is perhaps one of the most damaging stereotypes a young mother must consistently confront throughout her life. The "bad mother" and the "babies having babies" stigmas severely neglect the myriad socioeconomic influences that shape the life choices young women make.

For young women who have been forced to undertake adult responsibilities at young ages, the "bad mothers" and the "babies having babies" stigmas are inconsistent with the life experiences and capacities they have acquired throughout their lives. Young mothers, such as the PPPT girls, who embrace the stigma-wrong-frame, challenge the dominant perception that young mothers are bad mothers. Many of the PPPT girls in Luttrell's study affirmed that their pregnancies brought meaning to their lives. Having a child was the impetus for a positive self-transformation that would increase their children's opportunities for success.

Listening to Young Mothers Speak

In her book, Luttrell engages the PPPT girls in a process of self-affirmation that enabled the young mothers to challenge popular stigmas. Luttrell's art and writing projects enabled the young mothers to re-create themselves within the context of their immediate lives. In so doing, Luttrell created a space for young mothers to engage in a powerful, transformative discourse that silenced the public eye and enabled the PPPT girls to affirm their identities and challenge cultural scripts that dominate much of their life experiences.

Luttrell argues that there is an "inside story to pregnancy" wherein every mother imbues their pregnancy experiences with "personal feelings, hopes, memories and powerful unconscious mythologies" (Luttrell 5 2003). By encouraging the girls to explore the "inside story" of their pregnancies, Luttrell opened the door for young mothers to conceptualize their future opportunities and goals notwithstanding the public ignominy attached to their status as young mothers.

One of Luttrell's first exercises asked the young mothers to express who they are utilizing images and words as self-portraits. When the girls were asked to represent themselves in this way, they created self-representations that addressed and challenged the expectations and stereotypes of others. In addition, the girls were able to reveal the complexities of their worlds. Childhood, womanhood, motherhood, heterosexual romance, and consumerism were all recurring themes that illustrated their awareness of how race, class and gender dynamics have shaped their life experiences.

The media collages asked the girls to present themselves as they would like to be in the future. This project enabled the girls to engage in a dialogue that revealed the complexity of their social identities within media representations. Money was a dominant theme in their discussions on future goals and aspirations. According to Luttrell, the copious images of money pervading PPPT girls' collages demonstrated their awareness of the importance of money but also signified how far their reality stood from attaining these financial comforts. Luttrell affirmed that "money talk" exposes how girls construct their "worth" in contrast to mainstream notions of self-worth in society. Girls using images of glamour articulate a definition of beauty that strongly opposes white standards. To many of the PPPT girls, "looking good" meant possessing an attitude of self-confidence and control by "making what you got work for you." Their value was something to be achieved through their comportment, personalities and self-respect.

The "showing and telling pregnancy stories" was perhaps one of the most powerful projects Luttrell utilized throughout her engagements with the PPPT girls. The PPPT girls performed "pregnancy clinic skits" that engaged larger discourses that articulate the "problem of teenage pregnancy" in the form of negative stereotypes. Whether the girls re-enacted a visit to the doctor's office where nurses patronized and castigated them for their reckless behaviors, or recalled the moment they revealed their pregnancies to their mothers, the girls created alternative representations that complicated conventional stereotypes that oversimplify their realities. As girls positioned themselves within different contexts of their pregnancy experiences, many exposed themselves as victims of men's deceit, daughters who fear the disappointment of their mothers, and as decision makers who have not chosen the conditions under which they must make life-altering choices. Their roles in their parodies illustrate that girls are not entirely autonomous agents. The PPPT girls confront situations in their everyday lives that force them to challenge the stigmas and racial stereotypes that often belie experiences of mistreatment and subordination. The young mothers emphasized a need to learn how to respond to such situations while still maintaining their integrity.

The dramas depicted in the girls' self-portraits, skits and collages highlight how the PPPT girls resist and respond to negative stigmas in light of their ideology of motherhood. Constructions of the self and identity-making processes reveal how the girls negotiate their interactions with people who view them through a lens that is tainted with stereotypes and negative characterizations. In each of the exercises, the mothers represented themselves within a complex world where they face myriad challenges in their home lives and relationships with others. When Luttrell asked the girls who they were, they did not see themselves as pregnant teens. Although pregnancy was an important part of who they are now, the PPPT girls viewed themselves within a much more complex situation that undermined their decision-making processes. These representations confirm Luttrell's beliefs that in order to understand the "problem of teenage pregnancy" one must remove the focus from the pregnant teenager and examine the context in which she lives, the environmental influences she interacts with and the life experiences that have fashioned her outlook on her world and herself.

Research as Intervention?

America is terrified of young mothers because their experiences echo the sociopolitical consequences of racism and systemic neglect. Throughout her interactions with the PPPT girls, Luttrell exposes why young mothers are traditionally silenced. Their youth, energy, courage and motivation to secure more promising futures for their children compel the PPPT girls to engage in critical dialogues that reveal the breadth of their experiences. They speak the truth and tell it like it is when people are willing to *listen*.

Luttrell created a space where young mothers' voices were heard. Each workshop and project enabled the young mothers to own their public voices. Luttrell asked the PPPT girls to speak truthfully about themselves and their experiences. In this way, the PPPT girls were given the freedom to embrace who they are and silence the negative stigmas that have spoken for them for so long.

The young mothers' artwork and presentations emphasized that the "problem" of teenage pregnancy does not begin with the pregnancy. The PPPT girls' stories spoke to an array of environmental influences and experiences that have limited many of their life choices and opportunities. Nevertheless, Luttrell did not impart any knowledge base that would empower them to speak outside of their individual situations and communities. While Luttrell gave them a space to speak, she did not engage the young women in discussions that would expand their understanding of the greater sociopolitical forces framing the context of their circumstances. It is not enough to enable young mothers to affirm and embrace who they are. Young mothers are powerful individuals because of their position vis-à-vis their communities, schools, and society. Nevertheless, if they are incapable of seeing how they are positioned in society and why, their potential to affect revolutionary change remains suppressed. They must also be provided with outlets of support and guidance that encourage them to pursue their aspirations despite setbacks that have impeded their ability to dream—against restrictive stigmas that have doomed young mothers before they were ever given the opportunity to achieve.

I believe that individuals who are most directly affected by racism and institutional neglect represent the voices of a long-awaited political uprising. They represent the most threatening force in American society because their public voice is rooted in their life experiences. They are living testimonies that speak much louder than newspapers, journal articles, books, billboards, and seminar papers.

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Beyond Culture: Looking at Black English and Its Use in the Historically Black Institution

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The National Center for Education Statistics' study on the enrollment patterns of first-time beginning postsecondary students conducted in 1995–1996 showed a link between socioeconomic status and student enrollment. The study indicated that a little over 40 percent of first-time beginning postsecondary students enrolled in a four-year institution (25 percent at public institutions and 15 percent at private, not-for-profit institutions), while the other 46 percent enrolled in a two-year public institution. Twenty-five percent of the financially dependent students from families with incomes of $60,000 or more enrolled in four-year, private, not-for-profit institutions, which was considerably higher than the 16 percent of financially dependent students from families with incomes between $30,000–$59,999 and the 14 percent from families with incomes less than $30,000.

According to the Department of the Interior's Human Resources Office of Educational Partnerships (DIHROEP), currently "about 214,000, or 16 percent, of all African-American higher education students in the nation enrolled at HBCUs, which comprise three percent of all colleges and universities nationwide." Of these students, approximately 67% fall under the dependent student umbrella with a family income of about $30,000 or less, attending a two- to four-year institution. Furthermore, statistics verify that African-Americans comprise a significant sum of our nation's socioeconomically disadvantaged population. So, if African-American families comprise the majority of the nation's socioeconomically disadvantaged cohort, it is then plausible to purport that many of the students in these families would lack the necessary instruments and resources afforded to other students who live in homes with a higher socioeconomic status. Therefore, the point being made here is that African-American students make up a proportionate amount of underprivileged students represented in the educational system at historically black institutions. In which this is the case, there are still people who may refute that BE should neither be used in the classroom nor used as a tool to teach students Standard English; they may believe it to be substandard English and deem its use inappropriate for the academic setting. Because society holds Standard English in high regard as our country's official language or arbitrary language, those in opposition to the BE argument of this paper can, too, argue that the use of BE as a teaching mechanism within the classroom places African-American students at an educational disadvantage. The arbitrary standard refers to an agreed-upon way of talking within the Academy, professional workplace, et cetera (Fasold, 1999). If this is true, then one must revisit the mission and national standards of our higher education accreditation system set in place as a guideline for institutions in higher education to follow.

The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (COCSACS) is the regional body for the accreditation of higher education institutions in the southern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) and Latin America that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees. Accreditation by the Commission on Colleges signifies that an institution has a purpose appropriate to higher education and has resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain that purpose. Accreditation indicates that an institution maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that it is successful in achieving its stated objectives:

3.3 Institutional Effectiveness
> 3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

3.5 Educational Programs: Undergraduate Programs
> 3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.
> (SACS, *Commission on Colleges*, 2006)

SACS is explicit in its requirements for accreditation of southern institutions in higher education. The above objectives, especially **3.3 Institutional Effectiveness**, outline a few of several objectives the institution must adhere to in order to maintain its accreditation. These objectives, extracted from SACS handbook *Commission on Colleges*, are used in this paper to show the responsibility of the institution to provide a "qualitatively equitable" education for each of its students whether or not the student, rich or poor, requires some form of remediation. In other words, historically black institutions are required to create *effective* programs, courses, and syllabi that will improve the failing writing scores of their African-American students, to increase competency at the college level in a controlled use of Standard English. Historically black institutions have a responsibility to their students to make sure that the education an African-American student is receiving at Harvard is "qualitatively equitable" to the education an African-American student is receiving from Paine

College or Clark Atlanta University. So, in order to improve scores on college-administered and standardized writing tests distributed to African-American students at HBCUs, it is beneficial to use BE as an effective tool in teaching African-American students Standard English.

According to SACS, a first-time student enrolled in an institution of higher learning must be granted the right of remediation if said student qualifies. Upon completion of high school, all SACS accredited institutions require students to take a placement test during the summer and/or make a certain score on the SAT/ACT in order for college personnel to determine into what classes students are placed for the first semester of their freshman year. As it varies by institution, a study conducted by NCES on HBCUs (or Title IV degree-granting institutions) and their remedial course offerings showed that first-time postsecondary students needed more remediation in mathematics (71 percent), however, writing remediation (68 percent) did not fall far behind.

With a little over 100 HBCUs, this section will examine one SACS accredited historically black institution to marginally show that the HBCU remedial writing course(s) (according to the course description alone and not what is being taught in the class) does not acknowledge BE as a factor in African-American students' inability to use Standard English. The following historically black institution was chosen using the following criteria: coeducational, Title IV degree-granting, private, traditionally four years, and offers at least one remedial writing course.

Paine College is a fast-growing and developing historically black college in urban Augusta, Georgia. Founded in 1882, Paine is a private, four-year, coeducational, liberal arts college that prepares men and women for positions of leadership and encourages them to serve the African-American community, the nation, and the world. Its primary mission is to provide a liberal arts education of the highest quality that emphasizes academic excellence, ethical and spiritual values, social responsibility, and personal development.

In keeping with its mission, Paine's admissions personnel require students applying for admissions to have a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 or better and 16 credit hours of college preparatory courses from the high school from which the student is graduating. Although a specified SAT/ACT score is not required for admission into the college, all entering freshman students are required to attend the Summer Testing/Enrichment session. This event enables new students to take placement examinations, participate in advisement, and reserve fall courses for the onset academic year. If a student fails the writing placement test, he or she is required to enroll in the remedial writing course offered by the college, which focuses on cultivating students' written communications through "emphasizes on syntax and sentence structure, usage, diction, punctuation, mechanics, standard spelling, and grammar" (*Paine College Catalog*, p. 178).

Many higher education historically black institutions like Paine show that the remediation courses offered to first-time students focus primarily on a basic or intensive review of Standard English with no implications of a Black English focus. With approximately 30% of its first-time students enrolled in a remedial writing course alone, the implication of a need for a BE focus, or its use as an effective way to teach Standard English in the classroom, is great. This is not to say that the professors who teach these courses cannot choose to incorporate a BE focus for those students they identify as struggling with the usage of Standard English and BE. But this could be considered unethical in not keeping with the institutions' missions and quality enhancement plans (QEP). A QEP is a report required by SACS about the way in which the institution will improve to offer its students, faculty, staff, and administration a better and fulfilling experience. Consequently, the course description should explicitly state that BE is the focus or tool being used to teach Standard English to students who demonstrate that they have a need for remediation in writing with uncontrolled use of Black English.

Method

Participants

Twenty African-American students enrolled in the 099 remedial writing courses in the English department of a historically black college in southern Georgia volunteered to participate without monetary compensation or any other incentive. These students were either first-time or returning freshmen who failed the writing portion of the standardized placement test administered by staff members of the General Education Support Services program upon the students' enrollment and arrival to the college. They ranged between the ages of 18 to 20, and because the questionnaire did not focus on or ask the sex of each participant, there is no accurate number of how many students of each sex participated. Inasmuch, it can be assumed that there was an equal number of participation from both male and female sexes.

Materials

Using the Likert Scale, a psychometric response scale, a two-part questionnaire containing 20 survey questions combined was used. The first part of the questionnaire was comprised of 11 of the 20 questions, and it measured the degree of knowledge the participant had about Black English and his or her attitude towards its use in the classroom as a teaching mechanism. The choice responses ranged from extremities like "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" and its oppositely milder counterparts "Agree" and "Disagree" with a choice response of neutrality, "Neither Agree nor Disagree." In other words, the choice responses were as follow: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." The second part of the questionnaire was comprised of 9 of the 20 questions, and it measured the personal experiences and opinions of the participants' verbal and nonverbal Black English usage in the classroom. The choice responses in this section ranged from extremities like "Never" to "Always" to measure the degree of each response. All of the choice responses included in the questionnaire are as follow: "Never," "Seldom," "Often," "Almost Always," and "Always."

Design and Procedure

The questionnaire was administered one time each to two 099 remedial writing classes at different times and on different days. Ten minutes were allotted to administer and complete the questionnaire, in which the participants were made aware of their rights as voluntary subjects and taken through the survey step-by-step. Each participant completed the survey by him or herself in a quiet classroom without the conferring, interjection, or provocation of biased views by others.

The responses from each of the 20 questionnaires were then systematically coded by numbering the 5 choice responses 1 through 5 for both parts 1 and 2, and questions missing responses or those that the participant chose not to answer were assigned a "0" value. These were set up in a spreadsheet of solely numerical values from the responses and used in the SPSS Text Analysis software for surveys to generate a correlation between certain questions on the questionnaire. For example, questions 1 through 6 and 9 and 10 were combined and compared with the other questions from the survey since these.

Results

The hypothesis of this study states, "If a student wants to pass a writing exam or receive a passing grade on his or her class essay assignments, then the student will agree that his or her instructor should use Black English as a tool to teach Standard English." As stated before, the study consisted of a 20-question survey that measured the participants' opinions about, knowledge in, and personal experiences with Black English usage. Those students who strongly agreed with having heard of the phrase Black English or the term Ebonics equally agreed that Black English is its own language. Furthermore, the individuals who responded "Strongly Agree" to the belief that there is no such thing as Black English or Ebonics responded that they strongly disagreed about there being a distinction between Standard English and Black English; in addition, these same students disagreed with all teachers, who, teaching black students, should have a basic knowledge of Black English. Student responses that reflected a strong agreement to the idea that black students are incapable of speaking Standard English strongly agreed that there is not a difference between Standard American English and Black English. When asked if the student becomes frustrated as a result of a failing grade on an essay or writing test, the average answer ranged from "Almost Always" to "Always." Over half of these students said that they could not identify problems in their writings without the instructor's correction and approximately 70% of the students agreed that their written and verbal communication inside the classroom has made learning Standard English too difficult.

Discussion

There is no doubt an apparent dichotomy in the students' response to the use of Black English in the classroom with that of their personal experience with the use of Black English in their verbal and nonverbal communication in the classroom. Because of the unwavering aversion to the usage of Black English as a tool to teach Standard English by a majority of the survey participants, the hypothesis for the study was proven false. On the one hand, some of the students strongly disagree with the use of Black English in the classroom to help them learn Standard English because they do not see Black English as a language in and of itself separate from Standard English. These are the same students who disagree with the idea that both African-American professors and professors of non-African descent need to have a basic knowledge of Black English in order to culturally relate to and teach their African-American students. Furthermore, their abased view was reflected in their strong agreement to the question of black students being incapable of learning Standard English. In other words, it can be gathered from the presented data that many of these students currently enrolled in the 099 Enhancement Writing course

find no distinction between the way they speak and write compared to that which is being taught in the course; as a result, some even hold the belief that the way they speak and write is comparable or equivalent to or is the Standard English language. For this reason, 70% of these students are finding it extremely difficult to learn Standard English and 55% say that they cannot identify the problems in their written communication without the instructor's correction. So, if a majority of these students are having difficulties learning and mastering a controlled use of Standard English using the conventional way of teaching its basic principles, how much more beneficial would it be to the African-American student to use his language, Black English, and teach him the differences between it and Standard American English? This does not advocate the teaching of Black English to African-American students. The premise of this paper merely argues that African-American students are behind in their standard verbal and nonverbal communications; whether the factors for this cause have been self-inflicted or racially, culturally, and economically based is altogether unknown. The limitations of this study consisted of slight problems with the analysis of all of the data from the survey; so that which is reported in the results are accurately accounted for from the analysis. Also, the survey did not take into account the sex of the participant, his or her attendance record in the class, and his or her grade average in the course. These limitations could have answered many of the unknowns in this study as to why a majority of these students find it too difficult to learn Standard English and why over 50% of them cannot identify problems in their writing without an instructor's input. It can be determined, however, that these students require enhancement in their verbal and nonverbal communications and that this need, whether the student takes advantage of it or not, must be met.

EthniCities: Whites' Perceptions of Black Discrimination in Houston, Texas

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Alley Lyles is a native Houstonian and will receive her B.A. in Sociology from Rice University in 2008. The following is part of a larger work that took Second Place in the Association of Black Sociologists' Undergraduate Paper Competition. It is an attempt to add to the negligible amount of literature on the city of Houston. Before pursing her Ph.D. in Sociology, Alley will study urban sociology abroad for a year.

Abstract

This paper represents a summary of a larger study on the growing spatial and racial divide occurring between blacks and whites in Houston. The racial division between the two races shapes the unfolding racial and ethnic relations in the United States due to the significant roles of slavery, legalized segregation, and black-white conflict in our nation's history (Stoll 2004). Upon analyzing relations between blacks and whites in the fourth-largest city in America, a pertinent question arises: Do Houstonians' perceptions of racial discrimination against blacks differ based on factors contributing to an individual's move to the suburbs?

How are perceptions of discrimination against blacks a function of residential preference? According to Bonilla-Silva (2006:2), in America we live in an era of color-blind racism where "whites rationalize minorities' contemporary status as the product of market dynamics, naturally occurring phenomena and blacks' imputed cultural limitations." For my first factor, I evaluate evidence of white Houstonians' color-blindness in relation to blacks. The ideology of color-blindness elucidates that despite gains in social and economic mobility, residential segregation is no longer accomplished through overtly discriminatory practices; instead, covert behaviors such as steering minorities and whites into different neighborhoods, quoting higher rents or prices to minority applicants or not advertising all units are the means to maintain separate communities (Bonilla-Silva 2006; Massey & Denton 1993).

These forms of racial exclusion subconsciously socialize whites to acquire different perceptions of race from blacks. As Lewis (2004:640) ascertains, "Today many whites continue to live highly segregated lives having little meaningful interaction with people of color. They often are not consciously aware of the racial nature of their experiences and opportunities." Upon evaluating residential segregation among African-Americans and Caucasians, Bonilla-Silva (2006) finds that only a small number of his Caucasian subjects reported having resided in neighborhoods with a significant African-American or other minority presence (where minorities made up at least 20 percent of their neighborhoods). Additionally, the researcher finds that many of the white respondents attribute their segregation and isolation from blacks to being "just the way things are" (112). Therefore, the majority of respondents found highly segregated surroundings normal or unproblematic.

Bonilla-Silva (2006:123) concludes that "whites live in a white habitus that creates and conditions their views ... and, more importantly, fosters a sense of racial solidarity." Borrowing from classical social theorist Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus, the researcher defines "white habitus" to be a "racialized, uninterrupted socialization process that conditions and creates whites' racial taste, perceptions, and emotions and their views on racial matters" (104). I intend to evaluate whether white habitus may color—pun intended—whites' views of discrimination against blacks. This may account for some discrepancy between the assessments of whites in the city and in the suburbs.

How does white habitus develop? For the second factor, I argue white habitus is in good part a function of the places individuals choose to live. Habitus is formed in childhood, before choosing to live somewhere, then, as an adult this habitus guides people's choices and inclinations. Tiebout (1956) projects that in local governments people relay their preferences by "vot[ing] with their feet." To be specific, "the consumer-voter moves to that community whose local government best satisfies his set of preferences" (1956 418). With this implication he makes seven assumptions, two of which are applicable to explaining racial difference in views on ethnic relations in large metropolitan areas: (1) consumer-voters are assumed to have full-knowledge of differences among the revenue and expenditure patterns and to react to these differences, and (2) consumer-voters are fully mobile and will move to that community where their preference patterns are best satisfied. Based on Tiebout's assertions, it can be argued that movement to the suburbs is selective on social class and thus is selective on race.

I argue social class to be a third factor that influences an individual's perception of black discrimination. Those who are better educated have "full-knowledge" on how to navigate the housing market and how to scout potential home options; those with higher incomes are more likely to

"[willingly] pay for the provision of public goods or other characteristics considered 'desirable'" within suburban enclaves (Nechyba & Walsh 2004:183). Both explain why it may be probable that movement to the suburbs is selective on class as "these gaps between central cities and suburbs [are] created ... by the out-migration of the better off" (Drier *et al.*, 2001:39). Klineberg (2005) asserts that within the city of Houston, whites represent a larger majority in the suburbs. It is probable the pattern is a function of whites' higher income and better ability to navigate the housing market (Drier *et al.*, 2001); however, the implications of this group's movement into segregated subdivisions result in racial isolation that will inevitably impact their perceptions of social groups.

