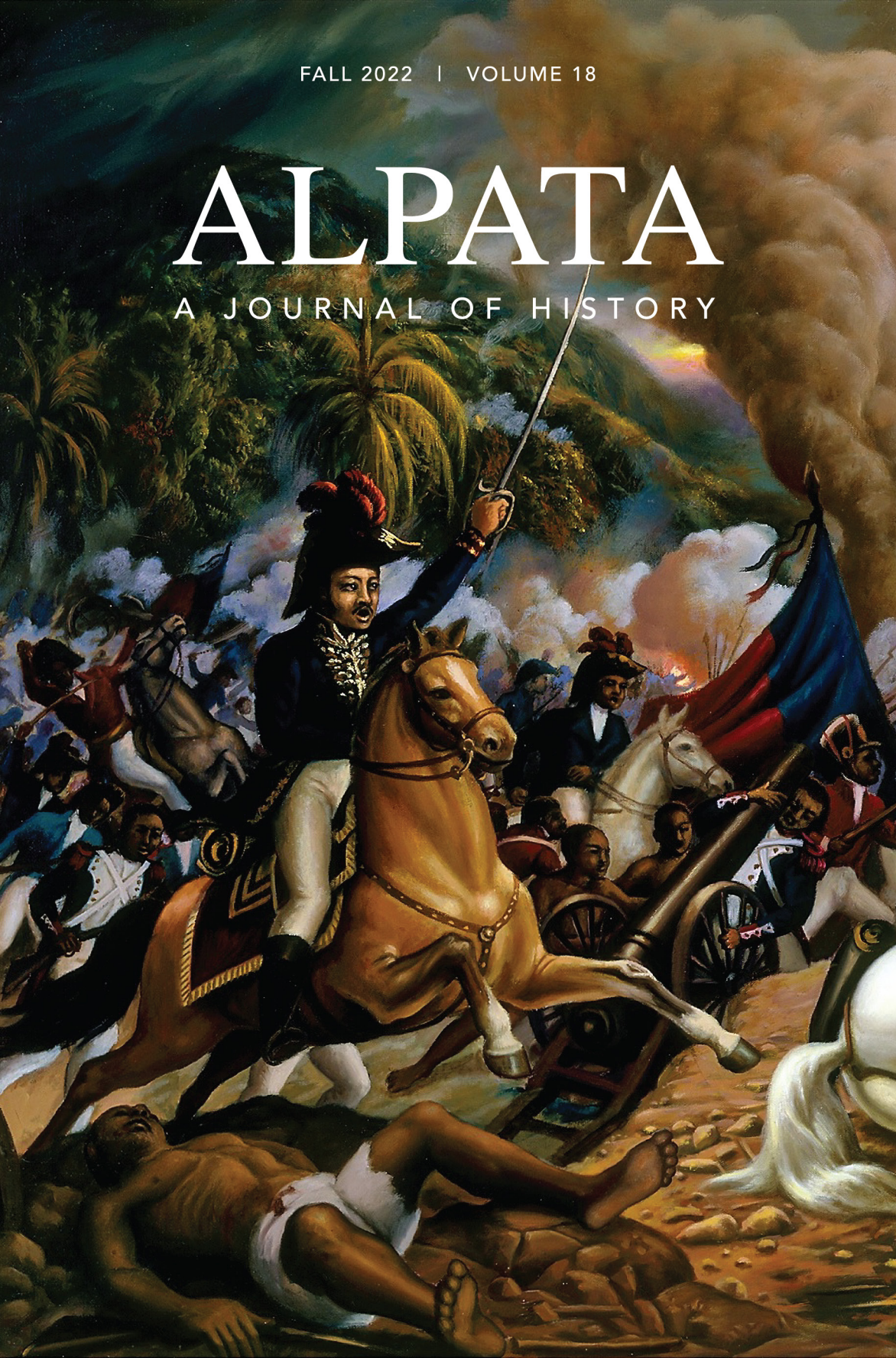


FALL 2022 | VOLUME 18

ALPATA

A JOURNAL OF HISTORY



Alpata is the Seminole word for ‘alligator’

ALPATA

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Acknowledgements

DR. WILLIAM A. LINK

Richard J. Milbauer Professor of History

The Alpata Editorial Board would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. William A. Link for his contributions to the University of Florida, his tireless dedication to his students, and for his guidance as the Alpata faculty advisor for the 2021 and 2022 fall issues. Dr. Link joined the University of Florida's Department of History as the Richard J. Milbauer Chair in Southern History in 2004. For 18 years, he shared his passion for southern history with his students at the University of Florida until his retirement in the spring of 2022. Even in retirement, Dr. Link has continued to support the Alpata team in putting together this year's issue—a testament to his generous spirit and his devotion to his students. As our faculty advisor, Dr. Link supported every step of the publishing process and ensured that each edition fully reflected the quality of our student authors and our history program.

Prior to the University of Florida, Dr. Link was a professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for 23 years where he taught courses on the history of North Carolina, the American South, and twentieth-century America. Dr. Link received his Ph.D. in 1981 in American history from the University of Virginia, his M.A. in 1979 from the University of Virginia, and his B.A. in 1976 from Davidson College. Dr. Link holds an impressive body of work on the history of the South ranging from the antebellum period to the modern day, including *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1920* (1992), *William Friday: Power and Purpose in American Higher Education* (1995), *Roots of Secession* (2003), *Jesse Helms and the Rise of Modern Conservatism* (2008), *Atlanta, Cradle of the New South* (2013), *Southern Crucible* (2015), and *Frank Porter Graham* (2021).

Congratulations, Dr. Link, on an accomplished career as a historian, author, and professor. Thank you for your mentorship, for inspiring a new generation of historians, and for the knowledge that you shared with us. We will miss you dearly and wish you the very best in retirement.

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EDITORIAL

Shannon Scott

Connections

“Remembrance also points into our present and future, and it must be seen as a call for tolerance.”

Memorial to the Homosexual Victims of National Socialism
Nuremberg, Germany

Under a brilliant blue sky dotted with clouds, I wandered the streets of Nuremberg. The breeze swept through the leaves and ruffled my hair, which I had long since given up trying to keep neat. I had woken up early to visit virtually every museum within walking distance and I had just left the penultimate one on my list. At first, I considered walking to the last one, but it was a beautiful day and I had time, so I let my feet carry me wherever they felt the urge to go. I marveled at the architecture and laughed at the American-themed store, which was naturally stocked with guns, but through some serendipity, I soon found myself in front of a rainbow-colored bench. Close by, there were a few signs, one of which described the plight of a man called Rudolf K. In 1937, Rudolf K. had been imprisoned for homosexuality; between 1940 and 1942, he had been in concentration camps for the same ‘crime’.

His torment did not end there. Before the war’s end, he was forcibly castrated and then drafted into the Wehrmacht, where he survived and eventually returned to Nuremberg. In 1955, he tried and failed to end his life by jumping in the river Pegnitz, after which he lived until 1986. No one needs me to tell them that the story is horrifying, but many have asked me why stories like Rudolf K.’s are relevant now.

To discuss that, I will first provide some context: my excursion to Nuremberg took place earlier this year as part of a language-learning study abroad program based in Leipzig. In between the group activities like classwork and the fun sorts of things that tourists do, such as trying a candy that I believe was chocolate-covered nail polish remover, I spent a great deal of time exploring Germany’s history. The nearby Nuremberg, which I traveled to on our free weekend, had everything from the history of the German

train system to the old rally grounds used by the Nazis. I passed by medieval rocking horses, or rather rocking dolphins, and cathedrals older than the United States before finding myself in the crush of FC Nürnberg supporters shouting down their local rivals that night.

The most striking thing to me, however, was the memorial to queer victims of Nazi persecution, located in the Magnus-Hirschfeld-Platz. Although I'd also find the memorial in Berlin, this one was the first memorial I'd ever seen for queer victims of persecution, and it struck a particular chord with me. In Leipzig, I had felt an immediate draw to the intimidatingly large and gorgeous Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, and the librarians had kindly suffered through my German as I requested sources and spent at least a few afternoons in the near-silence of their reading room, working through 1920s queer women's magazines. Here in Nuremberg was the stark evidence of queer networks and queer struggles across cities, and I, as a twenty-first century American, could trace it across oceans and across time as well.

There was something profound and soul-touching in it. I was surrounded first by people found in the ink and paper in Leipzig who asked questions as strange as "Can a bisexual woman marry?" and raised concerns as serious as restrictive legislation, then by people who, named as Rudolf K. was or unnamed but indicated by the text of the memorial, formed part of the topographical reality of Nuremberg. So much of it felt like conversations I'd had with friends, bouncing from advice for finding men's clothes that fit to anxieties about someone showing up at Pride armed because of the belief that we were predators, and so much of it was something I've been personally fortunate enough not to face: the desperation and pain that led a man to jump into the river, the pink or black triangles pinned to my clothes.

Rudolf K. and the people in those periodicals, and queer people now, are not lessons—that is to say, we are not props in some grand play in which others learn that participating in, or tolerating, bigotry is bad. But at the same time, it would be irresponsible to ignore the echo across time that shows our commonalities both in our triumphs, such as having communities where we can be ourselves, and in our struggles. Rudolf K. is relevant because he is a person who lived and breathed and died, a person whose experiences are his own, and he is relevant because he is not alone in history.

But because I study twentieth century history, where people had adopted similar frameworks of identity to the ones in use now, it is easier for me to draw a line from my area of study to today. Not every path to the present is so straightforward for historians. Confronted as we are with questions of

why our research is relevant, whether it focuses on indigenous people under seventeenth century English colonialism or concepts of disability in Ancient Greece, each of us tend to find a story in our work that fosters a sense of empathy and connection with those we study. Although people of the past don't necessarily share our values, our understandings of the world, or even our ideas of what it is to be *people*, we are never as alienated from them as the questions suggest. L.P. Hartley's 1953 novel *The Go-Between* begins with the line, "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there." To respect the differences of the past but help us travel there and understand its people is, in my view, the fundamental task of the historian.

With that in mind, please enjoy the hard work of our authors and editors this year. Each has done excellent work in producing and honing papers that represent the emotion and empathy that history so wondrously evokes in all of us.

ON THE COVER

Daniel Antonio Miguel

Reimagining Revolution

"For too long we have borne your chains without thinking of shaking them off, but any authority that is not founded on virtue and humanity and that only tends to subject one's fellow man to slavery must come to an end, and that end is yours."

Toussaint Louverture
Letter to French colonial leaders of Saint-Domingue, 1792

Revolutions have conquered our imaginations for millennia. When the right individuals coalesce at the right moment, they have the potential to radically redefine a society's cultural identity and unravel deep-rooted political and economic structures, for better or for worse. This is especially true with regard to the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), a revolution that has maintained a constant presence in the political discourse of the United States for more than two centuries. The Haitian Revolution holds a special and singular place in modern history—it is the only slave rebellion to have ever successfully overpowered a colonial empire and lead to the establishment of a sovereign state.

Several of our authors in this issue explored this history or drew connections to it in their research. Coincidentally, conversations about the Haitian Revolution found new life in 2022 in light of the intensifying civil unrest, deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, and the escalating political crisis in Haiti. For this reason, we decided to highlight this moment and feature a work of art on this year's cover that depicts, or is inspired by, the Haitian Revolution. Our search for the cover artwork led us to Ulrick Jean-Pierre, a distinguished Haitian-American visual artist based in New Orleans. Of all the artwork that we considered, Jean-Pierre's work stood out above the rest for the way that it reimagined the revolution. His paintings are breathtakingly vivid, portraying the historic scenes of the revolution in striking detail and color. Whereas some historical paintings merely emphasize the violence and the chaos of the war, and others bemoan what was lost, Jean-Pierre's paintings convey a sense of triumph and honor what was won.