Once whites move to the suburbs, how might this result in the racial isolation that affects social interactions and perceptions of social groups? In *Strangers in a Strange Land*, Douglas S. Massey (2005) recognizes determinants contributing to the third set of factors: how suburbanites socialize upon arriving to the suburbs. The researcher contends that suburbanites residing in their respective enclaves "increasingly live and work within residential and job settings with others of similar education, occupational status and income" (147). In the case of Houston area suburbanites, interactions in homogenous enclaves could alter their opinions of ethnic relations in the more heterogeneous Houston proper. Approximately 49% of Houston's suburbanites say that the inner city is more likely to be a place where "people of different ethnic and economic backgrounds live in the same neighborhoods and interact in a social context" (Klineberg 2005:5). Because suburbanites fraternize among persons within their own social class, they may not empathize with those outside their social class who are residing in larger numbers in the inner city.

Massey's (2005) logic brings the theoretical analysis full circle. The researcher's rationale explains how dwellers choose to socialize in the suburbs after they have "vote[d] with their feet." Segregated socialization in the suburban enclaves re-emphasizes Bonilla-Silva's (2006) notion that we live in a color-blind society as a function of the social isolation within segregated residential enclaves. Ultimately, while segregation has long been a function of covert and overt practices of discrimination (Massey & Denton 1993), when asked to explain how this came to be, whites respond that it is "just the way it is."

Research Hypotheses

I investigate how these theorists' projections in all three sets of factors may influence Houstonians' (living in the city proper or the suburbs) perceptions of discrimination against blacks. Given how suburbanites' residence is selective on class and race, it is imperative that we study how these perceived factors—education and income (indicators of social class) and race (and its relationship to color-blindness)—may influence a Houstonian's perception of black discrimination. I examine how suburban versus urban residence impacts the difference in perception of discrimination between whites and blacks. Additionally, I examine how social class, which determines the likelihood of someone living in the suburbs, might explain the impact of residence.

H1: Where one lives moderates the impact of race *on attitudes.*
H2: Where one lives moderates the impact of class *on attitudes.*

Data and Methods

Klineberg's 2006 Houston Area Survey data was conducted in two phases: (1) the interviews for the basic random survey reached a scientifically selected representative sample of 765 Harris County residents and were conducted between February 13 and March 14, 2006; (2) the "basic" interviews were followed immediately by the use of "oversample" interviews, where identical random-selection procedures were used to enlarge and equalize the numbers of Caucasian, African-American, and Hispanic respondents at a minimum of 500 each. I opted to use the latter dataset in an attempt to produce results from a large sample size of whites and blacks in the Houston area. My final sample size only includes whites and blacks (504 and 503, respectively).

The dependent variable is perception of discrimination against blacks ("How often, in general, are blacks discriminated against in Houston?"). I collapsed my responses of the dependent variable into (1) "Never to Rarely" and (2) "Fairly Often to Very Often." The independent variables are (1) respondent's ethnicity (coded as white and black), (2) respondent's place of residency (city proper or suburbs), (3) education (less than high school, high school, some college and college or more) and (4) income (less than $25,000, $25,000 to $50,000, $50,000 to $75,000, $75,000 to $150,000 or more). Frequencies of each of these variables are shown in Table 1.

In order to ascertain the relationship for my research hypothesis—where one resides moderates the impact of race on attitudes—I will cross-tabulate the dependent variable with the independent variable and examine significant associations with chi-square analysis. Similarly, to evaluate the second research hypothesis—where one lives moderates the impact of class on attitudes—I will repeat the same procedure. Finally, to assess the net effect of race, residence and social class, I conduct a Binary Logistic Regression.

Results

Bi-Variate Analysis

For my first hypothesis, the association between race and perceptions of attitudes, a chi-square test was conducted to assess differences in whites' and blacks' evaluations of black discrimination in the Houston area (Table 2). The results of the test were significant, $(1, N= 912) = 39.39$, $p = .000$, showing that whites are more likely than blacks to believe that blacks are discriminated against "Never to Rarely" (34.4% and 17.2%). Although a larger percentage of suburban residents felt, independent of race, that blacks are "Never to Rarely" discriminated against, the differences in responses between those in the city proper and those in the suburbs are not significant (all tests were assessed at the .05 level).

For the second hypothesis, the link between perceptions of black discrimination and measures of social class (income and education), a chi-square test revealed the relationship between income and attitudes to be insignificant, $(3, N= 639) = 6.782$, $p = .079$. Within the sample data, the relationship between income and discrimination is not linear as people believed blacks are "Never to Rarely" discriminated against. Respondents in the lowest and highest income strata are more likely to believe that blacks are "Never to Rarely" discriminated against (29.6% and 32.0% respectively). Meanwhile, those in the middle strata were slightly less likely to have this attitude. Education was also not significantly associated with attitudes of discrimination, $(3, N= 909) = 5.209$, $p = .157$.

Multi-Variate Analysis

While overall the bi-variate analysis revealed no significant relationships between residences, indicators of social class and perceptions of black discrimination, it is an incomplete portrayal of my two research hypotheses. In my forthcoming multi-variate analysis, I adjusted for the influence of race on the effects of these variables in four models.

According to Model I, race strongly divided how people answered this question. Relative to blacks, whites are 2.65 times as likely as blacks to believe blacks are "Never to Rarely" discriminated against in Houston (Table 3). How does a Houstonian's residence impact the finding? To evaluate whether residence mediates the impact of race on attitudes, I controlled for residence in the city relative to the suburbs (Model II). Race proved to be the only significant factor as whites were 2.74 times as likely as blacks to say blacks are not discriminated against independent of residence in the suburbs or in the city proper. Residence has no significant association.

In Model III, I tested the second hypothesis, the connection between class (income and education) and attitudes independent of residence. Overall, as the respondents' incomes increase, relative to those in the lower income strata (the reference category), they are more likely to believe blacks are not discriminated against in Houston. Those respondents earning $25,000 to $50,000 are different from the lowest income category in that they are 0.61 times as likely as those in the reference category to perceive that blacks are not discriminated against independent of place and residence. Therefore, they are 39% less likely than the reference to state that blacks face no discrimination. In Model IV, when I added the second indicator of social class, education, it proved to have no significant relation to attitudes of black discrimination.

Discussion

The test results of the research hypothesis demonstrate that Tiebout (1956) and Massey's (2005) theories on how social classes self-segregate by moving out to outskirts of cities and how this may affect perceptions of black discrimination are not easily applicable to the current patterns of consumer-voters in the Houston area. This may be attributed to Houston's unique lack of zoning—it does not fit the conventional city model of Burgess' concentric circles (Burgess 1924). In Burgess' model, there is much more of a contrast in the differences of the homogeneity of the suburbs and the inner city. In the city of Houston, there is a great blurring of these "circles" that allows for some heterogeneity in the Houston area. Simply put, the data relay that the present trends are not clearly defined in this metropolitan city: the affluent and well-educated who "vote with their feet" and move to the suburbs are not more likely to perceive ethnics relations amongst whites and blacks to be different from those Houstonians residing in the inner city.

The fact these relationships did not emerge may be attributed to two factors, sample size and respondents' understanding of what parts of Houston are considered to be the suburbs and what parts are considered to be the city proper. Regarding the former component, the number of respondents (both black and white) could be increased; however, due to limitations of time and resources, only 504 Caucasians and 503 African-Americans were sampled. If more persons in these two groups were surveyed, the respondents' opinions have the potential to be further representative of the Houston community at large.

Respondents' understanding what areas of Houston are classified as the suburbs and what areas of Houston are classified as the inner city could be misrepresented.

Figure – Cross-tabulation:
Respondents' Residency (City Proper and the Suburbs)
and Respondents' Zip Code

| | Zip Codes | | | |
| | Inside 610 Loop | Outside Loop/ In the City | Outside City | Total |
Responses	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
In the City	94.4	78.2	30.0	65.1
In the Suburbs	5.6	21.8	70.0	34.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Houston-area survey only samples persons in Harris County.

According to the above table, fair percentages of respondents misunderstood where their home zip code laid with respect to the official city limits. These false impressions could have skewed the data results and the conclusions of my two hypotheses.

Every bi-variate and multi-variate test revealed significance in the race of the respondent. After accounting for the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, the multi-variate analysis showed that in each of the four models, overall, whites became increasingly more likely to believe blacks are not discriminated against in Houston. This finding sheds light onto the work on Bonilla-Silva (2006) and suggests the possibility that white habitus may be influencing the respondent's perceptions.

A lingering question arises: In the future, how might we begin to assess the existence of white habitus in the nation's fourth largest city? Rusk (2003) predicts that within the next decades cities will become increasingly elastic and will move away from nucleated cities (Burgess' model) to multi-nodal cities (Houston). Without theories to accommodate our evolving cities, race relations in the United States—and its global cities—will become increasingly difficult to study.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (n=912)		
Variables	Values	(%)
Race	White	50.0
	Black	50.0
	Total	100.0
Place of	City Proper	63.4
Residence	Suburbs	36.6
	Total	100.0
Education	Less than High School	6.7
	High School	20.6
	Some College	30.3
	College or more	42.4
	Total	100.0
Income	Less than $25,000	24.5
	$25,001 to $50,000	30.4
	$50,001 to $75,000	20.3
	$75,001 to $150,000 (or more)	24.9
	Total	100.0

Table 2. Bi-variate Associations: How Often Blacks Are Discriminated Against (n=912)

Variables	Values	Never to Rarely (%)	Fairly Often to Very Often (%)	Total (%)
Race[a]	White	35.4	64.6	100.0
	Black	17.2	82.8	100.0
Place of	City Proper	24.7	75.3	100.0
Residence	Suburbs	28.5	71.5	100.0
Education	Less than High School	30.0	70.0	100.0
	High School	27.0	73.0	100.0
	Some College	21.3	78.7	100.0
	College or more	28.7	71.3	100.0
Income	Less than $25,000	29.6	70.4	100.0
	$25,001 to $50,000	24.5	75.5	100.0
	$50,001 to $75,000	27.6	72.4	100.0
	$75,001 to $150,000 (or more)	32.0	68.0	100.0
	Total			100.0

Note: Row sums to 100%.

[a]*Denotes significant associations between corresponding variables and with response to "How often Blacks are discriminated against" according to a chi-square test (p.<.05).*

Table 3. Binary Logistic Regression of the Likelihood of Stating Blacks are Discriminated "Never to Rarely" (n=912)

Variables	Model I B	Model I OR	Model II B	Model II OR	Model III B	Model III OR	Model IV B	Model IV OR
Constant	-1.57*** (0.12)	0.21	-1.66*** (0.18)	0.19	-1.46*** (0.20)	0.23	-1.07*** (0.32)	0.34
Whites (ref. Blacks)	0.97*** (0.16)	2.65	1.01*** (0.16)	2.74	1.00*** (0.17)	2.71	1.08*** (0.18)	2.94
Residence in the City Proper (ref. Suburbs)			0.1 (0.17)	1.10	0.06 (0.17)	1.07	0.07 (0.17)	1.07
Income: $25,000 to $50,000 (ref. Less than $25,000)					-0.49* (0.22)	0.61	-0.45* (0.22)	0.64
$50,000 to $75,000					-0.30 (0.24)	0.74	-0.21 (0.25)	0.81
$75,000 or more					-0.12 (0.20)	0.88	-0.02 (0.21)	0.97
Education: High School (ref. Less than H.S.)							-0.29 (0.34)	0.75
Some College							-0.61 (0.33)	0.54
College or more							-0.59 (0.33)	0.55
Nagelkerke R Squared	0.063		0.064		0.073		0.080	

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. OR denotes Odds Ratio.

*p>.05; **p>.01; ***p>.001.

The More Peculiar Institution

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Introduction

The American institution of African slavery is a historical event that has received an abundance of attention in the scholarly realm, but, unfortunately, little attention has been paid to the enslavement of blacks by Native Americans. Although there are some scholarly works that scratch the surface of the topic, there are very few comprehensive studies in this area. In regards to the Cherokee nation, only two comprehensive studies exist: Theda Perdue's *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society: 1540–1866* and R. Halliburton, Jr.'s *Red over Black: Black Slavery among the Cherokee Indians.*

After European contact, the subsequent interactions between Cherokees and Europeans inevitably altered Cherokee culture, their worldview, and their daily way of living. The introduction of European technology, religion, and economic systems are several stressors that helped to facilitate an evolution in Cherokee society. Besides these tangible concepts that were intentionally introduced into the Cherokee way of life, there are also intangibles, such as the European cosmology that was ultimately foisted upon Cherokee citizens. The totality of these stressors, tangible and intangible, resulted in a sequence of events that ultimately culminated with Cherokee Indians practicing a form of antebellum slavery. The goals of this paper are to assess what factors were relevant to the adoption of slavery in Cherokee Society, as well as to attempt to pinpoint precise dynamics that characterized Cherokee slaveholding. The paper will also address some of the scholarly debate surrounding certain aspects of this topic in an attempt to advance the conversation regarding the disputed matters.

In the absence of racial heterogeneity, slavery cannot be based on racialized conceptions, thus neither skin coloration nor phenotypic characteristics were used to justify enslavement in Cherokee society. In fact the words "negro" and "slave" do not even exist in the Cherokee language, which suggests that they did not have an understanding of the concept of race, nor did they consider their form of bondage as slavery.[1] What was of significance in terms of who could be enslaved was the kinship bond. Those with the kinship bond had all the privileges of tribal membership, while those without the kinship bond had no rights and their owners had absolute power over them.[2]

The introduction of European capitalism further complicated the lives of the Cherokee and significantly contributed to how history unfolded. Before European contact the nation maintained its livelihood by hunting and gathering, and harvesting a small amount of agriculture, thus they were communal people that placed little emphasis on individual wealth or its accumulation. European capitalism created a market economy. Europeans brought a market for deerskins and slaves, while the Cherokee sought metal tools, textiles, guns, and alcohol. Ultimately, capitalism changed the basis of the Cherokee economy from hunting and gathering to trade. With the introduction of this type of economy it seems inevitable that they would abandon certain cultural practices. The most pertinent to the institution of slavery would be their abandoning the concept of necessity and the replacement of communal cultivation to that done on an individual basis.[3] In traditional Cherokee society farming ground was worked collectively by all the female members of the nation, and food was distributed to all members of the nation. They later abandoned this practice and Cherokee citizens began to farm individual allotments of land for themselves.

The More Peculiar Institution:
The Old South and in Oklahoma Territory

By 1800 Christian missionaries document that there were a significant number of plantations being farmed by black slaves in Cherokee territory.[4] On these plantations corn, wheat, cotton, and vegetables were being cultivated and horses, cattle, hogs, fowl, dogs, and cats were herded.[5] By 1835 only about 8% of Cherokee Family Heads owned slaves, so it would be fair to estimate that this percentage was even smaller in the early 1800s.[6] Nonetheless, much of what is known about early plantation slavery in the Cherokee nation is based on three of the wealthiest Cherokee planters of the time; John Ridge, James Vann, and John Ross.

The Trail of Tears during the late 1830s forced the Cherokee to abandon their native lands in the Old South and relocate westward to what is now known as Oklahoma. Like

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[1] R. Halliburton, Jr., *Red Over Black: Black Slavery among the Cherokee Indians.* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 4.

[2] Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866.* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 12.

[3] Halliburton, 12.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 191.

that of slavery, the Trail of Tears is a historical event that has received a fair amount of attention in the scholarly realm, but too often this story has neglected to acknowledge that black slaves endured the horrors of the Trail of Tears alongside the Cherokee. Nonetheless, blacks found themselves in a similar situation to that of the Old South. The move to a new territory changed little and Cherokee planters picked up right where they left off regarding slaveholding.

The comparisons of white to Cherokee slaveholders by former bondspersons typically portray Cherokee slaveholders to be the more desirable of the two evils. Many former slaves describe their Cherokee masters as having been "good" to them. Because there is a dearth of scholarship that treats slavery in the Cherokee nation, researchers can only look to the works of Theda Perdue and R. Halliburton, Jr. for documented scholarly interpretations on this matter. Interestingly enough, Perdue and Halliburton's position regarding the dynamics and brutality assume opposite positions. Perdue is of the belief that on average the Cherokee bondspersons were treated much better and with much more leniency than those enslaved by southern whites.[7] Halliburton argues that Cherokee slavery is quite comparable to slavery of the Old South in its exploitative labor, strong color prejudice, and restrictive slave codes.[8] Perdue and Halliburton do not disagree on all fronts. Perdue does concede that Cherokee slaveholders did require hard work of the bondspersons, but her contention regarding the brutality and the dynamics of the slaveholding contrasts with that of Halliburton's. It is understandable how Perdue would arrive at such conclusions regarding the brutality of slavery. She does acknowledge that this cannot be asserted in all instances, and she acknowledges "exceptions" which are the large plantation owners such as James Vann. The interpretations of the former bondsmen are probably the most valuable resource in terms of understanding issues of brutality and slaveholding dynamics. If this matter was to be judged solely based on these narratives one would probably conclude that indeed Cherokee slaveholding was much more lenient and much less brutal. Typically, the masters are portrayed in a fairly positive light and some even make comparisons between Cherokee slaveholders and their white counterparts.

Given that there was such adamant resistance to enfranchising blacks on behalf of the Cherokee it is difficult to assert with a fair level of certainty that their prejudice and treatment of blacks was typically better than whites. If slavery were to be looked at on a continuum in terms of brutality and

leniency, southern white slavery would be on the far end of brutality while the Seminoles would be on the far end of leniency, and the Cherokee would fall somewhere in the middle, but much closer to white southerners than the Seminoles. After all, the Seminoles had a history of intermarrying with their slaves, and when emancipation came the Seminoles adopted their freedmen, gave them equal rights, and awarded them full citizenship in the tribe.[9] This is quite the contrast to that of the Cherokee.

Since it is documented that the extent of physical brutality ranges the broad spectrum from profuse beatings to not knowing what a whipping was, generalizations regarding this matter are best avoided. Instead of explaining the brutality in terms of racial or ethnic generalizations (i.e., Cherokees were less brutal slaveholders than whites), it is more significant to look at environment, circumstance, and temperament to answer this question.

Historians and researchers of antebellum slavery have planted the concept of the "temperament of the master" as one of the significant indicators of the quality of life of a bondsman. Kenneth Stampp stated that all masters were not alike, and although some governed their slaves to submit with minimal force, others resorted to brutality to govern their slaves.[10] Stampp's point is extremely important to keep in mind regarding this matter. Like white slave owners, Cherokee slave owners varied in temperament and it is clear that passive, despotic, and those in between all existed. The question of brutality must also be considered within the context of the slave system in which the bondsperson lived. Living within the plantation system, the level of brutality and constraint that a bondsperson is subjected to was likely to be much greater than a single bondsperson living with a family. The constant fear of revolt, as well as the ardent quest to fully exploit the slave labor for maximum profit, resulted in a slave system characterized by a high level of brutality. Theda Perdue concedes that James Vann was an exception to the generalization since he enslaved with a high level of cruelty. It is significant to note that he was indeed a wealthy large plantation owner. On one occasion, Vann burned one slave and shot another after several of them attempted to rob him.[11]

Conclusion

Slavery within Indian nations appears to be a historical topic that has been largely ignored by scholars until recently. There have yet to be comprehensive studies on this

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[7]   Perdue, 98.

[8]   Halliburton, 142.

[9]   Ibid., 9.

[10]   Stampp, 142.

[11]   Perdue, 99.

subject for several of the other "Five Civilized Tribes" although it is well documented that each experimented with black slavery. Future scholarship should address these other nations, as it will be interesting to compare the dynamics that characterize each nation, as well as the uniqueness of how each nation's history unfolds. Theda Perdue and R. Halliburton's works on the Cherokee nation have provided a solid foundation in scholarship to begin the task of reconstructing this historical subject. Although much of their research confirms certain facts regarding slavery in the Cherokee nation, future scholarship should seek to resolve conflicting interpretations in the historiography of African-American slavery in Native American nations.

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Hikikomori Phenomenon in Contemporary Japanese Youth: New Start NPO, a Case Study

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Abstract

Hikikomori ("shut-ins") is a contemporary phenomenon in Japan in which *hikikomori* individuals socially withdraw from society, confining themselves to their rooms or homes for six months or longer, with no social life beyond their homes. As *hikikomori* has become increasingly widespread in Japan, a support industry has sprung up around it, providing programs to assist recovering *hikikomori* to reenter society. This paper uses ethnographic data collected from a support program run by New Start, a non-profit organization in Japan. While there are many factors associated with causing *hikikomori* behavior, this paper explores the phenomenon particularly in its relation to the social role of the family, gender in Japanese society, and the impact of rapid technological changes in contemporary Japan. Findings from this study suggest the importance for various social institutions such as schools, communities and families to become more educated in ways that earlier prevention efforts can be made by everyday individuals.

Today, an astonishing number of contemporary Japanese youth suffer from a syndrome known in Japan as the "*hikikomori*" or "*shut-in*" phenomenon. *Hikikomori* individuals socially withdraw from society, confining themselves to their rooms or living spaces for six months or longer, sometimes up to more than a decade, with no social life beyond their homes. *Hikikomori* has become a baffling public health problem that has grown to epidemic proportions in Japan; a report by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare in 2002 indicates that between 50,000 and 1 million Japanese, potentially 1% of the nation's population, are estimated to suffer from *hikikomori*, and 40% of this affected population are below the age of 21 (Watts, 2002). As *hikikomori* has become widespread in Japan, an industry has sprung up around it, providing support groups, online psychological services, and several halfway rehabilitation programs that offer dorms and job training.

This paper provides a case study of a particular support program called New Start, a non-profit organization based in the Chiba, Japan, right outside of Tokyo. New Start, founded by Futagami Noki in 1996, has dedicated itself to dealing with the *hikikomori* problem in Japan for over a decade, and provides several support programs to individuals and families suffering from *hikikomori*. This paper uses ethnographic data personally collected from a support program at a "halfway house" for *hikikomori* provided by New Start.

This study proposes to investigate what distinct characteristics of Japanese society enable this seemingly culturally-bound syndrome to exist in Japan and not in other societies such as the U.S. While the causes cited for *hikikomori* behavior are thought to be numerous, this paper explores the phenomenon particularly in its relation to the social role of the family, gender in Japanese society, and the impact of rapid technological changes in contemporary Japan.[1]

Methodology

The stigmatized nature of *hikikomori* can make it difficult for an outsider to investigate. However, I was able to volunteer at New Start, a nationally recognized non-profit organization dealing with *hikikomori* in Japan, which allowed me to live inside the facility for two months. Thus, this study provides insider perspectives of key informants who are involved with *hikikomori* on various levels. The data for this study was collected through an ethnographic approach, using recorded personal everyday experiences of volunteering and engaging with *hikikomori* patients and staff members as my qualitative data. My research combines ethnographic interviews, participant observation, surveys, literature reviews and media analyses, all of which I conducted myself in Japanese.

Findings

While academic literature on the phenomenon is still limited, previous media literature has discussed a wide array of factors attributed to the development of the *hikikomori* phenomenon. Factors range widely from macro-issues such as the economic affluence of the parental generation in contemporary Japan, to micro-psychosocial factors such as agoraphobia induced by personal traumas experienced through school bullying experiences (Rees, 2002). While identifying and discussing the entire range of factors causing the *hikikomori* phenomenon is beyond the scope of this paper, this study's findings highlight the roles of three social

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[1] This abridged version focuses only on one of the three factors, the social role of the family. The original provides a more developed discussion on all three factors associated with the phenomenon.

and institutional factors that contribute significantly to the development and persistence of the *hikikomori* phenomenon in Japan, while also discussing auxiliary tangential factors crucial to the discussion of the phenomenon.

Social Role of the Family

This study emphasizes the importance of the social role that family members play in all steps of progression in an individual's *hikikomori* behavior. To begin with, having a child who is *hikikomori* is often considered embarrassing for a family, and thus it is most frequently acknowledged as a private and internal matter within the family. Consequently, many parents wait a long time before seeking help from a third party such as New Start. While supporting previous literature and findings, this paper further reveals more detailed processes in which family relations and parental figures are critically involved in the development and strong persistence of the *hikikomori* syndrome.

Overall, the sheer importance of the role that family members play in a *hikikomori* child's behavior is evident in the various ways in which New Start integrates family members into every step of a *hikikomori* child's recovery process. A general trend is that at first, most parents hope that the child will eventually overcome his/her problems and reenter society by his/her own will. Over the years, however, it has become evident that family members' private internal efforts can be effective only for so long. After 6 months, if there are still no changes in the child's conditions, the amount that family members can do alone, internally, is thought to be very limited. At this point, seeking outside help is recommended in order for the child to reenter society with the least amount of time in social withdrawal.

Accordingly, New Start explains that the first step for *hikikomori* youth in reentering society is for family members to liberate themselves from feeling internally bound to solving the issues solely within their own family. They are advised to borrow some collaborative assistance from a third party member such as New Start. Through new encounters with someone other than close family members, the youth may realize his/her limits of accomplishing tasks alone, learn the importance of cooperating with others, and thus proactively work towards coming out of reclusion. Thus, New Start has established three fundamental steps as vital to a *hikikomori* resolution: (1) Visiting outreach efforts by "Rental Sisters/Brothers," (2) "Youth Communal Living," and (3) "Work Experience Cram School." The first of these efforts, the Rental Sister/Brother program, is the critical

initial step in drawing the *hikikomori* individual outside of their homes. Thus, the Rental program is the focus of this paper, especially in its relation to the social role of the family. By focusing on the initial efforts made by the Rental staff, this paper highlights the processes in which *hikikomori* individuals struggle within themselves and with their family members, in attempting to make their crucial first step outside of their homes and into society again.

"Rental Sisters/Brothers:" When *Real* Families Step Aside

"Rental Sisters/Brothers" are New Start's support staff who regularly visit *hikikomori* youth before their entry into New Start's facilities. After receiving phone calls from concerned family members with *hikikomori* children, these Rental staff begin sending letters to the youth to initiate some level of contact. Not surprisingly, Rental staff are often strongly rejected at first, but these staff members persist, spending careful and long periods of time to achieve some level of communication with them. According to a Rental staff member, "Despite initial strong rejections, [they] have generally been able to establish communication and to physically meet with the youth at least once within 6 months, 90% of the time."

After initial contact begins, the amount of time that it takes for different youth to be able to come out into the wider world ranges widely. While it cannot be stressed enough that each individual is different in their causes, symptoms, and backgrounds, my fieldwork suggests that there is a strong association between the length of time it takes for a youth to come back out into society, and the "push," or the level of self-risk that family members are willing to take in pushing their child out of their homes, to begin a new start in their lives.

Parents: They Talk the Talk, But Do They Walk the Walk?

While families are advised to seek help from a third party after six months of immobility, it is still necessary for parents to play an active role in giving a powerful push from their side, especially when it comes to critical times. Particularly when *hikikomori* children seem to be on the verge of change (assessed by the New Start staff), parents must be prepared to find the strength to openly communicate their expectations to their child, putting aside their fears of being hated by their child. However, it is often very difficult for parents to push their unwilling child out of their homes. Too often, the necessary push from the parental side is lacking in order for the *hikikomori* child to make their crucial first step outside of their homes.

A dominant theme that arose throughout interviews with various Rental Sisters/Brothers was that parents constantly spoke about needing help from outside sources in order to help their child out of reclusion, but their actions ultimately proved incongruent with their spoken desires. For instance, a particularly common theme is illustrated by an experience described by Misato, a Rental Sister who has been working at New Start for almost two years now. She describes her unsuccessful attempt at pulling a 19-year-old *hikikomori* male out of his recluse:

> I began writing him letters introducing myself, talking about my hobbies, and asking him what he liked to do, but I never got any responses for several months. After months of no response or communication, I called him at his home, but he wouldn't talk to me … almost everyone refuses to meet me at first, but I visited him at his house, anyway. Patience and persistence is the key to our roles as Rental staff. When I went to his house, he refused to come out of his room to see me, but I stayed in his house for several hours waiting for him to come out and talk to me. I kept going back weekly for about a month … I'm sure he was surprised and annoyed at my persistence. As time passed, the mother asked me not to come any more, because the son didn't want me to be in his home. When I went to their house, she wouldn't let me in the door, and asked me to go home. My efforts had to end after that.

Misato recalls that his mother had been the one who first called New Start and initiated the request, and that she constantly expressed deep concerns about his progress for a very long time. However, although she would constantly ask how her son's progress was going, she was never doing much herself to urge him to talk to the Rental staff from her end. She would always say, "I know I have to do something, but I am scared ...." New Start reports the abundance of these "scared" parents to be one of the most hindering aspects of the recovery process. In particular, mothers are frequently reported to worry extensively about being hated by their child if they urge them too hard to accept New Start's outreach efforts. Fathers generally tended to be hands-off in the process, leaving most of the pressure on mothers to advocate the change.

Overall, parental figures are reported as too often ineffective in pushing out children out of their homes, largely because of the co-dependent *amae* (indulgent dependency) relationship that parents and children create in Japan. Tamaki Saito, a Japanese psychologist specializing in the *hikikomori*, describes that one of the primary problems with rehabilitation and long stretches of isolation by *hikikomori* youth can largely be blamed on Japanese mothers who smother their child and allow for them to stay withdrawn in a nurturing environment (Rees, 2002).

Hikikomori Violence and the Family

When *hikikomori* first became publicized widely by mass media, sources reported several instances of crimes by "violent *hikikomori*," arguing that their loss of a social frame of reference may lead *hikikomori* to commit violent or criminal acts. These media portrayals have unfortunately produced a negative stereotype of *hikikomori* as dangerous and violent. However, psychologist Tamaki Saito, along with other experts, has maintained that violent behavior in *hikikomori* individuals is actually quite rare; *hikikomori* are usually too socially withdrawn and timid to even step outside of their homes, and thus are not likely to go into public to hurt others (Rees, 2002). At New Start, staff also explains that acts of violence are unusual, but that if they do occur, they are often targeted at their own parents. Ryoko, a Rental Sister of eight years, has recently become the resident specialist in *hikikomori* violence at New Start, as it has become an increasing problem seen in Rental staff's outreach efforts. Ryoko describes that violent acts towards their parents are most often manifestations of their own frustrations towards their inability to effect change in their personal situations. When increased hostility arises when parents persistently exert pressure on their child to come out of their room and meet with the Rental staff, children often feel betrayed by their parents and resort to exerting violence upon them. Ryoko explains that it is important to realize that these violent acts are "signs of desperate cries of help from these children," rather than deep-rooted hostility and hatred towards the parents.

In analyzing why these violent outbursts are often targeted at their parents, experts point to the "soft parenting" styles practiced by Japanese families, and *amae* in which Japanese children are raised to become so dependent on their parents that they grow to believe that their parents will ultimately comply with all of their desires and needs (Swith, 2000). Following this philosophy, when a child withdraws from society, parents can act in ways such that children can become even more reclusive in the presence of their parents.

Conclusion and Implications

Currently, the *hikikomori* adolescents are labeled as "problematic youth who have no drive to succeed" (Futagami, 2004). With various societal trends considered, it

is perhaps not surprising that a generation of Japanese adolescents have become hyper-sensitive and reluctant towards engaging with others outside of their own home. When individuals feel that their external social interactions are dominated by anxiety about others' perceptions of their external behavior, etiquette, or material and nonmaterial qualifications, adolescents have found it easier to simply withdraw from the overly judgmental outside society, and feel safer and at ease inside their own home, their "haven."

Findings from this study may have significant implications for the future of *hikikomori* recovery and prevention efforts. Building on this study, closer examinations of rehabilitating *hikikomori* individuals should identify patterns of how certain patients who recover quickly differ from those who exhibit a prolonged recovery process. This type of knowledge may help implement more innovative programs that may help reduce one's time in social withdrawal. Further, if findings can identify ways in which to detect problems at an earlier onset of the social epidemic, there may be potential for education and awareness initiatives for everyday people to aid their friends and loved ones on a more daily basis, before the symptoms reach crises level. Overall, it seems crucial for social institutions such as schools, communities and families to become more educated in ways in which earlier prevention efforts can be made by everyday individuals. This way, there may be higher chances of socially isolated individuals to be brought back into mainstream society at an earlier stage, with less detrimental effects in their long-term lives. Battling *hikikomori* certainly needs to be a personal, national, and global effort, and the implications of this study's findings aim to work towards enhancing such efforts.

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The Role of Space in *The Virtues of the Solitary Bird*

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Juan Goytisolo's *The Virtues of the Solitary Bird* ends with an ecstatic, though bittersweet, image of total spiritual liberation. The story's characters have at last been "freed from an illusory and sterile envelope, emerged from the oppressive hood and basket" and are now free to soar through the air as birds finding their way into the garden of paradise (155). The moment is thrilling yet saddening in the sense that, for these characters, the only way to escape from the confining borders of the material world to experience true love and unity is through death. In Goytisolo's text, space functions to demarcate exterior from interior, heterodox from orthodox. Throughout the work, characters constantly try to breach imposed boundaries in order to end the loneliness of quarantine, but usually fail. Borders prove insuperable until death, when people transcend space only to discover that they were one all along.

Characters are trapped in bubbles of loneliness, constantly reminded of their position of exteriority, or marginalization, in reference to the mainstream world around them. Goytisolo often makes these physical boundaries literal, as is most graphically illustrated by the case of the salon owner with the flaming red hair, who is trapped behind a glass wall as she dies a grotesque death, presumably from AIDS. Goytisolo writes: "emaciated, covered with buboes, all nails and hair, she scratched furiously at the walls of her bubble, trying to get out and contaminate the air we breathed, the doctors had put a cross on her charts and nobody was even taking care of her now" (33). He places the reader in the uncomfortable position of belonging to "we," laughing with cruel pleasure as she struggles in agony, completely alone. Thus we become aware of a division between the indifferent, mocking world of the healthy and the solitary suffering of the contaminated.

In a later part of the novel, Goytisolo probes more deeply into the salon owner's history, allowing us to understand her in a manner that reverses the earlier treatment of her character, where she is merely a spectacle to be examined from behind glass. We learn how, rejected by her family because of her state of contamination, her husband dead, she takes refuge in the space of the salon. There she consoles herself by playing the piano, attempting to drown out the angry voices which had condemned her. The narrator attributes special significance to the piano playing, later returning to it as follows: "did they listen to the piano, the melodic notes of the piano, the Sonata interpreted by her, muffled, remote, almost inaudible through the protective membrane of the bubble?/was she playing, playing expressly for me?/ I want to hear her, let me out of here this minute!" (137) Sensing that the piano playing is key to being able to understand and communicate with the salon owner, the narrator frantically pushes against her own boundaries, only to find herself trapped.[1]

Disease continues to structure the lines of exteriority throughout the text. It cuts across temporal divisions to link the characters in their experience of isolation. St. John of the Cross, the medieval author of the *Spiritual Canticle*, which Goytisolo is drawing on for inspiration, is confronted with his own contamination when he finds his jailers are wearing gloves and mask to serve him food:

> ... his eyes, on meeting mine, had in them for the first time an expression of forlornness and puzzlement/what was the meaning of those precautions, the cordon sanitaire placed about his cell by the Unreformed Carmelites? was his contagion also physical or, as he had believed up until then, merely spiritual? (76)

The passage emphasizes the importance of physical separation and its effect on the person who finds himself suddenly shut out from the rest of the world. Despite the fact that St. John epitomizes the struggle to leave the material world and achieve divine union with God, even he suffers when confronted with the outer world's marginalization of his body into a quarantined space.

Blood connects the characters from the two time periods, defining who may be allowed to exist in the outside world and who must remain indoors, the latter paralyzed with fear as they hide from the cruelty surrounding them. Victims of the Inquisition and AIDS[2] alike strive to prove their *pureza de sangre* in an attempt to cross to the side of health, but to no avail:

> ... obligatory appearance before the health authorities so as to be subjected to blood tests and discover those who bore the virus, removal of those who were sick in carts and cages to the stadium where they would perish at the stake, I had managed to

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1   I use the feminine pronoun here only for simplicity's sake, not to rule out the possibility of the narrator being male.

2   Though the text never explicitly names either the Inquisition or AIDS, I am inferring that they are what Goytisolo is referring to.

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bribe the director of a hospital to certify that my blood was pure, free of any sort of bad mixture or taint, a document testifying to my noble Christian lineage going back generations on all four sides but the hoax had been spotted by the vicars of the General Inquisitor and the inspectors proceeded to verifications in situ with computers directly connected to the data of the blood bank ....

As Goytisolo weaves between the modern, with computers and viruses, and back to the medieval, he simultaneously collapses and hardens borders, removing temporal boundaries only to underline the extent to which characters are trapped inside their marginalized locations, forbidden to traverse the public space represented by the street.

Nevertheless, Goytisolo does play with the flexibility of the rules governing exteriority and its imposition of loneliness. When the "queer birds" are caged and put on display for the mob to jeer at, the act of spectacle soon comes to overshadow and erase the humiliation they are supposed to endure (92). Filled with pride at their plumage and the spotlight that has been placed on them, they strive to enact to perfection the role of the bird as described in Sufi literature: "deliberately apart now from the hubbub and predictable denouement of the proceedings, we pecked at the birdseed ... practiced making our flights smoother, cleaner, more agile, communicated with each other by means of trills and warbles, ending up finding, unintentionally, the ineffable language of the birds" (92–3). In a rare moment of harmony, then, physical separation fails to have an emotional impact on the characters who, suddenly enraptured by their own beauty and (queer) sexuality, find that they can stretch beyond the limits imposed by the cages and achieve unity with their peers.

The author also constantly asks us to question the appearance of reality, whether we can accept the text at face value, as another way of subverting the boundaries that seem otherwise incorruptible. The elegant ladies who sit as though frozen in place, relentlessly rehearsing memories of the past, are clearly marginalized, exiles from the outer world. Yet they cannot even take comfort in this certainty as they begin to experience the uncomfortable feeling that they are actors on a stage, and the sanctuary they are hiding in is their theater, "that illusory stage whose audience was ourselves" (21).

In a similar vein, the hospital patient at the resort begins to suspect that he or she is on a theatrical set. Initial amusement at the uncouth sight of the "beachniks" turns to alarm as the artificial set is deconstructed: "what in fact were those beachniks doing there, rooted for hours in front of that violet-colored light that didn't even come from the pasteboard sun but from light bulbs cleverly hidden by the stage designer amid the arborescences of the make-believe grove of trees?" (57). To add an extra layer of unreality, the patient suggests that the preceding chapter, detailing the plague's slaughter at the salon, might have all been the effect of medication the narrator has been prescribed after a fall.

The text itself is literally demarcated to connote exterior and interior space through the use of parentheses. Throughout, Goytisolo intersperses paragraphs that stand alone, singled out by the parentheses that surround them. Particularly marked in the first section of the book, the grammatical usage creates the impression of an interior conversation, one in which the narrator has actually moved past the isolation one senses in other parts and found a group of friends to tell his or her story to, as in the very first interruption of the narrative: (no, don't start asking me about dates, what does a misleadingly precise month, day, year mean at this point, after what's happened?") (11). The parenthetical clauses also actively destabilize gender and identity—"she had provided herself (I had provided myself?)"—reminding the reader not to take their fixed nature for granted (25).

Through experimentation with a text's own interior and exterior spaces, Goytisolo questions how one divides space in order to assert certain stable realities, even going so far as to explicitly make reference to the confusion this is intended to cause: "were we living between parentheses once again, granted a temporary amnesty or was it the beginning of a vague new aggression like the one that had turned us into ghosts? none of us knew or wanted to know ...." (22). Binary ways of thinking lose meaning as the characters wonder out loud where they are living relative to the text, having eventually lost track themselves.

In addition to delineating exteriority from interiority and then subverting the borders between each, space also functions in important ways in its relationship with orthodox and heterodox practices. In the fourth section of the book, the narrator abruptly enters a space specifically designated to mediate and smother the harmful effects of heterodoxy— the library. This special room is the only place allowed for the "reading of insidious texts, carefully withdrawn from circulation and fallen into a just and lasting oblivion" (103). The narrator is once again quarantined, considered contaminated by his dealings with unorthodox treatises. While

informing him of his unclean status and asking him to remove himself[3] from ordered society, the spokesman for the library drones on, cheerfully insisting that he will have no problems because "we are, as the saying goes, one big family" (102). One begins to feel the grip of an authoritarian society close around the narrator as the spokesman continues, refusing to acknowledge the contradictions in the speech he delivers.

Yet heterodoxy is denied a space even in a library reserved for texts that are already marked as dangerous. As he begins his research, the narrator finds that "vituperations of hyena sodomite stinking Jew dirty the clean margins" of books, official propaganda has been layered over particularly troublesome passages, and other volumes have simply been hollowed out, left as mere shells (104). This violation is dramatized by a man, dressed in furs, who ignores the narrator's outrage as he calmly rips out sections of a book and replaces them with his own substitutes, pages handed to him by the people in charge of the library. Shortly afterward, the narrator condemns the "all-powerful ecclesiastical machinery" for warping the original message of the Church through their insistence on an orthodoxy that would maintain their own power, making it all the more necessary for the heterodox, books like that written by St. John, to survive in secret (109).

The end of the book can be read as an escape from this authoritarian world, where orthodoxy and the marginalization of its foes are all-pervasive. In the final section, the narrator finds herself (or himself) in "the Assembly of the Birds!" and realizes with delight that she has taken on the somber hues of the solitary bird from the *Treatise* (153). Whirling about the room, she discovers that she recognizes many of the book's characters in the other birds, and declares:

> reborn light and lithe, and in groups of thirty, as in the well-known Persian text, we were reading ourselves for the arduous and exciting journey ... where S., the ethereal, colorless and ecstatic bird that is an allegory for the soul that has forsaken the world in the visions and raptures of the saint reigns (155).

The "well-known Persian text" Goytisolo refers to is by the Sufi mystic Farid al-Din Attar, called *The Conference of the Birds*. In it, the author tells the tale of a group of thirty birds that sets out in search of a mythic bird, the Simorgh, only to eventually realize that s*imorgh* in Persian can also mean "thirty birds," and that what they were searching for

is, in fact, themselves, one united being.[4] Thus Goytisolo ends the book with a vision of transcendence over space, as the characters fly away together in a journey that will end in ultimate union.

The birds' triumph is tinged with sadness, however, for the only way for them to find love and happiness is to die. The material world they leave behind is still spatially controlled by an authoritarian power that defines the borders of marginality, separating people from each other behind glass walls on the pretext of a concern over contamination, both spiritual and physical. As the birds set off on their journey, then, they in a sense leave behind the reader to navigate this troubled space, alone.

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[3] Once again, the narrator's gender is unclear, so "he" and "she" could be used interchangeably.

[4] Information from class notes.

Reading Resistance: Acts of Resistance as the Creation of African American Culture

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Abstract

This paper is an anthropological interrogation of the past for the source of an African American culture. Finding it in an act of resistance in the Middle Passage, the paper goes on to discuss the significance of this act and how such resistance might be practiced today.

If the process of the dehumanization of African Americans began with the physical act of forcing captured Africans to board slave ships, where do we locate the beginning of the humanization process of African Americans? Is it possible that the creation of African American culture began in the mind as an act of psychological resistance against the dehumanization of slavery? The short answer to these questions is yes. The long answer first requires a review of previous arguments on the subject of African American culture.

Putting aside the racist assumptions that underlie the designation of African Americans as a "problem" to be "dealt with" or made to disappear once the most appropriate and sterile solution can be found, the arguments made about the historical and cultural content of the African American experience must be acknowledged in order to understand where, in fact, the roots of African American culture lie. The basic arguments about this culture can be summarized in the following ways: *Slavery has prevented African Americans from possessing culture* (Jackson 1986 98). This must be recognized as a genocidal tactic aimed at destroying identity and therefore dehumanizing African Americans; additionally, it operates under a limited, traditional definition of culture. *African Americans have absorbed Euro-American culture* (Jackson 1986 102). This must be recognized as a tabula rasa argument, which also denies the experiences of African Americans as separate or different from those of whites. This is easily challenged because, if African Americans have fully absorbed Euro-American culture, why are they not accepted into an indiscriminate American mass? *African Americans retain African culture* (Jackson 1986 97). This argument implies that culture is static and that African Americans are only retainers and not creators. Recognizing that enslaved Africans maintained and passed on a variety of African cultures through the process of raising their children, this paper aims to discover what cultural creations mark the birth of a new culture later to be labeled African American culture. Lastly, *the recovery of African and African American history would solve a key issue for African Americans: "self-confidence"* (Jackson 1986 104). This claim does not address the root cause for the need for "confidence." The true key issue for all oppressed peoples is humanization; but how is humanization achieved?