Ultimately, we were thrilled to choose Jean-Pierre's *The Battle of Vertières, 1* to grace our cover. As the title suggests, the painting depicts The Battle of Vertières, the last major battle of the Haitian Revolution which led to Haiti's eventual liberation. During what feels like one of Haiti's most perilous times in modern memory, Ulrick Jean-Pierre's artwork helps us remember the promise of Haiti and is a tribute to its rich artistic and cultural history as well as its legacy as a symbol for independence.

A Brief Note on Alpata's New Journal Design

This year, Alpata has a new journal design that marks a significant departure from our previous issues and reimagines what an undergraduate student journal should look like. Therefore, I would like to briefly highlight a few of the most notable changes. First and foremost, our logo has been redesigned for greater uniformity and simplicity. The new logo reworks the traditional elements of the original logo in a modern way with a bold and elegant serif typeface for the primary wordmark (Garamond) and an iconic sans-serif typeface for the secondary wordmark (Avenir) that underlines the primary wordmark and no longer extends beyond its edges. This more uniform design allows for better balance and easier logo integration into a variety of mediums such as websites, social media, letterheads, and more. On the outside, our cover artwork now spans the entire front cover to better showcase the impressive works of art that Alpata features on its covers. Inside, we have modified line spacing, font sizes, title pages, headers, footnotes, and many other elements to produce a manuscript that nears the quality and excellence of scholarly journals like the *American Historical Review*. Our goal was to create a journal that is easy to read yet beautiful. We hope that you enjoy your reading experience.

Our Thanks to Ulrick Jean-Pierre

The Alpata Editorial Board and the University of Florida's Department of History would like to extend a big thank you to Ulrick Jean-Pierre for granting Alpata permission to feature *The Battle of Vertières, 1* on this year's cover. Please enjoy Mr. Jean-Pierre's extraordinary painting in its entirety on the upcoming pages.

ULRICK JEAN-PIERRE

The Battle of Vertières, 1 (1990-94)

Oil on canvas, 34" x 52"

The Haitian Revolution on November 18, 1803





Unick
1987-9

SPECIAL FEATURE

Brian Marra

Persecution on a Local Scale: LGBTQ+ Miami and Discriminatory Government Action, 1953-1964

Abstract

This paper discusses the struggle of the LGBTQ+ community in Miami during the 1950s and the early 1960s. Miami, a city known for its tourist market and tropical experience, took a turn in the 1950's when the local government, with the utilization of the police force, retaliated against LGBTQ+ people and attacked homosexual practices deeming them both "delinquent" and "immoral." Inspired by Joseph McCarthy's leadership in the "Lavender Scare," officials enforced bigoted policy on the local level. The justification from both the local and national governments mirrored each other: the fear of alleged "communism" and "deviancy." LGBTQ+ individuals became the "other" and any "deviant" practice was to be eliminated due to the association with un-American values. In Miami, the police force raided LGBT clubs and arrested many Miamians accused of deviant behavior. This bigotry soon expanded leaving an institutional system of prejudice in Miami and the state of Florida purely based on "otherism" and fear of the impact of delinquency. The remnants of this system are still in effect today.

During the 1950s, the *Miami Herald* published comics and columns that depicted homosexuality as a threat to the United States. The *Herald* portrayed the threat by using fear and blame that reduced homosexuality to a shameful and obscene act. These advice columns were written by doctors. They often described a case and explained how society, usually parents, should react to homosexual behavior. One article was about "Terry," a young student who was accused of being homosexual. In this case, the doctor explained that it was important for Terry's parents to "not get the deluded idea that homosexuals are predestined to love their own sex."¹ Another example was a section of the paper called "Problem Clinic," in which medical professionals addressed common medical problems. In an edition entitled "Grow Up," the doctor declares that homosexuality is a primitive

1 George Crane, "Youth's Erotic Behavior Discussed," *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), December 3, 1957.

and immature state and that homosexuality stems from a lack of religious conviction.²

These small blurbs that appeared from time to time in the *Herald* displayed systemic prejudice toward homosexuality. Indeed, 1950s America was a difficult, challenging, and dangerous place for the LGBTQ+ community. The Cold War accelerated this homophobia. The federal government invested in maintaining an image of strength and domination over the Soviet Union, and, in doing so, completely stigmatized diversity and supported conformity. The LGBTQ+ community became a prime target in this effort. Homosexuals were labeled as deviant and delinquent. The federal government began to use the term “security risk,” which provided political expediency to those who claimed that the executive branch was filled with subversives, which in turn led to a wider attack on homosexuality in all sectors across the United States.³ In particular, cities like Miami had notably robust and aggressive responses to homosexual behavior that directly involved leadership in the police department and city hall. Miami’s political leadership saw the suppression of homosexuality as a way to disconnect the city with the image of a “tropical paradise” that was full of immoral and stigmatized behavior such as homosexuality and sex work.⁴ When put in context with national inquisitions such as the Lavender Scare, one can see how national-level policies were enforced on the local level. The Lavender Scare involved an attempt to uproot queer people from federal employment.⁵ In addition to action on the federal level, doctors and other “experts” published fear-mongering dialogue about homosexuality in local papers which, when combined with municipal responses, created a united front against the homosexual community. Miami’s city government took control of the narrative of internal subversion during the Cold War y and turned it into a real and enforceable policy. This essay will explore the attack on LGBTQ+ communities and how the American fear of homosexuality led local governments, such as the one in Miami, to adopt

2 George Crane, “Problem Clinic: Grow Up,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), September 12, 1953.

3 David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 9.

4 Julio Capó Jr., “It’s Not Queer to Be Gay: Miami and the Emergence of the Gay Rights Movement, 1945-1995” (Order No. 3483248, Florida International University, 2011), 64.

5 Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 9.

these repressive policies.