Melville Herskovits writes in a letter to Herbert Seligmann in 1928 that the psychological attitude of Blacks towards their own freedom is what has prevented their full humanization:

> It has been forced upon me that one of the reasons the Negro is under the handicap of as much discrimination as he is, is because he has never learned to fight back …. It is only the NAACP who have realized the fact I have pointed out … and it is undoubtedly due to their willingness to endure unpleasant situations and fight for a right rather than weakly give it up that has resulted, in large measure, in making the general white population not quite as ruthless in overriding the Negroes (as cited in Jackson 1986 104).

However, he later recants this position in response to other scholars who advance a hypothesis of "slave mentality." Jackson (1986) illustrates Herskovits' new position:

> … the slaves reacted to their condition with a "constantly active discontent." Slaves resisted through open revolt, sabotage, the practice of the *vodun* cult, and *marronage*. The maroon communities in the mountains had kept alive African traditions and had given hope to those still in bondage. Even when revolt proved impossible, slaves resisted psychologically by maintaining their African traditions (113).

I intend to argue that African American culture has its roots in such acts of psychological resistance against dehumanization, evident in the practice of "shipmate relationships."

If culture is the creation and maintenance of long-term institutions that serve the needs of the community that created them, we must understand what constitutes an institution. In *The Birth of African-American Culture*, Sidney Mintz and Richard Price (1976) reject the limitation of institutions to traditional forms (for example, the NAACP). Instead, friendship, love, clothing mending, and burial rituals are included under the definition of what constitutes a valid institution (23). Herskovits earlier asserted that only

traditional/organized institutions have effectively created change or inspired hope in the mentality of African Americans. However, if our definition of "institution" is expanded to encompass daily activities that took place *within* the bounds of a larger system (slavery), how are we to measure the potential and impact of these internal institutions on processes of social change and resistance (Mintz & Price 1976 39)? If these loosely organized patterns of social interaction qualify as institutions, what is the first identifiable institution of African American culture? And what does this creation mean for the development of African American culture in the Diaspora?

Mintz and Price (1976) identify the concept/practice of "shipmates" as the birthplace of African American culture. Despite the horrors of the Middle Passage, captured Africans on slave ships "were not simply passive victims" but engaged in cooperative efforts that have resulted in the creation of culture (42–43). This relationship is described as a "dyadic" bond developed through the shared experience of transport on a slave ship. This bond was so valued that the family of one shipmate was regarded as family to the other. In "That Event, This Memory," David Scott (1991) argues that identity narratives are created through selective shared memories that "transform the general past … into the significant past" (265). What would transform our understanding of shipmates from simply a temporary survival mechanism to a creation of culture? Mintz and Price (1976) demonstrate that long after Africans landed in the Americas they and their descendents continued to use the term "shipmate" as a social organization tool to refer to intense personal relationships built on shared experiences (43). Thus, the shipmate-practice marks the development of community through shared memory, therefore laying the groundwork for the creation of culture. Scott allots agency to diasporans by claiming, "[c]ultural traditions … are not only authored; they are authorized" (Scott 1991 279). By continuing the practice, African Americans authorize shipmate-practice as a valuable cultural beginning.

The development of the shipmate bond is decidedly an act of resistance. In Herskovits' later argument *against* the concept of slave mentality, he cites acts of psychological resistance against oppression as proof that enslaved Africans did not passively accept bondage. To resist meant to recognize that one possessed a definition of self and a worldview in direct conflict with a dominant narrative. The goal of the latter was an attempt to impose a definition of self on slaves and prescribe a worldview that facilitated the slave's further

dehumanization. In order to build a shipmate relationship, one needed to recognize the humanity of the other. This is an act of psychological resistance against dehumanization and against the colonization of our most life-affirming impulse: to love. If maintained and continued, the response of resistance expands beyond the personal to the communal, thus becoming part of the foundation for culture. To resist domination is to resist dehumanization. By creating culture, African Americans have claimed their humanity.

Can evidence for a resistance culture be found in the choice of a single word—"steal" or "take"? The following story illustrates the developing culture of African Americans:

> Phillippo recounts the story of a Jamaican slave caught stealing sugar, who denied repeatedly that he stole, insisting that he had only "taken" the sugar: " 'As sugar belongs to massa, and myself belongs to massa, it all de same ting—dat make me tell massa me don't tief; me only take it!' 'What do you call thieving, then?' 'When me broke into broder house and ground, and take away him ting, den me tief, massa' " (as cited in Mintz & Price 1976 39).

This record illustrates how resistance became a daily activity among enslaved blacks and while the game of loyalty is played at on the surface, the enslaved define themselves in opposition to the master class. Resistance became part of the repertoire of African American methods of acting and reflecting upon a "new world" that dehumanized them. To "take" the sugar in this instance is to humanize oneself, and the slave cleverly manipulates the slave system terminology to illustrate that the sugar in actuality belongs to him. Instead of saying that he works to create the sugar and that the sugar is owed to him, the slave reappropriates the oppressor's language to expose the inherent contradictions of slavery through a type of doublespeak that renders the truth acceptable to the slave master's ear.

If African Americans represent one diaspora community, how do we see resistance represented in other areas of the diaspora? In "Black Liverpool," Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998) describes the reclamation of a black identity among the blacks of Liverpool, England. Brown describes the experiences of young black people in Liverpool attempting to claim a black identity through the direct links of their families to Africa. However, African fathers were seen as "gatekeepers" who refused to impart African culture to their children despite their petitions (310). As a result, the young black people of Liverpool looked to Black America for the

formation of their black identity. By knowingly or unknowingly facilitating international productions of blackness, America became "the object of diasporic-longing"—despite black Liverpudlian's greater geographic and generational proximity to Africa itself (Brown 1998 310–311). Additionally, links to a black identity were complicated for women because they were rejected by black Liverpudlian men but pursued by black American GIs on nearby army bases (Brown 1998 307). One informant, Karen, described the creation of her black identity based on the productions of blackness available to her through America and she "suggest[ed] that the manufacture of seafaring as an invented tradition has compelled black Liverpudlian women to access black America as a counterhegemonic diasporic resource, one which they can draw upon to feel some respect for themselves—as black women" (Brown 1998 313).

In contrast to Africans who were *taken* to America, in another time period black women of Liverpool choose to *move* to America to access or actualize the full humanization of their black identity perceived to be unavailable in their country of origin. This quest for identity can be defined as an act of resistance because the move to America was executed in opposition to the dominant forces in their home communities. For example, one father said disapprovingly of his daughter's move to America: "It's not like you're leaving; it's like you're dying" (Brown 1998 315).

Although many of the expatriated women did not find what they were looking for in America, this does not invalidate the creations of identity based upon Black American productions of culture. In fact, it is the mere *hope* generated by such productions that allows blacks to continue the process of personal and collective humanization. Brown (1998) states that "[f]ew contemporary meditations on globalization pause to note the racially empowering practices which that process can enable" (317). Though not available in the article it is predictable that, as women continue to explore their black female identities both in Liverpool and in travels to America, shipmate relationships may develop amongst women who have gone and returned. This will be made possible by bridging similar experiences for the formation of a shared memory of the struggle to access an empowering identity. Additionally, the desires and experiences of these women will inform the creation of newer institutions that will facilitate transformations in the culture of the black community of Liverpool. While this culture creation will not be separate from the dominant culture of Black Liverpool, it will take place within that culture, just as

the creation of African American culture began *within* the bowels of the slave ship. This shall, in the words of Mintz and Price (1976), "[announce] the birth of new societies based on new kinds of principles"—principles that will hopefully embrace the humanization of all identities (44).

Where we look for culture is informed by our preconceived ideas about culture. My ideas about the black American past have been informed by my needs of it. If one intends to find sources of weakness to serve the greater goal of subjugation, they will be found. If one intends to find sources of empowerment to serve the greater goal of liberation they, too, will be found. It is a matter of privileging the humanization of people over the dehumanization of them. There is no one single narrative of how culture came to be; it is a weaving of many strands that forms the cloth of culture. It must be remembered that liberating narratives of the birth of culture cannot throw off the yoke of oppression, but, to varying degrees, identifying resistance as the foundation of African American culture has the effect of remaking black ancestors into active agents in the creation of history and culture rather than passive, accidental stumblers or mere survivors. If survival is all that is at stake, mold cultures survive. If humanization is what is truly at stake, and I think it is, we must recognize that people have the capacity to create and that culture is an intentional preservation of what is valuable: black humanity.

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Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj*:
A Dialogue of Competing Modernities

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This paper was written in a history course entitled History of Modern India and allowed me to combine my interests in postmodern theory, religion and history in a terse essay heavily influenced by my Mellon research.

In 1909, Mohandas K. Gandhi published *Hind Swaraj* outlining key ideas on civilization, religion, and the future Indian state. Carefully constructed in the question-and-answer format of a dialogue between an "editor" and his "reader," Gandhi's treatise attempts to refocus the conversation about Indian nationalism so as to incorporate a more profound cultural critique of the possibilities of modernity rather than limiting it to a discussion of independence from British rule. Perhaps one of the most intriguing threads that runs through the *Hind Swaraj* is Gandhi's understanding of how Indian culture and civilization relate to other parts of the world, most notably Europe. Gandhi portrays India as religious, traditional, and historically static, while the West is presented as technologically savvy, decadent, materialistic, and religiously hollow. Thus, we might be inclined to portray Gandhi as an anti-modernist obsessed with preserving the true, ancient essence of Indian identity. This analysis is superficial, however. Using Benedict Anderson's assertion that the nation is an imagined community, I will argue through a close analysis of Chapter 10 of *Hind Swaraj* that Gandhi's picture of traditional India is itself a product of modernity, and therefore his treatise actually offers two competing modernities.

Benedict Anderson's classic exploration of nationalism offers a theoretically sophisticated and historically nuanced perspective that differs from more conventional understandings of the nature and origins of national identity. Approached from a traditional standpoint, we might try to achieve the most accurate definition of "the nation" possible by employing various philosophical, political, and historical arguments, opinions and data to say, "Ah, yes, *this* is what nationalism means." Such an approach harkens back to Weber's quest for ideal types and a yearning for a more refined conceptual heuristic that asymptotically approaches true essence.[1] Anderson, to say the least, has a very different

and much less idealistic approach. He notes, as had many scholars before him, that such abstract definitions of "nation" are plagued by intractable paradoxes, paradoxes that make "the nation" a historically and philosophically "impoverished" concept.[2]

Instead of striving for some kind of innate theoretical or historical truth to which "the nation" refers, Anderson, in contrast, pursues a more anthropological path of inquiry, whereby he examines how "the nation" is constructed in a particular historical situation, namely Southeast Asia. He thereby frees us from approaching "the nation" from a perspective rooted in ideology and instead suggests that the origins of national identity and the ideological framework it constructs may be profitably investigated by analyzing three socio-cultural practices: census-taking, mapping, and museum-making.

Anderson's approach to nationalism provides interesting insight into Chapter 10 of the *Hind Swaraj* in which the "reader" asks whether the introduction of Islam would threaten the Indian nation. The "editor" responds in the negative. A nation such as India must be able to assimilate foreign groups, since a unitary, national identity cannot be made synonymous with a single, specific religion.[3] When seen through the analytical lens provided by Anderson's work, this short conversation reveals two sets of modern practices. First, the "reader's" question about Islam implicitly links social conflict to religious identity. Of course, this is not historically inaccurate considering the rise of religious distrust in early 20th-century India. What the reader does not recognize, however, is that this identity is not necessarily a fundamental marker of difference for people in the subcontinent. Human beings, in other words, do not naturally see religion as a particularly potent source of conflict any more than they might view language, ethnicity, or any other potential identity category as problematic. The question then becomes: if religion is no more likely than any other aspect of identity to become a locus of identity, difference, and conflict, how do we account for the historical conflicts that arose around religious identity and which inform the unspoken assumptions of the reader's historical imagination? The answer lies in understanding the cognitive force of the technology of the census and the parallel example of ethnic-racial classification in Southeast Asia. According to Anderson, "the real innovation of the census-takers of the 1870s was … the systematic quantification" of

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[1]   This is not to say that Weber would not have anticipated many of the definitional traps Anderson subsequently mentions in his essay.

[2]   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2006), p. 5.

[3]   Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (Ahemdabad, India: Navjivan Publishing House, 1909) http://www.mkgandhi.org/swarajya/coverpage.htm (accessed May 27, 2006).

these classifications.[4] Dutch colonialists were able to definitively say, "so-and-so belongs to this ethnic group," and, more importantly, "this ethnic group has, according to our arbitrary yet official and scientific standards, this many people."

Once human beings had been placed into an ethnic category and the magnitude of that category had been quantified, it was possible to organize a wide variety of institutions such as schools and to imagine ethnically or religiously based voting blocs. This process of reification would eventually lead people to forget that individual ethnic identity and, probably more definitively for Anderson, a sense of ethnic solidarity were themselves creations of modern nation-building practices rather than innate phenomena. When Islam and Hinduism encountered each other in India then, there was nothing particularly distinct about either one that would inevitably lead to a strong sense of belonging to this or that bounded religious community. It was rather through a historical process of census-taking and the eventual colonial policies and institutional arrangements of the British that religious identity became so central to the historical imagination.

The "editor's" reply disputes the reader's mistaken assumptions concerning religion. At the same time, he still operates within an idealistic framework. Let me explain. The "editor" rejects "inborn enmity between Hindus and Mohammedans" and instead argues that this hatred is "invented by our mutual enemy."[5] Religion is not the natural marker of identity that is the ultimate mark of difference between people. As Anderson shows, it is a colonial creation, "an invention" forged in the encounter between Britain and the subcontinent. The "editor," though, then begins to take an increasingly idealistic stance. He argues that the Hindus and Muslims are of the same blood and their religions lead to the same ultimate ends.[6] Essentially, one imagined community is substituted for another. Instead of essentializing religious identity as a marker of difference and postulating that religious communities are fundamentally at odds, the "editor" counters with a constructed community that is unified and national. "India" and "Indianness" are the true, essential markers of identity and solidarity. The "editor" refers to adherents of the two traditions as "brothers" and argues that the respective scriptural traditions really lead to the same end.[7] If we examine Anderson's analysis of map-making, then we may further deepen our understanding of the source of this nationalist thinking.

The creation of maps by colonial regimes was much more than a technical process of cartography. Instead, maps played a fundamental role in creating a geographically specific sense of identity and history. Maps of the subcontinent, for example, became visual representations of an imagined community, an ideal nation named "India." Instead of serving merely as tools for travel, war and commerce, the very shape created by territorial boundaries led people to begin to speak of a history of the place named "India." While in the past, individuals might have conceived their histories within the local frameworks offered by village or kingdom, in the modern age people, aided by maps, began to speak of an "Indian" history, with the language of nationhood ordering and arranging the historical imagination. Hence the "editor" subsumes the difference of religion, itself largely created by the practice of census and the reification of its categories in various institutions, into a unitary category of the nation of India that had been made possible by map-making.

In Chapter 10 and throughout the *Hind Swaraj*, it is easy to assume that the "editor" represents a return to India's past, while the "reader" is a superficial modernist who has fallen prey to the dangerous viewpoints of the current age. This epistemological and moral binary of "real tradition" versus a "false modernity" obscures a more fundamental similarity between the two speakers' views. Although they differ in their understandings of the meaning of reality, the sources of their thought, or we might say, the boundaries in which their imagination of reality is made possible, are fundamentally modern. Both the practices of census and map-making inform the encounter of Europeans and South Asians. Concerns of empire and rule, mastery and knowledge, push colonial powers like Britain to engage in specific historical actions that shape how subsequent people imagine reality and how they, in turn, structure, institutionalize, etc. Reality-making is therefore not really about discovery but about creation in which an act of imagination occurs. Although ostensibly concerned to portray and defend a "traditional" India against modernist threats, Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj*, especially in Chapter 10, achieves something more interesting: an opportunity to witness the clash of two modernities: a "modernity of difference" versus a "modernity of unity" and a mode of analysis that relies, in many ways, on the very categories and conceptual frameworks that it seems to reject.

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4 Anderson, 168.

5 Gandhi, 1909.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

Hitting the High Note: *Salseras* Challenging Patriarchy

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Pursuing a major in American Studies and Ethnicity with a minor in Psychology and Law, Adriana Resendez is embarking on her final year at USC. Adriana's research interests include but are not limited to women's migration patterns in the 20th century and the patriarchy that exists in salsa music. She is currently completing an honors thesis that studies the ways in which Guatemalan women identify after having immigrated from Guatemala to the United States. Adriana has a strong passion to learn more about the issues occurring in Central and South America. She would like to receive her doctoral degree in American Studies and Ethnicity or Latin American Studies. Before doing so, she would like to travel to Latin America and work at a civil rights organization. Her goal is to obtain a Fulbright grant to study the indigenous women in Guatemala that have been largely affected by gendered violence. After obtaining her Ph.D., Adriana would like to teach at a Tier One research institution and have the ability to give back to students.

Abstract

Cultural Studies in Latino and Latin America have resulted in the study of popular music. Contributors to this field include Frances Aparicio and Lise Waxer who have both distinguished themselves through their research in the gendered dynamics that occur within salsa music. Aparicio argues that although mysogony exists heavily through the lyrics of salsa, women have been able to create an opposing meaning through their interpretations. Lise Waxer provides us with an ethnographic study of all-women salsa bands in Colombia. In this way, she demonstrates the ways in which women have resisted their roles in a hegemonic world. Specifically, this research deals with the following questions: What is the role of women in salsa dance, performance and industry? How has this gender dynamic evolved in the trajectory of salsa? What can be learned from the experiences of the few *salseras*? The paper is illustrative of the male dominance that occurs in many aspects of salsa that has been highlighted by previous research. It attempts to make a contribution to the understanding of gender relations within the different dynamics of salsa.

On a recent night out with my girlfriends to a salsa club in San Francisco, a white man who insisted that I dance with him approached me. Not taking no for an answer, he took both my drink and coat from my hands and grabbed my arm to accompany him in a dance. Normally, this situation wouldn't fly, but for the purposes of my ethnographic study, I accepted. I quickly learned the male dominance characteristic of many aspects of salsa. For instance, my counterpart instantly rejected my sudden dance move, which I thought fit quite nicely: "No. I have to lead."[1]

What is the role of women in salsa dance, performance and industry? How has this gender dynamic evolved in the trajectory of salsa? What can be learned from the experiences of the few *salseras*? The opening vignette is illustrative of the male dominance in many aspects of salsa highlighted by previous research. This paper attempts to make a contribution to the understanding of gender relations in different dynamics of salsa.

Salsa music and industry is often referred to as a "man's world" according to most observers (Waxer 231). Males have dominated this genre of music and it was not until the mid-1980s that women were able to break through on an international level (Waxer 231). However, there have been influential women performers such as Celia Cruz, Rita Montaner, and La Lupe who broke through during the early stages of the salsa scene. Despite women's breakthrough, the patriarchal forces of the salsa industry persisted. How much agency did women entering this industry actually have? Although women continued to break through at different points of the development of salsa, they were still being controlled by patriarchy. Men still held the power within the industry and were controlling every aspect of salsa music. The patriarchal system that is embedded within salsa music was occurring through their production teams, controlling the ways in which they were publicized, writing their lyrics, and controlling the nightclubs. Through the course of my paper I will demonstrate how women *salseras* were constrained by industry and patriarchal boundaries. I'll also show how they were able to overcome these constraints through their own agency.

The fact that women were able to break into this industry acts as a form of counter-hegemony. In this paper I define counter-hegemony as existing through the performance and lyrics of women *salseras* who have contested male domination and have entered the public space. These women contested power and were able to perform in ways that had been historically taboo. Women to challenge notions of superiority, sexual conquest, and machismo utilized their public performances.

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[1] This experience reveals a whole other range of questions that speak to how globalized salsa music has become. Music provides the ability to reach across many boundaries; which is quite evident through current processes of commercialization and globalization. This anecdote speaks to male dominance as well as racial issues displayed by his white privilege being exerted and imposed upon myself, a Latina woman. Addressing these questions in depth requires a different paper.

I will outline my research beginning with the existing literature on the subject. These scholars' work will form the basis of my research and my secondary sources. An extended version of this project will also include my own primary sources through my analysis of an ethnographic study that was conducted through an interview as well as my observations of salsa clubs in Los Angeles and San Francisco, California. In addition, I will focus my analysis on La Lupe, who is known to have been sexually explicit in her performances and lyrics. I will argue that she challenges the patriarchal system that is set in place as well as overcoming other structural forces such as the morality in the Catholic Church. Given the length of time for this research project, I will be unable to examine salsera lyrics even though my intuition tells me that they would support my argument in that they are counter-hegemonic.[2] In the future, this paper will serve as the basis for an extended, in-depth research project of the male domination that occurs through salsa music and how women have contested this.

Literature Review

The rhythmic tunes that make you want to get up and dance is one of the reasons why salsa has become an international sensation. Lise Waxer described the history of salsa to have begun in Latino barrios that were largely focused in New York City during the 1960s and 1970s. The influence stems from the Afro-Cuban style of music generated in the 1930s–1950s and includes Afro-Puerto Rican sounds generated from North American jazz and rock (Waxer 229). Salsa lyrics were an outlet in which the working class in the barrio was able to express their to day to day concerns and experiences. For many Latinos, particularly Puerto Ricans, salsa had become an entrance into understanding and maintaining their culture in the United States. Salsa does not only provide a sense of identity for those from Puerto Rican backgrounds, but has also been a passage for people in other Latin American countries to make connections through music (Aparicio 43).