The Lavender Scare, the Fight against Delinquency, and the Rise of Abe Aronovitz

In 1953, Miami embarked on a transformation that would change policing. Miami previously tolerated the homosexual community as an exotic part of the city's vacation culture in which Americans could escape their daily lives on the beaches of South Florida.⁶ However, with the heightened tension of conflict with the Soviet Union, Miami's "queer culture rapidly transformed into a sort of 'sexual deviancy' that needed to be quashed."⁷ Along with the rest of the United States, Miamian homosexuals became deviants almost overnight directly because of the association of homosexuality with communism and Soviet Russia by various institutions. The scrutiny behind their existence in the federal government largely related to the "uncivilized" nature of homosexuality existing amongst the ranks of federal workers.⁸ In addition to action on the federal level, doctors and other "experts" published fear-mongering dialogue about homosexuality in local papers which, when combined with municipal responses, created a united front against the homosexual community.

The Miami city government became more alert to the threat of homosexuals and organized retaliatory efforts to combat homosexuality and put these "perverts" in their place. On November 20, 1953, Miami Beach police received a complaint about "males with a feminine bent" congregating at the 22nd Street beach. Immediately, the police detained and interrogated twenty-one people whom law enforcement perceived as a threat to the community. Most significantly, the police chief remarked that, though no charges could be brought against these men, "it's just a question of...letting undesirables know they're not wanted here."⁹ The November 1953 raid by the police was the beginning of five years of consistent attacks on homosexuals in Miami.

6 Capó, "It's Not Queer to Be Gay," 64.

7 Capó, 64.

8 Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 9.

9 Stephen Flynn, "Turn-About Not Fair Play, Says Beach Police," *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), November 21, 1953.

Police and local government officials framed their vigilance against gay Miamians as a defense against delinquency. The term “delinquency” had become an umbrella term that meant any individual who strayed outside of social norms and thus became a threat to the American way of life. Divisive and politically charged narratives about the Cold War pushed many parents to fear for their children’s psychological safety because public officials and social scientists all proclaimed that any deviant behavior started in the home.¹⁰ There was a clear connection of indescency and intolerance related to homosexuality in all sectors. The anti-queer campaign responded to fears about the teaching of children, the moral standing of the federal government, and the policing of gay men in Miami—which all required good moral standing—a standard which federal government officials set. The Cold War accentuated these tendencies, as politicians stood firm in their belief of a united America against the unprincipled and evil tenets of communism. These, they believed, included homosexuality.

Often, sexual deviancy became connected directly to those in the LGBTQ+ community. Miami officials claimed that homosexuals accounted for the large spike in sexually transmitted infections. As a Miami policeman declared, “a homosexual has no morals. He will go out and he’ll make ten, fifteen contacts without any problem at all.”¹¹ Gay people in Miami became the scapegoats for all sexual immorality in the city due to their close association with sex work. This became the platform for city officials to assault the LGBTQ+ community and send an unwelcoming message.

Delinquency was neither limited to Miami nor homosexuals. Across American presidential administrations and all distinct levels of government, delinquency became the rallying cry to control crime and uphold “traditional” American values. The bar was set high as one official in the administration of John F. Kennedy stated that “controlling youth crime would be ‘only a small part of a large and just reward.’”¹² Whether deviant behavior came from African-Americans, homosexuals, or any other marginalized group, criminal justice initiatives claimed that stopping all delinquency would signal the consolidation of the American experience and a quicker end to the Cold

10 Elizabeth Kai Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 36-38.

11 Capó, 75.

12 Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 37.

War. Thus, Miami officials targeted homosexuals in order to fulfil this lofty ideological dream.

Upon his appointment in 1953, Mayor Abe Aronovitz championed the eradication of delinquency. He handily won his election to the Miami city commission in the November election and was in turn chosen to be the twenty-second mayor of the city. His acceptance speech foreshadowed his future intentions as Aronovitz casually argued that “we must call the shots as we see them.”¹³ Aronovitz advocated for a more blunt and direct form of policing that included attacking LGBTQ+ Miamians openly; the newly elected mayor would not allow bureaucracy to get in the way of his crusade against indecency. Later, in an article entitled “Mayor Previews New Era for Miami,” the reporter claimed that Aronovitz wanted to “maintain moral conditions which will put the Crime Commission out of business.”¹⁴ Aronovitz expressed a clear vision of the need for a strict moral code, which in turn would cease the need for bureaucratic committees such as the Crime Commission. The new code would entrust the police force, in particular its leaders, with setting the standards for the city of Miami rendering the appointed Crime Commission useless. Aronovitz’s commentary foreshadowed a reset of police practices which would mirror the beach raid of 1953 yet would be even more extensive, violent, and discriminatory.

The LGBTQ+ community responded with its own fiery statements. *ONE* Magazine was the first gay magazine published in the United States, and it featured letters and story submissions from across the country, especially urban centers like Miami. In the words of historian Fred Fejes, the magazine’s foundations were based on the idea that “homosexuals had a fundamental right to exist in American society. They had the same rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as anyone else.”¹⁵ With this mission, the magazine saw an imperative duty to denounce Miami’s city and policing policies. An article published in January 1954, by Dale Jennings, editor of *ONE*, responded to the beach police raid of the previous November. *ONE* Magazine not only called out politicians (including the director of Aronovitz’s

13 Luther Voltz, “Miami Expenses Slashed Fast by New Commission,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), November 27, 1953.

14 “Mayor Previews New Era for Miami,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), January 3, 1954.

15 Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America*, SUNY Series in Queer Politics and Cultures (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), 18.

ill-fated crime commission) but also informed its readers about their rights. The article claimed in capital letters that one cannot be arrested without a charge and that “NO ONE CAN BE LEGALLY CHARGED WITH MERELY A STATE OF BEING.”¹⁶ The LGBTQ+ community’s response in *ONE* magazine represented a call to action but also was an important space to deal with trauma; police forces like those in Miami were committing acts of aggression all over the country, which, as the 1950s continued, would only continue to get worse.