The form of identity that is created through salsa music is often a subject of interest for many scholars. Many researchers have focused on the racialization process that occurs through this music. Race relations and racial politics are embedded within the performance, lyrics, and music (Sawyer 2004). However, some scholars have chosen the less traveled road by focusing on the gendered aspect of salsa (for instance in lyrics, performance, and with audiences). While

there has been limited scholarship in the field, those who have contributed have been instrumental to advancing this discussion.

Frances Aparicio, perhaps one of the most influential scholars in this field, has focused on the patriarchal system that is set in place through all aspects of salsa. She argues that even though misogyny exists within the lyrics of salsa, this has also allowed women a space to act by "listening to woman and listening as a woman" (Aparicio 260). In this way, women are allowed to provide their own analysis of the very music that condones patriarchy over women and objectifies them. They are able to create their own meaning that might often oppose the message that is being transmitted through their lyrics. Aparicio's work provides a deeper analysis of how women are portrayed through the lyrics of music as well as within literature that parallels the hegemonic world of salsa music. Through this she depicts the woman as the Other, or how women are often sexualized and objectified in popular culture and mainstream patriarchy.

Although Aparicio's work has been critical to my study, she does not do an in-depth study of the art of salsa dance and gender. In addition, her work is limited when it comes to a deeper understanding of what occurs musically behind salsa lyrics. She instead leaves this up to the reader and encourages her/him to do their own research and analysis. A deeper history and contemporary discussion as to those women who have broken into the industry is lacking and would be beneficiary to include.

While Aparicio lacks in providing "all-women bands" that have broken out of the dominant structures that occur in salsa, Lise Waxer has done an in-depth study of the rise of all-women band groups through her field research in Cali, Colombia. Waxer begins by providing a brief history of the rise of salsa music in Colombia, which is a genre of music that does not necessarily incorporate Colombian rhythms but ironically became increasingly popular during the late 1980s (Waxer 230).

It was also during this time that the rise in "all-women bands" came into existence with different outcomes in the U.S. and Cali, Colombia.[3] Waxer exemplifies how these women have contested the structural forces that are in place through their entrance into a space that is male dominated. This is not to say that these women were not being produced,

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2   Cultural forms or politics that wrestle with dominant ways in which social life is organized.

3   While women broke out as "all-women bands" in Colombia, internationally they were prominent in their breakthrough as vocalists and instrumentalists (Waxer, 231).

managed, and significantly controlled by their male executives. Waxer does an analysis of whether or not women groups differ from male groups and how women have contributed to the production of new interpretations of "woman" in Colombian society (Waxer 233). Her ethnographic research allows for these women performers to assert the challenges they have faced when entering this public space. Waxer compares their entrance into this field with the entry that women have had within the national workforce. This public space has allowed agency for women's salsa bands that is an issue that has been detailed through the work of Rosa-Linda Fregoso. She assigns two categories to the rise of all-women orchestras with pre-commercial and commercial groups. The first was unique in that they did not negotiate their appearance and purposely wore baggy clothes while commercial groups had to negotiate their appearance under male management. Lastly, she focuses on the difference between *salsa romántica* and how it has allowed women to further contest patriarchal views that were not as easily represented in *salsa dura*. Some argue that women's entrance via *salsa romántica* is not an action of counter-hegemony. Conversely, I will argue, as Waxer does, that these women are using these lyrics to contest certain romantic ideas as well as demonstrating strength as an individual woman who does not need to depend on a man. For me, Waxer's work was useful because her ethnographic study concentrated on specific "all-women bands" instead of focusing on the dominant men in the field.

While Aparicio has contributed extensively, Waxer has also made substantial contributions to this field. Other scholars have followed but have not had the profound impact or deep discussion that these scholars have achieved. Patria Román-Velásquez included a section on the gendered aspect of salsa in her piece on the embodiment of salsa. Her short study on the gendered effects of salsa focuses on the primarily all-women group, *Salsa y Aché*, that is based in London. She critiques this particular group's identity that centralized their promotions around the fact that they were an all-women band. These women had an all-women brass horn section that originally began to perform at the front stage instead of their traditional position behind the vocalists and instrumentalists. They later discovered this to be impossible musically due to the fact that salsa bands need to be supported by their brass section while the vocalists or dancers take center stage. I have discovered an all-women brass horn section is a rarity and groundbreaking in salsa groups (Román-Velásquez 127). Román-Velásquez makes a distinct connection between gender and sexuality which later affected the band's performance. Her study includes those women who attempted to break into the industry but

were only wanted on the basis that they perform as background singers or dancers.

While her study is important in terms of gender, it does not accomplish its objective and provides a very thin analysis of gender. The section is limited and is not the focus of her work but must be addressed through a deeper analysis. Román-Velásquez addresses the sexualization of women in these groups but does not provide why these women were appearing to be "sexy." Were men behind their production teams? Were men in charge of their publicity? Were the women dressing in what is described to be "sexy" as an attempt to argue structural forces? These questions were left unanswered in her short analysis and definitely need to be addressed.

Women Denouncing Patriarchy Through Music

The early emergence of salsa music is most often referred to as *salsa dura* which comprised salsa music from the 1950s–1970s. Although there were women performers such as Toña La Negra in Mexico, Ruth Fernàndez and Mirta Silva in Puerto Rico, and Celia Cruz and La Lupe in Cuba and in the United States, these women have not historically been associated with *salsa dura* (Aparicio 175). There is a significant lack of scholarly research that includes women's presence within salsa music during this time period. It was not until the late 1980s that a softer and more commercially successful type of salsa music emerged—*salsa romántica*. Not surprisingly, this was also the same time period in which women began to significantly emerge on the scene. Although a break-off of *salsa romántica* known as *salsa erótica* does have lyrical content that objectifies women, I will argue that *salsa romàntica* provided a vehicle for women to agency to break through the salsa industry.

Salsa romántica allowed a space for women to enter a field through performance and opened a new sector in which women clientele increased. Salsa music was now being listened to by the middle and upper classes in Latin America as well as becoming commercialized at an international level (Waxer 244). This new genre of music allowed women the ability to speak on a subject that has often been silenced, they were able to protest against love and speak about their inner sexual desires. However, as Aparicio wrote,

> To sing to and about love from an individual viewpoint is much more socially acceptable and politically innocuous than to sing about those social issues that characterize salsa's thematic repertoire, such as migration, national identity, class, race, and gender itself.   (Aparicio 174)

Rightfully so, Aparicio comments on the issue of women's entrance into this field by recognizing its unthreatening position. The fact that so many women emerged out of a type of music that is romanticized does not discredit their entrance into this hegemonic industry.

Salsa has also worked as counter-hegemony, by deconstructing machismo within the genre. Aparicio's study included men's thoughts on salsa music in which they expressed the desire to be viewed in non-machista ways. They expressed how this affected the way in which Anglo women viewed them as Latinos. Thus, wanting to repeal the patriarchal roles that are displayed through salsa lyrics (Aparicio 205). *Salsa romántica* has done just that through the lyrics that men have composed in this genre of music. Lise Waxer writes how men typically engage in songs that consist of their "being left by a woman, and beg for forgiveness and reconciliation." Women performers, on the other hand, sing about being fed up with the insensitivity and philandering of their men, and having the economic freedom to cut him loose if she wants to" (Waxer 246). This sort of resistance proves that women are using this genre outside of its romantic context and instead using the lyrics as a form of objection. They are acting through counter-hegemonic ways by going against the stereotypical reference that often associates women as romanticists and weak in the respect of love. In this way, women are demonstrating their dominance through past romantic relationships in which they were empowered and not reflecting on an imperfect man.

Women's performance through *salsa romántica* challenges traditional gender roles that have been fixed through normative behavior. They are discussing issues that many women face within the private space and presenting them in the public space. Part of this economic freedom is also relevant to the growing workforce that also arose during the same time that women in the salsa industry emerged in significant numbers (Waxer 246). It is a new discovered freedom that is being protested against the times of the past in which women sometimes remained in abusive and intolerable relationships due to financial dependability. Furthermore, there have been women who have continued to contest fixed gender roles that exist within heterosexual relationships.

Women's entrance into this arena has allowed a new voice that speaks against heteronormative behavior. Albita Rodríguez, a self-composer, not only speaks about exile and nostalgia for Cuba, but has "openly erotic lyrics that can equally suggest lesbian love and homoerotic as well as heterosexual desire" (Aparicio 243). Her alternative perspective provides a space for this marginalized group of women who are largely not represented within the realms of salsa. It rejects a normative behavior that has been embedded by the morality of the Catholic Church along with governmental and cultural forces that have rejected same-sex lovers. It depicts different forms that exist through the Latina woman and therefore challenges cultural norms of what a Latina should be. Thus, placing the lesbian woman within a popular cultural form—music. In addition to contesting machismo perspectives, they are acting as women who understand and feel a different kind of love that does not involve a man. In these ways, Albita threatens social norms by speaking on women's issues that are not represented in any genre of salsa music.

It can then be argued that these women are contesting a larger political situation that has affected their lives. Although not an overt discussion, women's entrance into the workforce, lesbian rights, and abusive relationships connect to structural forces within the government. Some of these tensions are those that arose due to their social, class, race and gender. *Salsa romántica* may be a romanticized genre within salsa music, but it does not mean that these issues do not carry the same significance as those represented in *salsa dura*. We have to also remember that even though *salsa dura* represented issues that occurred through barrio life, they were being presented and composed by men. Therefore, the issues that affect women will not be the same issues that affect men. *Salsa romántica* has allowed agency for women to contest issues that are not represented and are particular to them as women.

Shouts of Pleasure and Defiance

A controversial figure in salsa music, Guadalupe Victoria Yoli Raimond, an Afro-Cubana otherwise known as La Lupe, emerged in New York City after being told to leave Cuba in 1961. She was known to have been very sexually explicit, extreme in her gestures and movement through her lyrics and performance. La Lupe is a figure who had a significant impact in salsa music, but, unlike Celia Cruz, was never given any credit for her influential impact within this arena. Time constraints will only allow me to analyze La Lupe's performance and how her audience perceived it.

La Lupe's performance broke through the patriarchal system that was set in place within salsa music. Her counter-hegemonic performances constituted performances that had never been seen and were not commercially advertised during the time. Aparicio and Valentín Escobar included Guillermo Cabrera's recollection of her performance at a nightclub that she performed at as:

The woman would hit and scratch herself, and later bite herself, her hands, and her arms. Unhappy with this musical exorcism, she would throw herself against the background wall, hitting it with her fists and with one or two movements of head, she would let loose, literally and metaphorically, her black hair. After hitting the props, she would attack the piano and the pianist with a new fury. All of this, miraculously, without stopping her singing and without losing the rhythms of that warm calypso that she transformed into a torrid, musical zone.

(Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 85)

La Lupe owned the stage and was not afraid of her extreme performances that allowed the music to take her. Her performances were also particular to her political protests as Cristóbal Díaz Ayala writes:

aside from being an intelligent and sensible singer, when she wants, she does in public what almost all of Cuba feels like doing, unconsciously, during those moments: scream, cry, scratch oneself, bite oneself, take off one's shoes, curse, indeed, break in some way the terrible tension that the transition from revolution to socialism demanded from each citizen day by day, hour by hour. La Lupe is a mirror of those times and, as such, she triumphs, and one day in 1961 she also flees Cuba ....[4,5]

La Lupe's performance depicted her protest against patriarchy and politics. Concretely, La Lupe grasped the power she had at center stage and defied her typical role as a woman. Her actions and her body served as a form of protest through her ability to control it, to act in ways that were un-feminized and were her own. She acted against the hegemonic system by placing herself as the controller through her performance.

Her body movements and gestures also served as a declaration of ownership through her sexuality. One of her performances in which feminist resistance was displayed was described as:

In "Canto Bajo" she combines English and Spanish to articulate erotic desire and sexually implicit gestures through a dialogue with the bass instrument. While she begins urging the bass to sing for her, she augments the degree of explicitness of her desire by alluding to touching the bass and putting her fingers in it. This quite particular song is, again, accompanied by moans, kisses, and oral gestures

that create a very erotic and highly suggestive experience for the audience.   (Aparicio 182)

La Lupe defied the structural forces existing in the morality of the Catholic Church as well as patriarchal forces. Aparicio confirms this theory when she writes that it is a "repossession of one's own body away from higher social powers, such as parents, church, and society" (Aparicio 151). In this way, La Lupe is performing in unconventional ways that speak to her sexuality and desires. She is protesting for all women and affirming that women may have sexual desires without feeling the guilt that the Catholic Church has instilled in many Latinas. She defies the lyrics that often objectify women as sexual objects and instead is taking ownership of her body and sexuality. She makes her body her own instead of being at the disposal of a male that can do what he wants with her. She expresses the right to know her body, the right to enjoy sex and affirms that women can enjoy their sexuality instead of having to hide it in guilt.

Furthermore, La Lupe's act in the public space displaces women outside of the private space. It allows sexual pleasure to be acted and felt outside of the home. Her performance defies the standard that women should remain virgins until marriage and have sex at the expense of the husband. Instead, she contests this hegemonic view by allowing women the space to act out their sexual desires in more than one way, to more than one person. It disassociates women from the teachings of the Catholic Church that define women as asexual creatures who should be aware of the dangers of impure thoughts and "promiscuity." Through La Lupe's performance, women are able to feel, to touch, and to express their sexual desires outside of the private space.

However, La Lupe's audience often expressed mixed perceptions of her unconventional performances. Negative critics have described her performance as "vulgar, cheap, and offensive," while a Puerto Rican woman from New York said, "*Cuando iban a dar un show de ella, yo no me lo perdìa*" (I would never miss any of her shows) (Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 84). Often her audience was described to have been "addicted" to her or was the extreme opposite and hated her. Regardless of who was in the audience, La Lupe's performance always served as a form of controversy. She displayed herself in untraditional ways and performed contrary to her counterpart, Celia Cruz. Aparicio captures the response to La Lupe's performance by saying:

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[4]   Ayala, 275; quoted in Aparicio and Valentín Escobar's piece as well as Vernon W. Boggs work.

[5]   Clearly, this response appears to be critical of Castro's political project in Cuba. In fact La Lupe at one point blamed Castro's government for losing her nightclub, vehicle, and money. The fact that an Afro-Cubana is critical of Castro's revolutionary experiment is worthy of further discussion in an extended research project.

La Lupe's chusma style indexed a very different social position for her listening audiences. Her subversive sexuality, along with her songs about illicit love, drinking, nomadism, and lack of social status, systematically articulated a bohemian, uncentered, and displaced identity. Such marginal location was both attractive and repulsive to many.

(Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 85)

However, her marginality and ability to confront issues that were not often represented also was the reason why so many people respected her.

The ability to speak against patriarchal and hegemonic forces often comes at a price for performers, particularly La Lupe. Her success has often been disassociated with not being her own and rather thanks to the men in the industry. One example was Tito Puente, whom she gives credit to but also acknowledges her own place by stating that he "had a lot to do with my growth in popularity. He did not create me. I have my own talent" (Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 90). She asserts that women are capable of creating themselves in an arena that is dominated by males. In this way, she disassociates her existence through patriarchal forces and gives credit to herself and her own talents. However, it was also Tito Puente who had the power to fire her and ultimately casted her out from salsa music altogether (Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 90).

Although La Lupe has not been provided credit for her profound impact in salsa music, she reclaimed herself as *la dueña de la salsa*[6] (Aparicio and Valentín Escobar 92). She claimed a title that was robbed of her due to the threat that she posed towards the patriarchal structure in salsa music.[7] She acted in ways that were viewed as a form of defiance and resistance against hegemonic standards that were the norm in salsa music. La Lupe acted through her own standards, creating new roles for women. Despite the salsa industry's attempt to silence a performer that contested their authority, La Lupe has impacted women performers such as La Duke and La India as well as being reclaimed by gay audiences. Therefore, La Lupe's performances show that she created a space for the Other through her forms of resistance and defiance against a system that left little room for women to fully control their own agency.

There has been a great evolution that has occurred within salsa music; however, the power dynamics of the dominance of men within the industry continues to exist. There are women who have managed to overcome these patriarchal forces and have entered the public arena. These women have acted as counter-hegemonic forces and have contested their positions in the private space. They have continued to break barriers by challenging musical lyrics. La Lupe and other *salseras* have used salsa music to express their sexuality, contest machismo ideals, and go against hierarchal structures that have constrained women to obtain a role in the private sphere. Women in the salsa arena will continue to hit the high notes of their own success and continue to fight for their presence to be heard within the salsa industry.

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6   An illustrative example of this is shown in her *New York Times* obituary that writes about her performance style but fails to acknowledge the challenge it posed to patriarchy. It attributes her success to Tito Puente as opposed to her own talents (March 7, 1992).

7   Self-proclaimed "Salsiologist," Vernon W. Boggs, attributes women's absence in salsa music to issues of race and class but is uncritical of the patriarchal forces that have marginalized and ousted women from the industry. He fails to acknowledge the more compelling reason why La Lupe disappeared from the salsa scene, which is Tito Puente's dominant male status in the salsa industry.

Toyi Toyi in the Volkstad: Getting a Taste of the Winelands When You Swallow and Don't Spit

Sean Samson, *University of Cape Town*

Sean Samson is studying towards his master's degree in Media Studies at the University of Cape Town. His research centers around the representation of people of mixed ancestry in South African media, and the impact this has on coloured (simply defined as mixed-race) identity formation. While studying, he has worked as a features writer at the popular Cape Town tabloid, The Daily Voice, *and as a production assistant and researcher on the television magazine show,* Top Billing. *The following pieces were requirements for a course in narrative literary journalism which aims to join journalistic works and longer pieces of creative writing in a non-fiction form.*

A Note to the Reader

The following piece was written after visiting the town of Stellenbosch, which is located about 30 minutes outside of the city of Cape Town. Known for its wine routes and beautiful scenery, the town of Stellenbosch proves popular with tourists. As a person of colour who resides on the Cape Flats, I had for years simply driven by the little town, until now. I chose to document my tour of the town of Stellenbosch because I had a hesitant fascination with it. It proved both interesting and … while the word "dark" would usually finish this thought, the truth is, it seemed "white," and this scared me. The huge University of Stellenbosch, which for a long time only taught in Afrikaans, and the vast farmlands which immediately summoned real narratives of farmworkers being paid with liquor, added to my sense of unease. This wine town had perhaps made alcoholics of a generation, and to me this Gateway to the Winelands was lined with the futures of many of my people. And so, my dear reader, it is with these feelings, fears and assumptions that I document my trip.

Oak-lined street leads into oak-lined street as if to keep pulling me deeper into the little town. Even as we move into the business district the shops seem inviting. The soles of your shoes too dirty to step on the pristine terraces, swept probably with reed brooms. Walls and trees become green and white against a blue sky, as if everyone had been told to colour within the lines. Stepping closer to this canvas we notice specks of red. Black men in red overalls, and like sergeants called to attention, in stiffened right arms, each of them held a stick. Not menacing, but if wielded with speed and force dangerous enough to cut. They are there to keep the peace, and to protect. To protect those who colour within in the lines from those who don't. A week before local papers reported that the town

had been ravaged by riots. Mostly black and coloured[1] workers from a major supermarket had been protesting their low wage. But for now they are kept in line by men in red overalls, against a backdrop of green and bright blue sky. I am left wondering if anyone else had noticed this, besides the beauty of the sweet little town.

The travel brochure, the tourist bible. "The town of Stellenbosch was started by a colony of settlers to whom land had been granted on the banks of the Eerste River." My eye scrolls down the page. "With its glorious scenery, close proximity to Cape Town, Stellenbosch is …." This isn't working. Stellenbosch is known for winelands and wine tasting. I swallow and don't spit. Stellenbosch is known for its rugby heroes. I don't watch or play. *Stellenbosch is the last bastion of Afrikanerdom*, educating the likes of Hendrik Verwoed, D.F. Malan, B.J. Vorster and Andries Treurnicht.[2] Stellenbosch, it seems was the intellectual HQ of the … ssshh, don't say it … Apartheid regime. Much of this is a mixture between history books and political propaganda, but it has been enough to keep me away from the town, its museums, its winelands, and friends who've left bohemian Cape Town. To head, it seems, where the trekkers who were too lazy to continue came to retire, breed, and start a wine farm. While this may not be factually correct, with it in mind, my companion and I head off to the "Gateway to the Winelands." At least there's wine. God, thank you, at least there's wine.

Cape Town has some visual evidence of its colonial past, and while name changes sweep through other parts of South Africa, Stellenbosch retains its past so willingly, with its colonial architecture. Despite my fears, my travel buddy, photographer and recent Stellenbosch convert, Lisa, assures me that's its not as bad as I think it is. I assume she's been brainwashed. I've decided to bring Lisa along for three reasons. She speaks excellent, *Noot vir Noot*[3] Afrikaans. She watches rugby. She loves Karen Zoid[4] and knows the words to all of her songs. Zoid, neo-Afrikaner rock chick, loves *Stellies* (as Lisa puts it) and plays there often. I love the fact that Lisa loves Zoid, so when the mob attacks, I'll force her to sing. Loudly!

My guide proves her worth as we drive through Stellenbosch. She calls out the names of different wine estates. I can't help but notice the large number of men on the side of the road. We're not in the developed part of town yet, so the sides of the road are dusty. Bakkies kick up a storm of sand as they stop every now and then to pick up

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[1] Simply defined as mixed race, but much more complex meaning referring to peoples of mixed ancestry. Also known as *bruinmense*, directly translated as brown people.

[2] Used here to refer to the architects of Apartheid.

[3] A popular Afrikaans language game show, based on knowledge of music.

[4] Afrikaans rock singer.

some of the men and then speed off. The advertisement for the estate Delheim makes Lisa and I laugh. *"Most people are related here."* But this tagline does bring across how close knit the town actually is. Lisa points out a traffic officer helping school kids cross the road from nearby farmhouses. They seem happier than I ever was going to school. As the sun rises it lights the hills in front of us. As if each blade of grass turns to greet the sun, and stretches, shaking off the sleep. It's as if God had flicked a paintbrush dipped in green. I understand why the kids are so happy.

The centre of the town seems cleaner than any other CBD I've seen. The buildings are uniformly white, without the coldness of a hospital ward. There's something about the colour white as soon as sunlight hits it. As if it swallows the light and throws it back at you, only brighter. An Asian man comes out of his little shop, looks up, stretches and steps back inside. There's almost a smell to the area. The cliché of freshly baked bread, or coffee just brewed. The town seems cliché. The sweetness that causes a cavity.

The Mystic Boer

We arrive at the most popular bar in Stellies. The Mystic Boer isn't an Afrikaner sporting a turban and a crystal ball but a watering hole that seems to double as an ode to the settlers of the past. Framed photographs of what used to be a black-and-white settler boy have undergone the Andy Warhol effect on the wall. In one, the boy is green with red hair, in another he's tinted yellow. The staircase has a collage of black-and-white images from the Boer War. Like our colonial past on acid. An old TV screen has been paused on an image that is both past and present, news reader Rian Cruywagen. His translucent skin stretched on high cheekbones, his hair perched on top of his head. Cruywagen alongside images of the settlers makes me believe that the Boer doesn't take himself that seriously. Perhaps he would wear that turban.

The soundtrack to this Mystic Boer is pop rock of the English variety. The singers, whose voices have barely broken, belt out lyrics of teenage angst and youthful rebellion. In line with the music, the waiters float around in the skater boy garb of trucker caps and board shorts. In the midst of this, Jurgen appears. His shoulder-length blonde hair frames a smiling face. Jurgen is a Stellenbosch native. The son of a farmer, he's doing his honours in psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. He starts every question with "So …?" "So you're doing an article on Stellies?" he asks. I give him a roundabout answer, afraid our discussion would

be limited to talk of drinking spots and restaurants. To my surprise, Jurgen seems more interested in talking about his Brazilian girlfriend. As our drinks arrive, he tells me that he's always either at The Mystic Boer or Bohemia. "They are the best places to party in Stellenbosch, and there's a good mix of people," he says. I wonder what he means by "mix." After a couple of drinks, both Jurgen and I work up the courage to ask each other what we wanted to know within the first minutes of our conversation. I ask him about Stellenbosch's history. His answer surprises me. "Look, I know that there are racist people out there. But just because Stellenbosch celebrates Afrikaans culture doesn't mean it's racist, and Afrikaans culture isn't just white culture. We mix with all people." Even though I don't see all people at The Mystic Boer, I believe Jurgen. Jurgen then asks me if I have a girlfriend. I pause, not because I'm afraid or ashamed, but because I fear the conversation might not go any further if I answer. "No, I'm gay," I answer. Strong enough to be unashamed but not overpowering. Then Jurgen surprises me. The blonde farm boy asks, "So … do you have a partner?" Jurgen has earned the right to be my drinking buddy.

Bohemia

Like The Mystic Boer, Bohemia sounds promising. I think about the mix so many people have referred to. Bohemia implies this. The interior certainly complies. Like a medieval tavern, the varnished woodwork gives sound to everyone's steps. The bar/restaurant looks half full but sounds packed. It seems to attract the skater boys of Mystic Boer but also girls in flowing skirts, helping the cleaners sweep the floor with their embellished material, and boys with piercings who smoke clove cigarettes and quote long-dead philosophers. Bohemian … in culture, yes.

My favourite part about Bohemia is that we order a large gourmet pizza and pay what we usually spend on a dessert. A small box of wine, enough for about three glasses, costs less than a glass back home, which probably comes from a box, anyway. The wine loosens Jurgen's tongue even further, and soon, "The Jew" arrives. Jurgen announces "The Jew"'s approach. Tamsyn's a Camps Bay girl; her tan proves this. She moved to Stellenbosch to study and decided to stay. Tamsyn does not speak Afrikaans. Tamsyn is not a *boeremeisie*. She makes this very clear. Her hand and mouth move in unison as she speaks. It's as if every time she rolls an "r," her hand makes a circle in the air. Her hair's pulled back tight, a no-fuss approach to styling, but her tight jeans and pumps channel the mannequins of up-market clothing stores. The blue in her belt matches the blue in her shoes. The white of

her vest matches the white of the jacket. The circular motion of her hand best showcases the little stone in a shiny setting on her ring finger. According to Tamsyn, you can spot a Stellenbosch native a mile away. She calls them *poppe*.[5] "Well, they all look the same. Blonde, tight jeans, perfectly manicured, and sunglasses." Did I mention Tamsyn's not blonde and she's not wearing sunglasses?

Tamsyn tells me that the "entire population isn't like that. There are some real cool people living here. Cape Town has a variety of people, but they tend not to mix. In Stellies, there's less of a variety, but people socialize. They live and breathe Stellenbosch. There's no reason to go anywhere else." There's that word "mix" again. I saw people of colour at Bohemia. They made my pizza.

Oom[6] Samie se Winkel

"The Jew" suggests that we see Oom Samie se Winkel, or rather, "Oh my God you have to check out Oom Samie." My eyes get used to being outside as we turn into oak-lined street after oak-lined street. There's a slight breeze carrying voices from what I find out is a nearby shop, the disturbance … a group of workers protesting. Last week they caused a "riot." Shop owners stand at their doors half out of curiosity and half to provide a human barricade to their places of work. The usual strolling tourists, shoppers, natives, stop and turn. No longer any white walls but red. Red overalls and wearing them black men with *riete*. My mother kept a *riet* behind her bedroom door, and despite threatening to use it never did. It still filled a 20-year-old with fear. I stop one of the men to ask what happened. Even though I ask in English, the black man answers in Afrikaans. "Die Shoprite werkers strike." Simple, really. He moves away, taking big steps in construction boots towards the supermarket entrance. I follow standing in front of the shop, but it seems the commotion is unwarranted. Where had the disturbance gone? My city brain looks down for signs. Blood, torn clothing, a smashed something. But there's nothing. Oom Samie's waiting.

"The Jew"'s directions were, "… go straight and then turn right," as always the dreaded, "you wont miss it." We forgive her as we ask for directions. "It's just down Dorp Street. No. 82 to be exact." The shop owner has done this before. To say that Oom Samie se Winkel looks like a Victorian wine dealer is an understatement. The wrought-iron arches form columns down to a wooden porch. On the steel bench, in his *kruisbanne*[7] pulling his pants so high his ankles are left exposed sits Oom Samie. The original *kort-broek*.[8] He doesn't move but stares into the distance as if expecting someone. Nearby Oom Samie is that little blonde girl in her blue dress. She's holding onto a red moneybox. I wonder if she's part of the recreation. Was she alive in 1904 and was she still asking for change?

We ring the bell to enter. The little iron gate opens and we step inside. Oom Samie se Winkel smells strangely like an Eastern spice market. I look at the lady by the counter; she stares back and then looks somewhere else. At the opposite counter, there's a graying woman, her shoulders weighed down by age, in a *blou trei*.[9] She returns my gaze. I ask her if I can take some photographs. She doesn't hear me, and continues looking at me as if waiting for words to come out of my mouth. *Ek vertaal en praat harder*.[10] "*Mag ons asseblief 'n paar fotos neem?*"[11] "*Wil jy net fotos neem?*"[12] she answers. "*U kan ons ook 'n bietjie van die winkel vertel,*"[13] I answer, and this seems to make her happy, almost but not quite taking the weight from her shoulders. Oom Samie se Winkel is excellent for little gifts. Good wine is stored at the back, but in front you can get different spices "*en konfyt wat so lekker op scones proe.*"[14] Just the smell of the shop, however, is comforting. The coffee and spices stimulates that same sort of anticipation you feel when a good meal's being prepared for you. I wonder who Oom Samie is waiting for?

Tamsyn has a spacious townhouse in Stellenbosch. She tells me the rent is quite cheap, but tonight the townhouse turns into party central. The guests are a *mix* of white and coloured. I suggest that we *braai* early to line our stomachs. Jurgen arrives with pork sausage. One of the girls at the party, Zelrese, hides it before Tamsyn sees. A group of blonde girls put music into the CD player. It seems their party has started earlier than ours as they gyrate to the music. Tamsyn has befriended some *poppe* after all. I sit and chat to Zelrese while Jurgen and Lisa stand by the fire. Zelrese speaks English with the preciseness of someone

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[5] Bimbo.

[6] Uncle.

[7] Suspenders.

[8] Khaki shorts stereotypically assumed to be worn by white farmers.

[9] Blue jersey.

[10] I translate and speak up.

[11] May we take some photographs please?

[12] Is that all you'll be taking?/All you want?

[13] Can you tell us a bit about the shop?

[14] "and jam/jelly that's very tasty with scones."

whose first language is Afrikaans. She pulls her hands towards her neck and throws her hair backwards as she answers. She says she realizes how some coloured people like myself look at people of colour from Stellenbosch, but we don't realise how much has changed, and the opportunities that exist there now. Since the town has an intensely Afrikaner past, it now gives opportunities to people of colour who show potential. I think about the kids I saw crossing the road earlier.

I ask Tamsyn and Zelrese about the riots last week. Zelrese tells me that nothing like that has ever happened in Stellenbosch and she's glad they've calmed down (another hair toss but this time tying the hair back). Tamsyn says that the CEO of the supermarket takes away millions every year while the workers get nothing and that the "riot" (using her fingers to make bunny ears) was blown out of proportion. Jurgen takes a sip of his beer and asks where we put the sausage.

A Stellenbosch morning's signaled by beams of yellow light on my face. Again I'm greeted by greenery brought to life by sun and breeze, but there's no time to appreciate. I feel that I need something greasy. Tamsyn suggests that we go to *Die Neelsie*.[15] I imagine a restaurant or street café, anything but a mall. The mall's devoted to students, but its prices attract the youth of the town and those trying to survive the morning after the night before. Through swollen eyes, I see a number of health breakfast spots (which I pass) and head towards a picture of bacon and eggs. We get coffee for R3.50,[16] and I get bacon and eggs for R13. Suddenly I feel like Jurgen as I chew in front of Tamsyn, but she doesn't seem to mind. I ask Tamsyn what happened to Jurgen. Apparently he left with Zelrese. I wonder if he called her "The Coloured" and if she replied with a hair toss.

Leaving Stellenbosch, the canvas seems green and white again. The wind has picked up, and the branches of trees seem to wave goodbye. I leave confused. The meticulously clean town has left me tainted. There's a tiny speck of contradiction on my mind. In the town I never really did find the mix everyone kept speaking of. But possibly by mix, the locals mean change, and that's good. Like all places in South Africa, Stellenbosch is changing. There's a youthful energy to the town within Old Dutch walls. A rock movement, punk movement, filled with young people who acknowledge The Great Trek and Afrikaner heroes but look at them through new lenses. Acknowledge the bad and celebrate the good, and it is them who keep the town alive. They aren't costumed in khaki shorts and long socks but at the same time are unapologetic for being. But I can't help feeling there's a price paid for perfection. From the Dutch gables of the buildings to the dusty soil, fertile enough for huge oaks, the town is living history, and as the population of the town grows, and more opportunities are granted, it is being rewritten.

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[15]   The Neelsie, a local mall.

[16]   Rand, SA currency.

Shaded and Jaded: The Social Perceptions of Skin Color (Blackness) and the Changing Image of Black Female Beauty Norms in Post-Apartheid South Africa

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Abstract

This research focuses on two specific areas of thought: the social perceptions of feminine beauty, blackness, and skin color, as well as the recurring shifts in the black African public consensus of the respective female beauty image norms. The former is examined within the context of post-Apartheid South Africa, while the latter is examined through the lens of African-based beauty pageants within South Africa and in a small number of African nations where there have been influxes in the contention between "Western-versus-African" beauty standards. Five interrelated themes are highlighted: the changing cultural status of "African" beauty; the hazards of adopting westernized beauty standards; the influence of marketing, publicity, and sponsorship of African beauty pageants on the development of African beauty ideals; a brief historical background and the modern existence of a select few prominent African pageants; and a behind-the-scenes evaluation of pageant participant trends. Through such study, it is found that westernized standards of beauty have infiltrated almost every dimension of the black African female beauty aesthetic, to the point that Western beauty standards have proven to be detrimental to the physical and emotional health of black African females, and have contributed to the deconstruction of "traditional" African standards while simultaneously recreating the literal face of African female beauty as one modeled after and symbolically "colonized" by the Western white female image.

Beauty itself is relative—or at least that is what so many of its subscribers, both supportive and critical, frequently claim. In many instances, the defining elements of beauty shift themselves between nations, recreate themselves in and throughout each varied location, and then reemerge, generally familiar and yet markedly different. Beauty, then, exists as a medium of both continuous and simultaneous change, as the social perceptions of beauty in one place shift at the same time, though often in a different direction, than the social perceptions of beauty in another. In such a way, the answer to the ultimate query—what *is* beauty—is, at times, as unique as the genetic combinations of those individuals who possess, according to popular culture, such a defining title. Nonetheless, enter here a second, more derivative series of questions: what is *African female* beauty, how is it defined, and who represents it? In such a specific instance, the context within which African beauty—and consequently what is *beautiful*—is viewed, however, exists under a more selective and Western-monopolized limelight; in a way, individuals are left to deal with the worldwide equivalent of the American "good ole boys" club, in this case, with a feminine beauty variation. Even more so, perhaps an apropos twist on a commonplace saying would express it best: *African female* beauty is in the eye of the *Western* beholder.

In this paper, I will explore two specific avenues of thought: the social perceptions of feminine beauty, blackness, and skin color, examined within the context of South Africa with regard to its Apartheid past and post-Apartheid present, as well as the reoccurring shifts in the black African public consensus of the respective female beauty image norms, examined through the lens of African-based beauty pageants, both within South Africa and in a small number of other African nations where there have been pronounced and noteworthy influxes in the contention between "Western-versus-African" beauty standards. Additionally, throughout my exploration of both areas of thought, I will highlight five interrelated themes: the changing cultural status of "African" beauty; the hazards of accepting and adopting westernized beauty standards; the influence of marketing, publicity, and sponsorship of African beauty pageants on the development of African beauty ideals; a brief historical background and the modern existence of a select few prominent African pageants; and finally, a behind-the-scenes, foundational evaluation of the pageant participants themselves. In the end, I hope to bring well-supported truth to my belief that westernized standards of beauty—epitomized in this case by the feminine image of the white majority—have infiltrated almost every dimension of the black African female beauty aesthetic in South Africa and its surrounding nations. Such infiltration has subsequently taken place to the point that Western beauty standards have proven to be detrimental to the physical and emotional health of black African females, and have contributed to the deconstruction of "traditional" African standards while simultaneously recreating the literal face of African female beauty as one modeled after and symbolically "colonized" by the Western white female image.

"Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall …":
The Assimilation and Acculturation of Western Beauty Ideals

Both the assimilation and acculturation phenomena within the United States are often referenced as part of an aptly titled "aesthetic sabotage" that went on during—and even before—the nation's birth and infancy. This "aesthetic sabotage" served as an ever-present reminder of a degrading and demoralizing historical past linked directly to slavery—a sabotage that succeeded in simultaneously discrediting both black hair and black skin (Arogundade 30). South Africa's "aesthetic sabotage," though not a direct link to slavery, instead presented itself as a direct link to another institutionalized form of racism: the system of Apartheid.

As is true in all institutionalized systems of racism, a hierarchy must exist; whether based upon socioeconomic status that translates itself into social status, or simply the hue of each individual's skin, ranking of the population occurs nonetheless. The system of Apartheid did not escape such a rule, and skin color firmly dictated its hierarchal stage when, in 1948, it was formally instituted by the Afrikaner Nationalist Party, lending an official name to a previously established, almost three-century-old existence of the skin color hierarchy. As self-appointed members of the ruling class, the Dutch colonizers of South Africa—not-too-far removed from simultaneous English rule themselves—established themselves squarely at the top of the skin tone-based system, removed from lower-class admission and accessibility by a hierarchal glass ceiling, as well as the public perception that white skin reflected "a certain purity, innocence, and status" ("History," Schuler 3). Over time, the ascription to white status by lower-classified racial groups—including (in hierarchal order) Indians, Coloureds, and black Africans—led to a complex existence and series of demoralized identities for each group, epitomized by varying degrees of four descript characteristics: assimilationism, relative privilege, negative connotation, and marginality (Adhikari 8–17). As "skin color is significant to both status and identity" (R. Hall 126), the recognition of each group's respective lower-class position has taken hold and manifested itself into a plethora of emotional wounds, the sentiments of which are expressed best in one childhood rhyme:

> If you're white, you're all right.
> If you're yellow, you're mellow.
> If you're brown, stick around.
> But if you're black, git back!
>
> (Hobson 8)

As such, the pursuit of perfection, of recognition, and of beauty has outweighed all else in the futile quest to be "white" and "all right."

Dying to Be Beautiful:
Skin-Lightening Creams and Western Influence

More often than not, the desire for straightened hair takes a back seat to the desire for a lighter complexion, as so many "African ideals [of beauty] are increasingly based on images peddled by the white, Western world," and "Eurocentric ideas of what is beautiful have been pervasive thoughout the globe, in particular in the case of Western-dominated women"—in African societies, especially (Schuler 1, R. Hall 127). Skin bleaching, as it is described dermatologically, is the application of chemicals to the face—usually found in creams that contain mercury, steroids, and the harmful chemical hydroquinone—that reduce the melanin content in an individual's skin (R. Hall 128). The effects of such creams have been linked to a multitude of health issues, from blotchy, peeling, and scarred skin to convulsions, asthma, leukemia and other forms of cancer, liver damage, brain damage, fetal complications in nursing and pregnant women, and even death (R. Hall 128, Jenness 1, Mahe 495, "Tanzania" 1). Though the health risks of such skin-lightening creams are well known to both men and women today, the actual removal of creams from store shelves and the prevention of the smuggling of the illegally hazardous creams into South Africa are both problematic setbacks; without the adequate manpower to combat either issue, certain stores will continue to sell the potentially deadly creams, and darker-toned individuals who put the quest for lighter skin above their own health will continue to use them—a reality that could cause these individuals both the future of their skin and their lives (Jenness 2).

However, despite the fact that many of these harmful skin-lightening creams have been banned in South Africa and other surrounding nations, the issue is not so much the creams themselves but the psychological pressure to be lighter that is of consequence. In many African nations, including South Africa, black African women are often told that if they "want to look beautiful, then [they] have to look like a white person and to look like a white person [they] have to use [skin-lightening] creams" ("Tanzania" 1). The essential devaluing of black skin, however downplayed, occurs daily, both as residual effects of the Apartheid system and as influence from outside, Western sources: television shows, movies, magazines, and books all perpetuate the hierarchal framework in which possessors of white(er) skin hold the highest power.

The Black Body Aesthetic:
Modern Body Image and the "Hottentot Venus"

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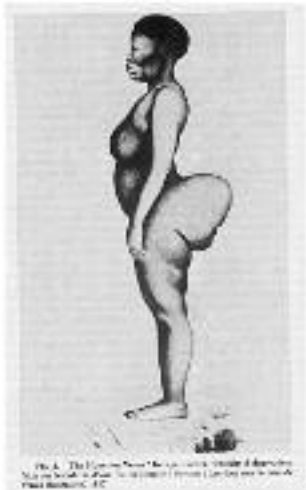
On the far left stands the pictorial representation of South African native Saartjie "Sara" Baartman. Standing only four feet eleven inches in height, Baartman came to represent "both the presumed ugliness and heightened sexuality of the African race" during the early 19th century. As she was paraded across Europe, "touring" as a "freak show" exhibit in both England and France, Baartman came to be known not by her talent, beauty, or intellect, but instead as the ultimate antitheses of the white female body and beauty—the "Hottentot Venus"—and as a figure that has tremendously shaped both historical and contemporary "representations of blackness and beauty" (Hobson 1–2, 5).

The central photograph—depicting the quintessential and seemingly normative African female body, according to the observations of many white and Western counterparts—directly correlates with the "characteristic" African buttocks, epitomized by the portrayals of the Hottentot Venus herself. Once hailed as a normative marker of traditional African beauty, the sizeable female backside came to be seen as an abnormal affliction in Western culture, and even garnered the medical term "steatopygia" which, in essence, classified the "protruding buttocks" as an unsightly disability that afflicted all black African women (2–3). Simultaneously, such a label brought light to the staggering reality that allowed—and continues to allow—black female bodies to be "judged by their physical attractiveness and evaluated in comparison to standards of beauty based on white supremacy" (7).

Even today, it is the common perception that "black bodies exist as a 'deviation' in comparison with the 'normative' white body"; the white female body is still put forth as the ideal, meek, feminine image of beauty, while the black female body—with its characterizable sense of physical power and strength—exists as both a masculine and freakish form (10–13). Sexual deviance, as well, is attached to the black female body, especially when compared directly to the white feminine image; the usual portrayal of the scantily clad female "native," as well as the exaggerated descriptions and illustrations of overly enlarged, phallic-resembling genitalia—the "Hottentot Apron"—dealt striking blows to perceptions of black African women as beautiful and sexually desirable (as opposed to sexually deviant) figures (Magubane 817).

On the far right, however, stands Ethiopian-born model Liya Kebede. The one and only black model to represent cosmetic giant Estée Lauder, African or otherwise, Kebede is the new face of black African beauty—she *is* the "new" beautiful black African woman that so many females, both young and old, see and aspire to when they open fashion magazines, watch television advertisements, and idolize the winners of national and international beauty pageants. She and a number of other black African models, fashion, and beauty icons are all that so many African women wish to be. She also bears the weight of another title, however: she is one of the many faces that are killing African female youth.

With a new image of African beauty comes a series of ways to reach, obtain, and epitomize that image: diet clubs, cosmetic surgery, and other hair-straightening, skin-lightening products are "in" and represent only a few of the lengths that South African females are going in order to be "beautiful."

WeighLess—the South African equivalent to America's Jenny Craig dieting association—proudly proclaims that it has over 4,000 black African members in Johannesburg alone, as it is now "embarrassing to be a fat African mama" and the "healthy, independent woman who looks good" is now in fashion (Schuler 2).