“D-DAY”: The Height of Miami Police Raids on LGBTQ+ Spaces

The new mayoral administration brought renewed vigor in its response to the threat of delinquency. Seeing homosexuals as the pinnacle of the threat, the Aronovitz administration called for a resounding police effort to suppress them and to ensure that they would not remain a threat to the rest of society. Aronovitz had an ally in the media, specifically the *Miami Herald*. The *Herald* not only published anti-LGBT columns such as those written by medical professionals but also, according to Fred Fejes, “strove hard to keep the Cold War before its readers with large front-page headlines and daily editorials devoted to the international situation and the threat of world communism.”¹⁷ These considerations fanned fears among *Herald* readers about the connections between communism and homosexuality and emboldened them to support anyone who would promise to fight back against social delinquency. All of these elements were at play when the First Unitarian Church in Miami held a forum entitled “Homosexuality: Cause, Society, and Crime.” The *Miami Herald* was quick to support Aronovitz’s anti-homosexual campaign. He served as a panelist at the conference, along with other notable figures such as Jack Kapschan, a psychology professor at the University of Miami.¹⁸ This forum propelled Aronovitz’s anti-homosexuality campaign forward. By August 1954, the Miami police force and the officials at city hall were prepared

16 Dale Jennings, “Miami Junks the Constitution,” *ONE Magazine*, January 1954, 17.

17 Fred Fejes, “Murder, Perversion, and Moral Panic: The 1954 Media Campaign against Miami’s Homosexuals and the Discourse of Civic Betterment,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9, no. 3 (July 2000): 319.

18 “Homosexuality Forum Topic,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), January 11, 1954.

to launch a full-scale assault.

In early August 1954, Lt. Chester Eldridge of the Miami Police Department published a piece in the *Herald* encouraging the entire city to face what he called the “pervert problem.” On the front page of this particular edition, Eldridge called for the separation of sexual deviants from society and for the education of youth in the homes and in schools.¹⁹ In a separate article in the *Herald*, reporter Bert Collier urged Miami officials to obtain funding to build a treatment center for sexual delinquents. While this new institution’s policies promised to focus on returning patients to society, the decision “should be determined by persons most skilled in evaluating abnormal human behavior.”²⁰ The adamant pleas for reform of sexual delinquency were not limited to one officer; it was an effort that was made by the entire Miami Police Department. These pleas culminated in the police department’s announced plan to raid “hangouts” that apparently housed communities of “perverts.” City manager E. A. Evans “returned to his desk after a Canadian vacation to find Mayor Abe Aronovitz...adamant on a change in police policy.”²¹ Aronovitz was tired of lackluster police responses to deviance and forced Evans’s hand to organize a massive task force.

By September 1, 1954, plans had been arranged for the Miami police to embark on the largest anti-deviancy effort in Miami’s history. The *Herald* published the headline, “Evans sets Thursday as D-Day.” Luther Voltz explained that rumors of gay Miamians paying off police had motivated Aronovitz to order the strike. Evans complied with the mayor’s demands and reassured the public that “it will be handled.”²² The militarization of this event is notable as it was referred to as “D-Day”; this was Aronovitz’s war and he intended to win it. With all of the pieces in place, the raids began on September 2, 1954. In that day’s edition of the *Herald*, the paper again justified the raids and celebrated the police’s intention to “throw the book at night spots catering to perverts” and to make “arrests for vagrancy and...

19 Chester Eldridge, “Official Urges Society to Face Pervert Problem,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), August 11, 1954.

20 Bert Collier, “\$200,000 Outlay Urged for Center to Treat Deviates,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), August 11, 1954.

21 Luther Voltz, “Evans Sets Cold War on Perverts,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), August 31, 1954.

22 Luther Voltz, 1954.

to hold suspected perverts for venereal disease checks.”²³ The publication of police raids are notable as, Fred Fejes explains, “the goal was to guarantee that homosexuality be regarded as stigmatized behavior for which... there would be no public tolerance.”²⁴ The use of the *Miami Herald* as the local government’s mouthpiece gave legitimacy to the raiding and a sense of security to the reading public. Aronovitz wanted it to be known that the alleged “perverts” would be completely brought under control.

Regardless of Aronovitz’s bold moral strategy, the “D-Day” of September 2, 1954, utterly failed. The publication of the police raids only alerted gay Miamians to stay home and very few arrests were made. Smaller articles appeared in the *Herald* over the next few days discussing a case in which the “Police Net 4 Bar Men in Purge.”²⁵ City Manager Evans admitted that their publication strategy failed, but he still sought to “rid the city of an undesirable situation which has developed.”²⁶ The government still had plenty of remaining motivations to attack the homosexual community, and many gay Miamians remained vigilant to this threat. *ONE Magazine* published an open letter written to them from Mayor Aronovitz in which he claimed, “I have never advocated harassing homosexuals or other deviates.”²⁷ LGBTQ+ advocates at *ONE* denounced this claim as completely untrue and took Aronovitz to task for his previous calls for violence against homosexuals. The city of Miami and its homosexual community were now truly at war with one another.

Although the invasion of homosexual spaces did not pan out, resentment about gay Miamians persisted. The city of Miami had institutionalized the “vice squad,” which, as Anna Lvovsky describes, embodied “this rising demand for vice enforcement...accompanied by the state’s growing capacity to perform it.”²⁸ The process had become cyclical all over the country: news-

23 Luther Voltz, “Pervert Cleanup Starts Tonight,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), September 2, 1954.

24 Fejes, “Murder, Perversion, and Moral Panic,” 342.

25 “Police Net 4 Bar Men in Purge,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), September 3, 1954.

26 “Miami Memos: Drive to Continue,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), September 4, 1954.

27 “Untitled,” *ONE Magazine*, January 1955, 36.

28 Anna Lvovsky, *Vice Patrol: Cops, Courts, and the Struggle over Gay Urban Life before Stonewall*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 5.

papers and other institutions denounced homosexual activity and associated it with communism, the public became fearful of the deviant, and local governments saw the opportunity to strike. The previous two sections have exhibited the use of this cycle in Miami with the rise of Mayor Aronovitz and his attempt to squash “deviant” behavior. Although these efforts were only marginally successful, larger bodies of government took notice and a collaborative effort soon emerged.