The quest for weight loss, however, has taken a drastic and devastating turn, as "young black women are becoming [more and more] dissatisfied with their body image as a result of the social, cultural, and political changes" that have taken place in South Africa since the end of Apartheid ("Eating," Littlewood, "Western"). Consequently, eating disorders among black Africans are on the rise, despite the fact that seven years ago, "eating disorders among African women were unheard of" (Schuler 2). According to a number of scientific, psychological, and sociological studies conducted in South Africa, including a study regarding eating disorders in South African female youth, it has become apparent that

> black female emancipation at both a political and socioeconomic level has occurred rapidly and without either historical precedent or meaningful mentorship, thus creating circumstances that may increase vulnerability to identity seeking through weight and shape preoccupations leading […] to abnormal eating attitudes and the […] development of eating disorders.   (Szabo 43–44)

In another study that compared the eating attitudes and behaviors of South African Caucasian and non-Caucasian college students, it was concluded that "black subjects demonstrated significantly greater eating disorder [attitudes] than Caucasian, mixed-race, and Asian subjects" (Le Grange 252).

Additionally, the Western images that the South African media peddles to its consumers are a major part of the problem, as those same images are "contrived in a very northern Eurocentric notion of what constitutes beauty, desirability and femininity," and a significant number of black women are "revoking their cultural standards to follow the Western images of beauty" (Mlangeni 3). As studies have shown, the "traditional and cultural perceptions concerning body size [equate] being overweight [with] many positive connotations in the African community in South Africa," and the introduction and perpetuation of Western beauty and body image norms are often even more detrimental to such South African populations (Puoane 1044). Consequently, the "fat black woman's body is triply removed from the West's

conceptualization of normalcy" when it comes to beauty standards: she is overweight, she is black, and she is a female (Shaw 151). In an attempt to copy the often-unattainable Western body images that they see, black South African women are continuously partaking in the process of "rejecting the traditional African socio-cultural norm of plumpness and [become increasingly] frustrated at being heavier than the Western norm dictates (Mlangeni 3). In essence, black South African tradition and culture are no longer beautiful—and neither are its subscribers.

New-Age Pageantry
Marketing, Publicity, and Sponsorship:
Behind the Blank Check

So much of South African society is accustomed to the public face of the African pageant world: the taller-than-most, skinnier-than-most, paler-than-most female who many South Africans, and the African public in general, refer to as "a white girl in black skin"—the one who clashes directly with the "average African woman, [who] is robust, has big hips, [and] a lot of bust" (Onishi 2, Sboros 1). The pageant world, however, is concerned with neither the "average" black woman, the "sell-out" perceptions of the winners, nor the detrimental effects on the black African female who ascribes to such visions of beauty. To every bit of negative press and criticism, pageant producers continue to give the same unspoken answer, as fewer—if any—"traditional" black women are chosen, and those who are seem almost unrecognizable to the general African public: their goal is to *win*, and it is a well-established fact that "black African women have little chance of winning an international competition in a world dominated by Western beauty ideals" (Onishi 1).

Since the reinstatement of South African beauty pageants in the 1960s, contestant representatives who are sent to the global pageant stage—participating in competitions such as *Miss World* and *Miss Universe*—have looked less and less like the black women in the South African public. The first black winner of the *Miss South Africa* pageant, Jacqui Mofokeng, emerged in 1993, only one year before the official end of Apartheid. Since that triumph, the black winners of the *Miss South Africa* pageant have failed to resemble the South African black female public, with little more authenticity than those molded under the heading of Western beauty—light skin, straightened hair, and thin frame included.

The question then becomes, however, why more traditional forms of South African beauty aren't being

showcased on the pageantry stage. With a plethora of potential contestants, the issue is not based upon numbers; it is instead a matter of judgment. In Nigeria, the *Most Beautiful Girl* pageant originally attempted to showcase representatives of local beauty, sending the winner of the local pageant to the *Miss World* competition each year—and each year, the local winner came back with an international loss. Then, in 2000, Guy Murray-Bruce—the executive director of the local Nigerian pageant and publicist for the *Miss World* pageant—instructed judges to look, not for a "local queen, [but] someone to represent [Nigeria] internationally" (Onishi 1). The translation: look not for a representative of traditional, local beauty, but for someone who matched—and could compete with—the Western ideals of feminine beauty.

Directors of the *Miss Swaziland* pageant adopted a similar strategic mindset, implementing a "public relations-minded effort to send a Swazi envoy out into the world to show that the small kingdom can compete with the greatest when it comes to female beauty," and as a result, "the pageants have naturally followed the tone of the other pageants worldwide" (J. Hall 1–2). Though some pageant events allow contestants to showcase talents and "accomplishments in local culture," such talents are still strictly regulated, as pageant producers have acknowledged that they "keep in mind that the [contestants] will be performing in international pageants," and therefore make sure that the young women "don't do anything too far" outside of the realm on international (and Western) acceptability (2).

Other African pageants, including those on a much larger and more expensive scale, reflect similar Western-geared beauty values—especially contests backed by Western sponsors. The *M-Net "Face of Africa"* pageant, established in 1998, is backed by a number of Western supporters, including Nokia, M-Net—and electronic media network—and Hilton Hotels, among others. Issues have erupted around the pageant—established as a continental model and talent search—when a white South African woman was selected as one of the pageant's finalists. Black African critics of the situation "insisted that the 'Face of Africa' should be an African face, not a white Western one," and "accused white people among the organizers and judges of not taking black sensitivities into consideration" ("Namibia" 1-2). Though the success of the contest has "catapulted more African models into the world of haute-couture, glossy magazine covers, stardom, and international catwalks," issues still surround its winners and its intent; despite proclaiming that the goal of the pageant is to highlight African beauty, previous winners of the pageant still represent Western beauty standards (Musoke-Nteyafas 1).

Similarly, the *Miss Malaika* pageant, established in 1999, has been producing African female beauties since its contests began in 2001. Instituted to showcase the "beauty of African origin," the goals of the pageant include the promotion of African Renaissance through African culture; the celebration and union of Africa and its Diaspora through beauty; the provision of the opportunity for women of African origin to recognize their beauty and talent, *not* judged by Western standards; and the creation of a platform to raise issues relevant to a healthy society and the improvement of women's lives. Despite the claims that the pageant is free of Western beauty standard influences, a requirement of the pageant is that a contestant's "hips must [naturally] be proportional to her body size"—a criterion that some "natural" and traditional African women might not meet (*Miss Malaika*). Once again, in an effort to showcase black African beauty, regardless of Western aesthetic ideals, the pageant succeeds only in perpetuating the very stereotypes and values that it aims to combat—perhaps influenced by its international sponsors.

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1. *The Hottentot Venus* by Georges Cuvier, 1817. "*Extraits d'observations faites sur le cadaver d'une femme connu à Paris et à Londres sous le nom de Vénus Hottentote*."

2. *Nguni Woman Wearing Neckpiece* by J.E. Middlebrook, South Africa, late 19th century.

3. Liya Kebede by Marc Baptiste.

Creole without Borders: *Zouk* Music in Boston's Haitian and Cape Verdean Immigrant Communities— a Time of Transition, a Place for Transformation

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Abstract

This article will explore the unique and sometimes divergent ways in which Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrant/second-generation youth in Boston understand and connect with *Zouk* music and dance. It is a preliminary look at how they make *Zouk* music/dance meaningful and how this art form is connected to the construction of a minority/ethnic identity. Based on fieldwork conducted in Boston over a six-month period throughout the summer and fall of 2006, the article refers to a larger project looking at the effects on social relations of the exchange and mixing of popular music and dance traditions between Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrant communities in Boston, MA. The piece presents historical information on Haitian and Cape Verdean immigration to Boston and the establishment of ethnic enclaves throughout the city. Further description and background of *Zouk* music and dance is also provided, starting with its origins in the French Caribbean and highlighting the timeless connection with the immigrant experience and Creole identity. Imperative to the central argument is how the embodied meaning of such music/dance is reinterpreted anew based on how these two communities wish to be seen as part of Boston's social landscape/soundscape.

Introduction: *That's My Beat!*

Pairs of bodies move together as single units gliding in and out of the shadows of the dimly lit crowded room. Feet shuffle, step, and stomp utilizing the music's off beats to weave, swivel, and pivot. It is a typical Saturday night at Club Kriolu in Roxbury, MA, where Cape Verdean and Haitian youth gather to dance *pasada* or *Zouk-Love*, the popular movement form that accompanies modern *Zouk* music. My own partner, Marcelyn, throws me a devilish grin, a silent warning that he is about to interrupt the traditional step sequence; sure enough, moments later he kicks back his left leg, grapevining around to my other side. I stumble slightly in a quick attempt to regain composure, reminded of my foreigner status, a condition sometimes overlooked but always present. "Here comes the *Zouk*, girl," he laughs. "That's my beat, that's my beat!"

Boston, MA is home to the fastest-growing Cape Verdean immigrant population in the U.S. While Cape Verdeans began arriving on the shores of New England even before the American Revolution, the past two decades have seen the largest wave of new immigration to the Boston area, or, more specifically, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Brockton, MA.[1] In the nearby neighborhood of Mattapan, affectionately called "little Haiti," resides Massachusetts' largest Haitian population. The majority of Mattapan's population are new-comers, first- and second-generation Haitians. Starting in the 1980s, large numbers of working-class Haitians began a mass exodus to Boston, putting Mattapan on the map for its vibrant Haitian community, which today numbers around 60,000 legal and illegal Haitian Americans. [2]

As Haitians and Cape Verdeans work to construct robust and successful ethnic communities in Boston, they do so through the preservation and celebration of cultural relics. For those relocating to the U.S., popular music and dance become a means for transnational cultural preservation and enjoyment. What is particularly interesting about the Boston Haitian/Cape Verdean circumstance is that the immigrant and first-generation youth cultivate a strong fan base for a common musical genre. *Zouk* (according to Haitians) or *Cabo Zouk/Pasada* (according to Cape Verdeans) is a popular dance music, based on a powerful, repetitive, and mildly syncopated 4/4 rhythm laced with a lyrical melody.

I began to research *Zouk* music and dance as part of a larger project looking at the effects on social relations of the exchange and mixing of popular music and dance traditions between Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrant communities in Boston, MA.[3] My desire to examine the ways in which people relate to one another and transmit cultural identity through music and movement stems from my observations growing up in a racially/ethnically diverse suburb of New York City. A descendent of Jewish immigrants, my grandparents also instilled in me the necessity to preserve cultural arts through immigration.

This article will explore the unique and sometimes divergent ways in which Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrant youth in Boston understand *Zouk*, a music so integral to their specific cultural realities, yet actually rooted in

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[1] *Espirito de Cabo Verde*, dir. Claire Andrade-Watkins, 1987.

[2] Zéphir, 102.

[3] *Cabo Zouk* and Haitian *Zouk/Konpa* are rhythmically identical genres. In Boston, the same dance clubs play both types of music, and Haitians and Cape Verdeans attend in large numbers. Furthermore, Haitian and Cape Verdean artists now record and produce music together.

another national heritage. It is a preliminary look at how they make *Zouk* music/dance meaningful and how this art form is connected to the construction of a minority/ethnic identity.

The Origins of *Zouk* Music

It is important to note that since the time of its inception, a wide range of rhythms has fallen under the heading of *Zouk*. For the sake of clarity, this paper will refer to *Cabo Zouk* when discussing Cape Verdean *Zouk*, *Antillean Zouk* when discussing *Zouk* from the French Antilles, and *Haitian Zouk* when discussing *Zouk* from Haiti.

The word *Zouk* comes from French Antillean Creole meaning dance party. *Zouk*s in the 1950s were large social gatherings in Guadeloupe and Martinique, featuring a variety of Afro-Caribbean music.[4] *Haitian Konpa*,[5] in particular, was very popular. Around 1980, a band by the name of Kassav' burst onto the Caribbean music circuit popularizing bouncy, joy-filled dance music they generically called *Zouk*. The Paris-based band, comprised of immigrant artists hailing from Martinique and Guadeloupe, dedicated their Caribbean fusion music to a general nostalgia for their homeland and pride in their Creole culture.[6] From this point on, the term *Zouk* was universally associated, but not limited to, Kassav's genre. Kassav's *Zouk* eventually subdivided into two separate styles, "*beton* or *fast-Zouk*" and "*Zouk-Love*," a slower, romantic style to which couples dance in a deep embrace, doublestepping to the 4/4 beat.[7]

Zouk-Love became overwhelmingly popular throughout the Caribbean, especially in Haiti, where *Konpa* and *Antillean Zouk* met anew, becoming even more enmeshed.[8] At about this point, Haitian music artists began developing and performing some of their own *Zouk*. The rhythmic structure remained identical to that of the traditional *Zouk-Love*; however, Haitian artists experimented with language and instrumentation, giving their *Zouk* a Haitian flare.

With immigration to the U.S. and Europe,[9] *Antillean Zouk* expanded to include a still wider spectrum of influences. In New York City, Haitian music groups like New Generation purposefully assimilated *Konpa* and *Zouk-Love* to create popular dance music with a new and exciting twist.[10] Consequently, Haitian musicians all over the world were now singing *Zouk-Love*, and the genre was becoming a part of the cultural tradition. In Paris, *Antillean Zouk* mixed with *Makossa*[11] and *Soukous*[12] from Africa. Historically, most Cape Verdean music has been recorded in either Portugal or France.[13] Cape Verdean artists absorbed the sounds and name of *Antillean Zouk* in Europe, infusing and exporting them back and forth to Cape Verde. At the same time, *Antillean Zouk* was also being exported back to Africa via the many Africans living in France and Kassav's world tour.[14] Several types of *African Zouk* developed and became popular as a result.

As might be inferred, the path of exchange for music and movement is never linear but rather a constant melting pot and cross-fertilization of ideas, traditions, and influences. Despite its assorted heritage and numerous reinventions,[15] however, certain features remain salient when discussing *Zouk* music. *Zouk*, in all its forms, has consistently been linked to defining cultural identity in the face of adversity.[16] Furthermore, *Zouk* has always been immigrant music. While artists and fans alike enjoy *Zouk* at home in Haiti, Cape Verde, Martinique, etc., it was first created by Antillean immigrants outside of their countries of origin. Now it is also produced and listened to by Caribbean/African immigrants all over the world.

I conducted my fieldwork in Boston over a six-month period throughout the summer and fall of 2006. During this time I went to many *Zouk* clubs and concerts, and listened to dozens of *Zouk* albums. I also attended other Haitian and Cape Verdean cultural events. I administered 17 method surveys and interviewed a self-selected group of first- and

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[4] de Ledesma and Scaramuzzo, 290.

[5] *Konpa* is considered to be the Haitian national music. The genre developed in the 1950s under the artistic inspiration of Nemours Jean-Babtiste and Wéber Sicot and came to be extremely popular throughout the Caribbean. *Konpa* has had a profound effect on the modern popular music of the French Antilles. Averill, 78–79.

[6] Guilbault, 22–23.

[7] de Ledesma and Scaramuzzo, 289.

[8] Steward and Harvey, 424.

[9] Post 1960, Caribbean immigration to the U.S. (New York, Florida, Boston) and Europe (France and England) occurred and continues to occur in mass quantities. Sloat, 321–23.

[10] de Ledesma and Scaramuzzo, 424.

[11] *Makossa* is popular dance music from Cameroon characterized by brass and electric keyboards. Nkolo and Hayter-Hames, 328.

[12] *Soukous* is heavily rhythmic repetitive electronic Congolese music. Ewens, 314.

[13] Peterson, 279.

[14] Africans from ex-French colonies such as Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, etc. immigrated in large numbers to France, often returning to their countries of origin with new cultural/musical influences. de Ledesma, 515.

[15] Kassav's general popularity and world tour led to the invention of many *Zouk* derivatives, including *Haitian Zouk*, *Cape Verdean Zouk*, and many other *African Zouks*.

[16] de Ledesma and Scaramuzzo, 293.

second-generation Haitian and Cape Verdean youth aged 18–26 from the Boston area (i.e., Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Brockton). For issues of privacy and ethics, all names have been changed.

Zouk-Love without Boundaries?

Creole is defined as a mix of cultures, peoples, and/or languages. As the title of this study denotes, it can be relatively unclear as to where the borders of a Creole heritage lie, especially when one lives day to day immersed in such a mixed reality. When Haitians and Cape Verdeans relocate to the U.S. (Boston), however, they are faced with the decision of whether to expand the Creole[17] mindset to include new cultures and values. On the one hand, they desire to assimilate to and share with the diverse American public, but at the same time, there is the constant obligation to define oneself in opposition to others and to engage in the competitive process of making it in the new world, while preserving a cultural past.[18] In varying ways, *Cabo/Haitian Zouk* music is intricately connected to this immigrant experience for first- and second-generation Haitian and Cape Verdean youth in Boston.

While the Haitian and Cape Verdean youth I spoke with share common affinities for their respective *Zouk* musics, the ways in which they tie these affinities to their cultural identity remain largely divergent. All my interviewees note that the beat and melodies of *Zouk-Love* are undeniably addictive. "The beat is just hypnotic," Samira Gomes writes. "That's why people enjoy *Cabo Zouk*." The body becomes "entrained"[19] or aligned musically to the repetitive drumming, a condition only enhanced by dancing. The interviewees further state that they like *Zouk-Love* at least in part because of its romantic quality. The ultimate goal is to move as one body in relation to the music.[20] The above features make *Zouk-Love* a really "sexy music," as stated by both Jerry and Joanne.[21]

The fact that romance and passion are so central to *Zouk-Love* is significant for the Haitian youth involved in this study, because these are universal emotions that span cultural difference. Horatio Babtiste explained that part of the reason *Zouk-Love* is such a special genre is that while it is not technically a "Haitian music," it still has a profound effect on Haitians all over the world.[22] Consequently, the informants see *Zouk-Love* as a music which transcends ethnic barriers and brings people together. As Melissa Dejand says in regard to *Cabo Zouk*, "It's the same music, same story, just different language."[23] Likewise, Franz said that as he grew, he was excited to learn that there were so many *Zouk-Love* derivatives under the same musical umbrella.[24] This signifies that there is a wealth of ethnic groups who are linked through artistic traditions. While all informants admitted that different Afro-diasporic communities are not necessarily as unified as they should be, particularly in Boston, they considered *Zouk-Love* a possible route for overcoming some of the ethnic conflict that does exist.[25] "Basically," says Marcelyn, "*Zouk* is an everyone music; it doesn't matter where you are from."[26]

Whereas many of my Haitian informants downplayed specific (Haitian) cultural connections to *Zouk-Love* music, the Cape Verdean interviewees chose to emphasize *Cabo Zouk* as the "quintessential product of Cape Verdean immigrant culture." *Cabo Zouk* is so intricately woven into how Boston's immigrant and first-generation Cape Verdean youth see themselves that they tend to downplay its connection with the musics of other Afro-immigrant communities. While none of the Cape Verdean youth I talked to expressed negative sentiments in regards to the sharing of music, they were reluctant to attribute any rights of *Cabo Zouk* to Haiti or other nations. As put by Aisha Mendes, "Yes, we go to the same clubs and we have our *Zouk*s, but *Cabo Zouk* is still *Cabo Zouk* and *Pasada* is *Pasada*. That stuff is Cape Verdean! From what I can see, the two communities are very separate and only really interact at clubs."[27] Regardless of its origins, they stated that *Cabo Zouk* is

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17 Haiti and Cape Verde are countries home to Creolized cultures that combine West African influences with those of Europe due to a colonial past.

18 Zéphir, 117–125.

19 Musical entrainment refers to how the body and its processes regulate themselves in relation to musical elements. DeNora, 78.

20 Naomi Sturm, field notes, 17 November 2006.

21 Jerry Toussaint, personal interview, 20 October 2006.
Joanne LaBranche, personal interview, 04 November 2006.

22 Horatio Babtiste, personal interview, 06 October 2006.

23 Melissa Dejand, personal interview, 06 October 2006.

24 Franz Gachette, personal interview, 12 November 2006.

25 Africana and Afro-Caribbean immigrants as well as African American populations in Boston and the surrounding areas are often quite segregated and tend to hold contempt for each other's communities. In neighborhoods such as Brockton, ethnic conflict between Haitian and Cape Verdean communities has resulted in violent altercations in schools and at dance clubs.

26 Marcelyn Babtiste, personal interview, 06 October 2006.

27 Aisha Mendes, personal interview, 24 July 2006.

superior to other *Zouk*s in musicality and dance style. No one would argue that love is not a universal emotion; however, in this case, such romantic themes are used to paint a likable picture of Cape Verdeans in Boston; to send a positive, non-violent message to its listeners.

Conclusion

A local fan addressing the relationship between the French and Dutch Caribbean through *Zouk* music once said, "No matter where we are located, one thing for sure is that we have so much to share—language, music, food, culture, dance, and even mentality—and, yes, we speak Creole in some form or another."[28] Halfway around the world, however, Adela Peeva illustrates how shared musical traditions in the Balkans are the source of much ethnic conflict and border tension. In her critically acclaimed documentary film *Whose Song is This?*[29], Peeva demonstrates how countries throughout the Balkan region engage in brutal, often violent, competition over the rights to a single folk song.

The Cape Verdean/Haitian music connection in Boston falls somewhere in between the above two examples. *Zouk*, in all its forms, has been linked to national liberation movements and defining cultural identity in the eye of adversity.[30] Given that the music's history matches the mosaic of influences found in Haiti and Cape Verde's Creolized cultural realities, Cape Verdean and Haitian youth's ethnic/minority identity is closely related to their affinity for *Zouk*. Furthermore, because of its transnational popularity, the music represents an important bridge between traditional culture and the immigrant experience. While the Haitian youth involved in this study remain looser in regards to *Zouk*'s musical rights than do their Cape Verdean counterparts, both groups clearly perceive *Zouk* as immigrant music. Where one is from may be more or less important based on the context, however being "from somewhere" is fundamental. Marcelyn notes that many ex-colonial peoples of mixed African descent (Haiti, Antilles, Cape Verde) produce and consume *Zouk* music.[31] Like other African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants, they resist being lumped together with African Americans. *Zouk* music serves as a key identifier for Cape Verdeans and Haitians as they work to establish themselves as a distinct immigrant population.

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[29] *Whose Song is This?*, dir. Adela Peeva, RKO, 2003.