The Senate Comes to Miami: Local Government Involvement in Senate Judiciary Hearings

In December 1954, the United States Senate held the first of two hearings in Miami related to juvenile delinquency. The *Miami Herald* cited a jump in crime as the reasoning behind the Senate’s visit to Miami. Senator Robert Hendrickson of New Jersey, the chair of the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, prepared to face the “challenge” ahead of him in attempting to fix these problems.²⁹ On December 16, the hearing began with several different local officials, including Mayor Aronovitz, providing testimony. Aronovitz claimed that Miami had “accumulated...seven or eight thousand perverts, which was amazing and astounding to our decent church-going and church-loving people.”³⁰ In addition to these exaggerated claims, Aronovitz blamed his police chief, Walter Headley, for allowing sexual delinquents to “congregate” and also called for a “specific law prohibiting the transportation of males for immoral purposes.”³¹ As Julio Capó explains, this was Aronovitz’s attempt to change the “Mann Act...to help control Miami’s ‘homosexual problem.’”³² The Mann Act, which Congress enacted in 1920, sought to end the interstate trafficking of women (specifically young girls) for sex work; Aronovitz wanted to revise the law to include males which would specifically target gay men in Miami who participated in sex work. In

29 Bert Collier, “Youth Crime Increase to Be Aired Thursday,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), December 12, 1954.

30 U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency in the U.S. Senate; Committee on the Judiciary*, 83rd Congress, 2nd session, Dec. 16, 1954, 103.

31 U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, 104.

32 Capó, “It’s Not Queer to Be Gay,” 80.

this hearing, Aronovitz defended his city and did his best to report stability and accountability to the Senate Subcommittee, throwing blame off him and onto others. This mirrors his other statements made to *ONE* magazine and the *Miami Herald*.

Chief Walter Headley's testimony in some respects contradicted Aronovitz's. When asked about the ability of police to repress the homosexual problem, Headley responded that "it just spreads them out somewhere else. They are still here."³³ This testimony contradicted Mayor Aronovitz's stance that all was well. But Headley's testimony also questioned policing methods as they related to homosexuality. Regardless, Headley stood by these methods when asked if he had any legislative suggestions: "I think the problem can be attacked with the laws that we now have, with more people to do it."³⁴ Headley, as chief of police, was more candid about Aronovitz's anti-homosexual campaign. Still, Headley wholeheartedly believed in the expansion of the police force in order to combat delinquency. It is important to note that all of the senators on the subcommittee agreed with Headley's proposal for more police as opposed to the need for new laws; this suggests agreement among the federal and local levels in order to combat the issue. The blind commitment by senators to keep the status quo in Miami suggests that the problem was indeed artificial and that the committee preferred to support the police instead of passing unnecessary laws. The narrative was sufficiently upheld, as seen in the *Herald*, because all of the witnesses generally "maintained that there is no major juvenile delinquency problem in this area."³⁵ Chief Headley was the most transparent of the witnesses yet still stuck to the company line that Aronovitz insisted upon. In order to maintain a sense of security, many in Miami's local government felt the need to lie to the Senate committee.

Another hearing held almost a year later in 1955 brought few changes. Mayor Aronovitz insisted, much more frankly, that Miami had almost no cases of juvenile delinquency and reminisced that "when I was a boy, I never

33 U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency in the U.S. Senate; Committee on the Judiciary*, 83rd Congress, 2nd session, Dec. 16, 1954, 7.

34 U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, 11.

35 Bert Collier and David Kraslow, "How Vices Trap Young Spelled Out at Hearing," *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), December 17, 1954.

knew anything about the practice of perversion.”³⁶ The sentimental flashback to his childhood suggests his motivation: his drive to keep Miami at the pinnacle of moral behavior and to reassure the country that his city was not a place for sexual deviancy.

The most important takeaway from these Senate Subcommittee hearings was the acknowledgment of deviancy that suggested its nonexistence. Mayor Aronovitz railed against sexual immorality and deviancy throughout his testimony, yet claimed that Miami was devoid of it. This represents a general thread that ran through the different levels of government. During the Lavender Scare that occurred on the federal level, it was common to see assertions of “records that did not exist or that could not legally be made public.”³⁷ These records falsely implicated officials who were not included in the Lavender Scare by painting a picture of a cover-up. Similarly, in Miami, rumors circulated about policemen allegedly being bribed by homosexuals. In both the federal Lavender Scare and the cases in Miami, government officials wanted to create and exaggerate a problem but also keep it under appropriate control. As renowned sex researcher Alfred Kinsey wrote, “hysteria thrives best when only a small segment of the picture is understood.”³⁸ The goal of these policies made by both local and federal governments was to create chaos and then squash it in order to reinforce conformity.

The 1955 hearing also interviewed witnesses, primarily mayors and city leaders from across the state, who suggested a shift in the delinquency problem. *ONE* magazine described this shift in the article “Miami’s New Type Witchhunt.” Lyn Pederson claimed that “politics in Florida is a rough and dirty game” and that any elected official must subscribe to the “undying opposition to reds, ‘queers,’ integration- and corruption.”³⁹ Across the state of Florida, politicians, like Mayor Aronovitz, joined a statewide campaign against homosexuality that emerged. Significantly, this campaign focused less on police raids and more on the everyday lives of homosexuals and their interaction with “proper” society.

36 US Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Hearing before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate*, 84th Congress, 1st session, Nov. 16, 1955, 50.

37 Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 87.

38 Johnson, 88.

39 Lyn Pederson, “Miami’s New Type Witchhunt,” *ONE Magazine*, April/May 1956, 10.

The Decline(?): The Evolving Campaign against Homosexuality in Greater Florida

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a decline of the aggressive local responses toward homosexuality as seen in 1954. However, discriminatory policies toward homosexual activity did not disappear. Rather, they became institutionalized. In 1958, police arrested forty-seven people in raids across Miami Beach. *ONE* magazine republished an article that appeared in the *Miami Herald* on June 3, 1958, the day after the raids. In it, columnist Jack Kofoed questioned if Miami was “returning to that sort of system... Can anyone be arrested, because he does not fit a cop’s concept of what a visitor to Miami Beach should be?”⁴⁰ Evidently, this writer for the *Herald* acknowledged some injustice in this case, with a majority of those arrested taken in on trumped-up moral charges. Although “police raids” were not occurring as often as in the early 1950s, Miami still saw policemen condemn and arrest swaths of people based on their alleged homosexual activity. In addition to that, discrimination against homosexuals had spread beyond the police force, entering other institutions in Miami and around the state of Florida.

Police interaction with homosexuals had been institutionalized by the 1960s., thus not requiring the extravagant efforts seen by Aronovitz in 1954. Consider the case of Tim from Miami. Tim had lived in Miami for several years before he “was arrested, jailed, and his bail was set at the exorbitant amount of \$6,000.”⁴¹ While this experience seems excessive by today’s standards, during the 1950s this type of police interaction had become standard. Tim was arrested primarily because “he had been named during a large-scale homosexual crackdown in Miami, which was notorious for antigay crackdowns in the 1950s.”⁴² Even in 1961, Miami’s police were still attempting to restrict large groups of homosexuals and conducting individual investigations rather than large-scale raids. Yet, this quieter method of investigation was just as destructive and just as discriminatory.

The attacks against homosexuality cast a wider net than just policing; reforms made by Florida’s state government to the education system specifically targeted homosexuals. In terms of education, the state legislature began

40 Jack Kofoed, “Beach roundup,” *ONE Magazine*, August 1958, 28.

41 Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 115.

42 Loftin, 115.

to examine universities and public schools for homosexual and immoral activity as an arm of the Florida Legislative Investigative Committee. In 1960, the *Herald* reported that “fourteen Florida school teachers with questionable morals were kicked out of the profession this year.” In addition, “the moral charges involve homosexuality,” and the teachers “came from all over the state, including Miami.”⁴³ The Florida legislature swiftly condemned homosexuality in public schools as well as in universities. An investigative group, known as the Johns Committee, specifically targeted homosexual professors and students at Florida state institutions. The committee’s investigations into homosexual activity at the University of Florida reportedly “hired a former FBI agent to run the campus security department” and was “running a ‘purge’ of homosexuals at the school.”⁴⁴ Schools across the state began to form their own investigative committees, with hundreds of Floridians being outed and kicked out of the most esteemed universities in the state. The evolution of homosexual discrimination began costing gay Floridians more than a night in jail; they began to lose coveted professorships, spots at universities, and their entire livelihoods.

Consequently, homosexuals also were blamed for a rise in venereal disease. An article published in the *Herald* disclosed a number of diseases that were rising in the Miami area and argued that “syphilis has sharply increased, largely due to increased juvenile delinquency and homosexuality.”⁴⁵ Not only did the article provide yet another example of the correlation between juvenile delinquency and homosexuality, it also directly linked a rise in disease to homosexual activity, which had never been so candidly done before. Institutions such as the media and the local government found new ways to exploit the homosexual community and continue the cyclical trend of fear-mongering and suppression.

A report was published in 1964 about homosexual activity in Florida that symbolized the culmination of the efforts of the State Legislature. The forty-page document provided a listing of the tropes given to homosexuals in Florida and across the nation. The report claimed that, “in Florida, known

43 “14 Teachers Fired on Morals Counts,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), December 8, 1960.

44 Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 134.

45 H.G. Davis, “2 Contagious Diseases Climb Sharply in Dade,” *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL), July 31, 1961.

homosexuals have ranged from ill-paid field hands to individuals at the highest levels of government, commerce, and culture.”⁴⁶ In order to reinforce fears about homosexuals, the report further suggested that homosexual activity was found anywhere and everywhere. In addition, the report directly linked homosexuality to sexual deviancy (ranging anywhere from immoral conduct to child molestation) and that “the homosexual...tends to neuroticism and mental imbalance.”⁴⁷ The report concluded with several images of child pornography and suggested a “homosexual fixation on youth.”⁴⁸ While in modern society this report is horrifying, it was duly praised in 1964. In particular, a resident in Miami thanked the committee: “I admire you very much for publishing this booklet and I do hope it will shock our State Legislature into making some new and stiff laws to control these sex deviates.”⁴⁹ The report reveals two important conclusions from the previous decade. One, rather than changing the narrative about homosexuals, attitudes remained essentially the same as they were in 1953, and they morphed into new anti-gay policies. Second, and most significantly, the attack on homosexuals in Miami and the state of Florida had not faded over time. Instead, they were normalized.

Conclusion

Miami was a bellwether for treatment of LGBTQ+ individuals during the 1950s and 1960s. The local government of Miami emulated the federal government’s strategies in order to ensure conformity and reject delinquency during the early Cold War period. Mayor Aronovitz directed his municipality and police force to openly attack LGBTQ+ spaces in order to rid his city of “perverts,” who were suspected and accused of being “communists.” Aronovitz and his officials testified before Senate subcommittees that mobilization of the police was the best strategy and that delinquency was on the decline. By the end of the 1950s, police raids in Miami became less common. Instead,

46 *Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida: A Report of the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee*, Tallahassee: The Committee, 1980, 6.

47 *Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida*, 14.

48 *Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida*, 34.

49 Lvovsky, 244.

the state government took other measures, such as investigating the public education system, to eject homosexual activity from “normal” society. Delinquency and sexual deviancy took the form of an acknowledged yet ignored problem; local officials were absolutely willing to scare the public about homosexuality yet never admit that the “problem” affected their city. In the end, the impact on the LGBTQ+ community was enormous: gay Miamians, in particular, lived through tumultuous times dodging police interrogations and hiding their true identity. Discriminatory action, as seen in the early Cold War, has never truly been eradicated even today.