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Facing the Yellow:
An Exploration of Shame in Asian American Poetry

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There are many people, particularly youths, in America who have stories about their difficulty in fitting in with the mainstream. Many of these stories stem from differences in socioeconomic status, varying physical characteristics such as being too short, tall, fat, or thin, and from cultural differences. Coming from a different cultural background, as well as from the socially constructed category of "race," can make an individual feel as though he or she does not belong among a predominantly different group of people. This paper discusses the shame Americans of Asian descent feel. Some Asian Americans perceive their Asian heritage and physical characteristics as traits that hinder their chances of being accepted by peers, teachers, employers, coworkers, and American society in general. It is important to note that in almost all cases, these individuals seek acceptance from white Americans. There are ways to express such inner conflicts and one of the ways is through writing, an example being poetry.

Asian American poets often portray how the desire to assimilate and conform to mainstream American culture crashes against the chain-link fence of urges to please the traditional standards of one's parents' culture. First-generation immigrant parents usually want their children to maintain a high degree of their home country's traditions, language, and culture. Sadly, it is the unfortunate scenario that with each generation that follows, a piece of tradition dissolves. These parents may perceive their children's adaptation of "American" life to be a shame. This is partly because they feel as though their children have somehow betrayed their heritage, through the disregarding of their language and customs, and opting for a more American identity. There are poets, such as Adrienne Su and David Mura, who write poems that deal with the conflicts between an American and an Asian American identity. The concept of "choosing sides" often means choosing between one's family and the dominant environment, or between the tradition and values one was brought up with and the contemporary lifestyles of the country one now lives in.

On the other hand, these poets also depict the shame on the children's part of having subjected their parents' traditions and ideals to ridicule and marginalization. For instance, Adrienne Su also writes about the guilt that is felt in some cases when the fingers point at the speakers themselves.

Shame also arises from the stereotypes that Asian Americans are faced with. When one is viewed and judged by stereotypes, it is hard to stay above the rising flood of insecurity. Stereotypes may dictate how other people react to and judge others. Like other minority groups in the U.S., Asian Americans also suffer from stereotypes and prejudices. They constitute many savory dishes at the steaming buffet table of the mass media. One sees unfair and misleading images of Asians on television, in films, books, and music. Such images suggest that Asian males are eunuchs, studious, ambitious, not athletic, martial artists, and sneaky, or that Asian females are exotic dragon ladies, innocent virgins, manipulative, and submissive. One of the ways Asian Americans have addressed such distorted perspectives and categorizations is through poetry. Poets write about how they view themselves and their communities, as well as their perspectives on how they are viewed and treated by other ethnic groups in America. Poetry can be a private and personal form of art and expression. It can also publicly express social concerns and issues. Thus, it gives voice to those who are placed in subordinate positions.

One may say that an Asian American poet confronts their shame and addresses it by incorporating "Asian images," and balancing their Asianness and Americanness. In this way, a writer might peel back the dust-covered sheets covering their rejection and shame of their Asian heritage.

Rejection of one's heritage and background is a major identity issue particularly widespread among youths. Because of the differences in their outward appearances, how they were raised, and their cultural backgrounds, they want to be "normal." The desire to be the "typical American" blinds their appreciation for their families' culture and traditions as well as their families themselves. This shame of what constitutes their identity as Asian Americans is a recurring theme in poetry by writers such as Adrienne Su and Marilyn Chin.

Adrienne Su's "Things Chinese" from *Sanctuary* portrays the struggles of a young Chinese girl who had just wanted to be like everybody else in her Georgia town. She created her "own totalitarian government" in which she censors and changes parts of her heritage and family history that do not make her "American." By using the conception that in America one can start over with a new identity in hopes of a better future, the speaker desired that her background could be altered: "This was America, after all, where everyone's at liberty/To remake her person, her place, or her poetry" (lines 2–3).

The tone of the speaker reveals her shame and embarrassment in being one of Chinese heritage. She "eliminated most of [her] family," such as her grandparents, two of whom remained strongly tied to their heritage. The only significantly Chinese aspect of her other two grandparents

was their expertise in Chinese food. She imagined her father not having had to stop and decide which water fountain to drink from, or her mother not having had to immigrate from the other side of the globe. Instead she transforms them into "1950s Georgians/Who'd always attended church and school, like anyone" (17–18). By using the phrase "like anyone," the speaker refers to the white Americans who make up the much greater majority of her town. She desired not to be the "other"; she wished that she and her family were just plain "ordinary" Americans. Her rejection of categorization as a minority is also indicated in the stanza in which she cannot find any benefits to reap from "distinctness and [the] mysterious"; from her experience such distinctness only brings "failures."

However, she found that she could not repress her heritage, especially in her writing. This is evident when she says, "For months I couldn't write anything decent/Because banned information kept trying to enter/Like bungled idioms in the speech of a foreigner" (31–33). One cannot exchange his or her roots, family, traditions, and cultures for others because they define who he or she is. The speaker may be more Americanized than most of her family, but she cannot deny their histories; their own histories, from their upbringing to adjusting and surviving in a new world, are to be acknowledged, appreciated, and respected.

Thus, one can also see how the momentum of one's perception and regard for their heritage can swing from shame to appreciation. Through poetry, the reader is able to gain aesthetically presented insight on how one may identify or disidentify with their Asian Americaness. As McCormick writes, a writer should strive to achieve a balance between politics and aesthetics as a way to examine their positions as American writers of Asian descent. The attempts to achieve this balance include the incorporation of distinct "Asian images," and the resistance against the silencing power of linguistic and literary assimilation. Such characteristics are observed in poems by established Asian American writers such as Marilyn Chin, Adrienne Su, and David Mura, who each examines past self-contempt and shame at their Asian heritage, cultures, and family. They then try to position themselves in a country where they do not belong to just one group. It is through the marginalized and underappreciated medium of poetry that they voice these thoughts, concerns, and issues.

These poets are inspiring, not only for their skills in writing, but also for the humility and honesty that they express in their poems. Reading their work is like feeling hot steam emitting from the boiling pages. A reader may indulge his or herself in such amazing poems that encourage one to be proud of who they are. One must be peacefully intolerant of negative outside perceptions, which include stereotypes, and counter such affronts. The shame in the above poets' works is one that usually arises because of conflicts between new and old cultures. The hope for a utopian society, that is comparable to the biblical paradise where lion and lamb nap side by side, is nearly unfeasible. However, the efforts to work towards more tolerant coexisting diversity will bring people closer. To embrace one's own heritage with respect and appreciation is one way towards developing understanding and awareness of the diversity in the world. Arar Han and John Hsu, editors of *Asian American X: An Intersection of 21st Century Asian American Voices*, express it well: "Like those before us, our voices will leave a distinctive legacy by creating a new chapter of history and redefining what it means to be both Asian American and American" (5).

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A Comparative, Exploratory Study of the Role and Place of African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights and South African Women in the Struggle against Apartheid

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Abstract

This paper discusses the priceless role of leadership provided by women leaders in both the civil rights movement and the struggle against apartheid. It calls for recognition of female leaders' contributions, in that these contributions were equal to, and in many cases greater, than their male counterparts. This abbreviated paper focuses primarily on the virtually "invisible" black women or the commonplace women who made numerous priceless contributions and sacrifices to both movements.

Black South African women, much like their African American sisters in the United States, have for centuries served selflessly as catalysts in the struggle against social injustices and for the establishment of a new social order. In the face of insurmountable adversities such as sexism, racism and classism, these women never lost sight of the fact that any meaningful change could never come through some piecemeal reforms, but through the total destruction of a dominant and well-entrenched racist, unjust, and patriarchal social order. Yet, while these women sought their own individual liberation, they viewed themselves and their quest for self-realization as part and parcel of the total liberation of an entire people from the joke of both apartheid and racial discrimination. In other words, their struggle is an integral part of the long march for freedom and social equality known as the civil rights movement and the liberation movement against apartheid.

Though women leaders in both the civil rights movement and the struggle against apartheid played a role as viable as their male counterparts, if not greater sometimes, they are for the most part treated as either a footnote, if not altogether left out of modern history textbooks. In fact, one must turn to a serious Women Studies program to gain any in-depth knowledge about these women. Furthermore, even the most recent studies on women in both the civil rights movement and the struggle against apartheid have focused on the achievements and contributions of famous women. This work; however, will focus primarily on the virtually "invisible" black women or the commonplace women who made numerous priceless contributions and sacrifices. The scope of these women's activities in the 1950s and '60s, in the United States and South Africa, however, cannot be accurately evaluated using today's standards of gender equality. It is imperative therefore, to place them in the context of time and place.

Brief Historical Background of Gender Relations in the 1950s and '60s

Women in the United States

In a very incisive essay, "The Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s," essayist Vintee Sawhney asserts that, at the opening of the decade, American women were generally portrayed on television shows and in advertisements exclusively as content homemakers, secretaries, teachers, and nurses.[1] It was the credence that all women, regardless of race, should simply strive for beauty, grace, matrimony, family, and a well-structured and efficient home.[2]

As authors Marisa Chappell, Jenny Hutchinson, and Brian Ward discussed in *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement*, these perceived ideals of respectable behavior and gender roles were imitated and further reinforced in black life. Furthermore, they were also codified in the black press.[3] Case in point, mass circulation magazines like *Ebony Magazine* consistently enforced popular middle class values of respectable womanhood by means of black female pioneering journalist Freda De Knight.[4]

In "'Dress Modestly, Neatly… as if you were going to church': Respectability, Class and Gender in Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement," De Knight, in conjunction with other journalists, stressed the significance of black women to work hard to mind a household, as well as be efficient and attentive mothers, all while providing "physical satisfaction and psychological reassurance for black men whose self-esteem was frequently undermined by the ravages of racism and its attendant blights of economic, social, and political impotence."[5]

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[1]   Sawhney, Vintee. "The Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s."

[2]   Ibid.

[3]   Chappell, Marisa, Hutchinson, Jenny and Ward, Brian. "'Dress Modestly, Neatly… as if you were going to church': Respectability, Class and Gender in Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement*. 69.

[4]   Ibid.

[5]   Ibid.

In the United States during the 1960s, there were a multitude of restrictions set on what a woman could and could not do, especially in the right of employment. Black women who had successful careers or were "conspicuously active in political and civic life, potentially presented a serious challenge to traditionally gendered structures of power, prestige, and responsibility in post-war America." Black women were certainly counseled that, in no circumstances, were they to make their men appear inadequate or ridicule them if they proved unable to fulfill their appropriate patriarchal roles of protector and provider.[6]

Few women, however, chose to adhere to all these stipulations, while several others entered the workforce and even began to create and fashion organizations. It was during this epoch that American women of all races began to play important roles outside the home in business, politics, media, and other influential sectors. It was also during this time that black females became some of the first critics of war, inspirations and fighters for the rights of all women, leaders in anti-poverty efforts, and advocates of natural and inalienable rights belonging to all human beings.[7]

Women in South Africa

Under the title "For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears," Hilda Bernstein states that, in 1960, women represented well over half of the population in South Africa. Black South African women were bound to the most severe and ruthless conditions.[8] These same sentiments were echoed by the Secretariat for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Copenhagen in July 1980 when it states:

> As Africans, which for the most part defined their class position, they had to contend with the restrictive and repressive apartheid legislation, which ensured alien control over all facets of their lives. In addition, as women, they had to contend with the fact that they are regarded as dependents and inferior to men; as such, they are even further discriminated against within the framework of apartheid.[9]

Following a tradition and legal framework established under the 1891 Bantu Code, in the 1960s, South African tradition and law defined a woman's status as inherently subordinate to a male.[10] Thus, South African women of every ethnicity acquired their status according to the framework of male dominance especially in the areas of economy, family, politics, and society in general. In comparison to their African and Indian female counterparts, however, white and colored women tended to share a similar cultural system that was far less repressive.[11] Fatima Meer in "Women in Apartheid Society," drew the following conclusion:

> Colored women, however, were not as liberated as white women in their relations with men. The difference was largely due to the economic factor. White women attained a very much higher standard of education and were able to reach out to a far more varied and relaxed life.[12]

Adhering to traditional African custom, the compliant, subservient black South African woman had to not only suffer terrible conditions quietly with a smile, but she also had to simultaneously fulfill her traditionally defined role of bearing and raising offspring, as well as caring for the aged and ill in the community. Unable to afford rent or purchase even the most basic staples, many women had no other choice but to venture out in the community and seek work. This labor generally constituted an average of five hours of travel time to and from work and then an eight- to ten-hour work shift. Psychologically, many suffered intense feelings of guilt and penitence for "deserting" the home. As a result, they more often than not handed over wages to demanding husbands or elders as if to offer retribution for this desertion. It is imperative to note that, although several black South African women often made equal cash contributions to the household and at times even greater than the spouse, they were still very much ignored when it came to major issues.[13]

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6 Chappell, Marissa, Hutchinson, Jenny and Ward, Brian. "'Dress Modestly, Neatly ... as if you were going to church': Respectability, Class and Gender in Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement."

7 Robnett, Belinda. 1997. *How Long? How Long?: African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights.*

8 Berstein, Hilda. "For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

9 "Effects of Apartheid on the Status of Women in South Africa, 1980." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

10 Under Bantu Code, women are lifelong wards and eternal minors to men. This includes husbands, fathers, and in the absence of these close male relations, even sons. Under Bantu Code, women may not defend nor bring any action in court, marry, or continue in employment, prior to a male's consent. In the venue of employment, these same male guardians have the right to lay claim to the woman's earnings as well as be in command of the woman's property. In the case of marriage, the wife's assets are automatically reverted to her husband, and she acquires no right over his property. Upon the husband's death, the family estate, regardless of the wife's contributions, automatically goes to the closest surviving male relative. The woman then becomes his ward.

11 Ibid.

12 Meer, Fatima. "Women in Apartheid Society." 1985. *Indigenous People of Africa and America Magazine.*

13 "Effects of Apartheid on the Status of Women in South Africa, 1980." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

Women played countless multidimensional roles during the civil rights movement in the United States. In "Passing the Torch: African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement," academician LaVerne Gyant, referencing prior works says "modern research illustrates that there was an enormous contingent of women who participated in the civil rights movement." Gyant quotes a popular Civil Rights activist, Ella Baker, who stated: "The movement of the fifties and sixties was carried largely by women, since it came out of the church .... The number of women who carried the movement was much larger than that of men."[14]

In 1966, Teresa A. Nance described the roles black women played during the civil rights movement as follows:

> The first role was that of "mama," the community member who provided outside civil rights volunteers with food and a place to stay. The second role was that of activist. In this role, black women functioned most openly in ways that accomplished the business of community organizing for issues of social justice. Finally, black women functioned in a role best designated as that of friend. History seems to show that, especially in southern farm communities, black women supported each other's civil rights activities by helping each other attend to their various domestic responsibilities.[15]

Needless to say, Nance's taxonomy never described the black female civil rights activist as a leader, though in many instances she was. However, Nance is not without associates. In this respect, one may recall Charles Payne's work on the civil rights movement which concentrated its attention on women in the Mississippi delta. According to this writer, men were the true leaders, while women were the organizers. Much later, he modified his tune stating that women were leaders, but even then their primary task was that of organizers.[16] The writer of this essay, however, feels otherwise and embraces the position defended by Jewel Prestage in asserting that though black women were often denied leadership positions and forced to serve in the capacity of secretary or assistant, many remained greatly determined to play a more prominent role in the movement for Black rights.[17] Thus these women did so through church organizations, women's clubs, sororities, educational organizations, grassroot organizations, or by serving as bridge leaders in local communities and being on the frontline in direct confrontations.[18]

This stream of thought is also supported by well-known scholar Belinda Robnett in the article entitled "Women in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee: Ideology, Organizational Structure, and Leadership," where she stated that African American women's activism included much more than organizing. She speaks of them serving as marshals for grassroots mobilization and bridge leaders.

Robnett also provides an all encompassing definition of the role of women as "bridge leaders." According to this author, bridge leaders fostered ties between the social movement and the community, served as key links between what social scientists term pre-figurative strategies and political strategies, and served as necessary "stepping stones" for potential supporters to cross arduous boundaries between political and personal life. "Bridge leaders were able to cross the boundaries between the public life of a movement organization and the private spheres of adherents and potential constituents."[19]

Returning to Payne's claim, it is important to note that because women often did not hold titled positions, it did not make them any less of a leader. In addition, many times titles failed to truly or wholly capture a woman's authority in the movement. For example, in the case of one female activist, her title of "office manager" completely disregarded her repeated leadership during moments of crisis when she acted as a formal leader. Aware that such titles might restrict their leadership opportunities, several women either chose to avoid them or to ignore the restrictions imposed by the title.[20] In fact, Robnett, through the conduction of countless interviews with surviving female activists of the time, was able to determine that these women wanted no title and instead "took the lead in the struggle for dignity." They were not looking for fame and fortune or national recognition. Rather, they were "dedicated to community service and not self-service" and were willing to forfeit their livelihoods to fight against racial oppression and discrimination.[21]

[14] Gyant, LaVerne. "Passing the Torch: African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement." *Journal of Black Studie*s, Vol. 26, No. 5, pp. 629–647.

[15] Nance, Teresa A. "Hearing the Missing Voice." *Journal of Black Studies*, 26:5, 243–259 (1996).

[16] Payne, Charles. *Men Led, But Women Organized: Movement Participation of Women in the Mississippi Delta*, 156-157.

[17] Prestage, Jewel L. "In Quest of African American Political Woman." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 515, pp. 88–103.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Robnett, Belinda. "Women in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee: Ideology, Organizational Structure, and Leadership." *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement*. 141.

Women under Apartheid

> We women do not form a society separate from the men. There is only one society and it is made up of both women and men. As women we share the problem and anxieties of our men and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress.[22]
>
> Women's Charter adopted at the Founding Conference of FSAW, 1954–

Black South African women played a vital part in the liberation struggle as members of the African National Congress (ANC), and allied organizations, as well as participants in trade unions and a wide variety of functions. These strong, defiant, and determined women can be credited with the organization of militant campaigns in opposition to the despised pass laws and, upon the banning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC) in 1961, participation in armed underground struggles.[23] Repeatedly, these women suffered imprisonment, restriction, torture and, sadly enough, brutal assassination by a both racist and sexist apartheid regime.

In 1948, the Women's League of the African National Congress (ANCLW) sprang forth to continue systematic resistance to national oppression as well as serve as an organ to organize women for the "reconstruction and development of South Africa into a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist society." In addition, the Federation of South African Women, or the FSAW, was formed in 1954 as an umbrella unit of the ANCLW. Taking heed to the words stated by National Council of African Women spokesperson Josie Mpama in 1937, "We women can no longer remain in the background or concern ourselves with domestics and sport affairs. The time has arrived for women to enter into the political field and stand shoulder to shoulder with our men in the struggle,"[24] these two organizations as well as several others concentrated mass action and protest in the areas of passes and education.

Passes

On August 9th, 1956, approximately 20,000 women of all races presented a petition to the South African Prime Minister protesting against the requirement of the carrying of *dompas*, which literally translates as "dumb-pass" in Afrikaans. Under apartheid law, all Africans over the age of 16, regardless of gender, were required to register and obtain

a "pass." This paper had to be in one's possessions at all times, as it indicated whether the holder was legitimately in a particular area. If one did not have it, or the papers were not "in order," he or she was subjected to an instantaneous arrest. These passes chiefly allowed for the government to control the stream of Black South Africans into the designated white areas. The following is just an excerpt from the petition:

> We are women from every part of South Africa. We are women of every race, we come from the cities and the towns, from the reserves and the villages. We come as women united in our purpose to save the African women from the degradation of passes. We, the women of South Africa, have come here today. We represent and we speak on behalf of hundreds of thousands of women who could not be with us. But all over the country, at this moment, women are watching and thinking of us. Their hearts are with us. For hundreds of years the African people have suffered under the most bitter law of all—the pass law which has brought untold suffering to every African family.

In the "Repeal the Pass Laws ...," South African women of all races argued that these passes fated broken households when women were arrested for failure to produce a pass. In turn, children would be left uncared for. Also as a consequence, these women and young girls would be exposed to "humiliation and degradation at the hands of pass-searching policemen." The march was a joint effort on behalf the ANCLW and the FSAW.[25]

ANC and PAC

In 1961, after their prohibition, both the African National Congress and Pan-African Congress established underground organizations so as to continue the struggle against apartheid. The militant wing of the ANC, known as *Umhonto we Sizwe* or Spear of the Nation, embattled power plants and police stations, but cautiously avoided killing humans. The militant wing of the PAC, *Poqo* or Blacks Only, often engaged in a campaign of terror, "targeting in particular African chiefs and headmen believed to be collaborators with the government."[26] The South African black woman participated in the underground and armed struggle and helped to carry out many of these militant campaigns. As a result many women suffered imprisonment, restriction, torture and even brutal assassination by racist regimes.[27]

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[22] "Women's Charter." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

[23] "The ANC and PAC Turn to Violence." US Library of Congress.

[24] Ginwala, Frene. "Women and the African National Congress: 1912–1943." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

[25] "Repeal the Pass Laws ..." African National Congress. ANC notes and documents.

[26] "The ANC and the PAC Turn to Violence." The Library of Congress. *Country Studies; CIA World Factbook*.

[27] "The ANC and the PAC Turn to Violence." The Library of Congress. *Country Studies; CIA World Factbook*.

Conclusion

The civil rights movement and the liberation movement against apartheid, both were essentially a people's struggle, and both employed similar tactics: civil disobedience, nonviolent resistance, marches, protests, boycotts, "freedom rides," and rallies, which all undeniably brought about tremendous transformation in society. Both movements were composed of men and women working together, side by side, shoulder to shoulder, standing tall against the giantess of racial inequality and segregation. This researcher is in much agreement with Belinda Robnett who stated that whether black or African, these "men and women alike have shared hardship and degradation, while helping each other survive the violent and inhumane treatment of slavery, discrimination, and racism.[28] Thus the fates of African American men and women are bound together."

While the writer of this paper does not deem that history has to condemn the men in order to exalt the women, she firmly believes in an accurate history of both the civil rights movement and the struggle for liberation against apartheid, one that gives the same consideration to women and males as leaders; until that point is reached, our scholarship will continue to suffer from a severe hiatus. Thus it behooves all scholars, males and females, to correct that which must be. This is the only way to honor all those who dedicated their lives to the common good.

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[28] Robnett, Belinda. "Women in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee: Ideology, Organizational Structure, and Leadership." *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement*. 163.

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