COLONIALISM,
SLAVERY, *and* LIBERATION

Fighting on the Homefront: Women of Color and Their Impact on the Haitian Revolution

KIANA POLANIN

ABSTRACT

Women's roles in the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) remain under studied. However, women of color, in particular—both enslaved and free—actively contributed to the revolutionary process that challenged slavery and colonialism. Free women of color had a variety of economic, social, proprietary, and legal liberties prior to the beginning of the revolution. I argue that these liberties exercised in Saint Domingue were the principal motivating factors inspiring enslaved women to play such a large role in the Haitian Revolution. Enslaved women actively participated in the revolution via various methods, including exercising control over pregnancies, conducting religious ceremonies, and fighting in battle. Their involvement broke traditional gender roles and at times challenged the status quo. During and after the revolution, some women of color sought shelter from violence or wanted a new life away from the absolutist leadership. This essay will focus on free women of color and enslaved women's crucial impact upon the Haitian Revolution and, conversely, how the Haitian Revolution affected women.

Women's roles in the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) remain under studied. Women of color, in particular—both enslaved and free—actively contributed to the revolutionary process that challenged slavery and colonialism. Free women of color had a variety of economic, social, proprietary, and legal liberties prior to the beginning of the revolution. For instance, the notary records of legally binding transactions in Cap Français during the eighteenth century provide an independent, hardworking, and often luxurious portrayal of free women of color, directly linked to their liberties. I argue that these liberties exercised by free women of color in Saint Domingue were the motivating factors that inspired enslaved women to play such a large role in the Haitian Revolution. Enslaved women participated in the revolution by exercising control over pregnancies, con-

ducting religious ceremonies, and fighting in battle. Cécile Fatiman was an enslaved woman and mambo priestess who took leadership roles and helped lead the Bois-Caïman ceremony, a voodoo ceremony that was considered to be one of the starting points of the Haitian Revolution.¹ This article will include analysis of a written history from 1791 that commented on women in battle as well as recent historiography regarding the economic and direct and indirect ways in which women of color were involved in rebellion. Through the evaluation of these sources, it becomes clear that the liberties exercised by free women of color were a driving force for enslaved women, who made a crucial impact upon the Haitian Revolution.

Historical Background

The Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), the first and largest slave rebellion in the Western Hemisphere, included complex racial, social, economic, political, and gendered narratives. In *Revolutions in the Atlantic World*, historian Wim Klooster argues that divisions about the meanings of the revolution were so strong at times that they resembled a civil war.² The gender divisions proved crucial, as enslaved men and women experienced slavery very differently. White men, white women, free men of color, free women of color, and enslaved men all oppressed enslaved women, who were at the bottom of the social hierarchy. This hierarchy not only displayed dominance over women but was also a method of producing more enslaved people. Moreover, it was significantly more difficult for enslaved women to obtain skilled jobs than enslaved men.³ One of the most prosperous cities in Saint Domingue was the commercial port Cap François, where the population of free people of

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- 1 Aisha K. Finch, "Cécile Fatiman and Petra Carabalí, Late Eighteenth-Century Haiti and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Cuba," in *As if She Were Free: A Collective Biography of Women and Emancipation in the Americas*, ed. Erica L. Ball, Tatiana Seijas, and Terri L. Snyder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 293.
 - 2 Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History, New Edition* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 4. Klooster is a specialist in the history of the Atlantic world. His work primarily focuses on comparative colonialism of the Americas, the age of Atlantic Revolutions, and Caribbean history.
 - 3 David P. Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women in Saint Domingue," in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 260.

color was almost equivalent to that of the white populations. It was in Cap Français that a plethora of free women of color engaged in wealthy lifestyles.

Chapter 1 | Free Women of Color Prior to the Haitian Revolution

Unlike enslaved women, free women of color enjoyed substantial economic, proprietary, legal, and social liberties. Free women and men of color were very diverse in terms of occupation, wealth, culture, and phenotype.⁴ In the French Caribbean, free women of color included all who were either manumitted or born free, e.g. mulatto, black, and others of mixed blood.⁵ All had various backgrounds and different journeys to freedom; however, once freed, they actively participated in society. The various independent actions free women of color took did not go unnoticed by enslaved women and were the driving force for enslaved women's fervent participation in the revolution.

Free women of color in Cap Français were frequently involved in the buying and selling of enslaved people. Economic advancement allowed former enslaved women to gain acceptance in a free society and to ascend from a lower to a higher social level.⁶ Médéric-Louis-Elie Moreau de Saint-Méry was one of the most prominent observers of late eighteenth-century Saint Domingue.⁷ Although he suggested that all free women of color earned their living as mistresses or prostitutes, they actually had varied occupational roles.⁸ While some free women of color had jobs that depended on men, a majority solely ran large domestic establishments, were landlords, or bought and sold luxury goods, which were in high demand. Further, free women of color who owned retail businesses often received credit from white merchants. Elisabeth Bonne Femme, a free woman of color and owner of a shop on the corner of Rue Royale and Saint François Xavier, borrowed 1,260 livres from

4 Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women," 270.

5 Susan M. Socolow, "Economic Roles of the Free Women of Color of Cap Français," in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), 279.

6 Laura Foner, "The Free People of Color in Louisiana and St. Domingue: A Comparative Portrait of Two Three-Caste Slave Societies," *Journal of Social History* Vol. 3, No.4 (1970), 406.

7 Socolow, "Economic Roles," 279.

8 Socolow, 279.

a white merchant for three months in 1784.⁹ Additionally, Femme was able to sublet part of her apartment to Victoire Arelise, a free Black woman.¹⁰ Free women of color, such as Femme and Arelise, were able to manage their own businesses, pay to maintain their homes, and borrow money to do so. Enslaved women did not have such economic opportunities. Instead of achieving economic prosperity and social mobility as did some free women of color, enslaved women participated in the Haitian Revolution to gain this independence.

Another avenue available to free women of color was the ability to own enslaved peoples. Some historians have argued that free people of color purchased enslaved people to emancipate their kin. Susan Socolow, a historian who, among others, has drawn attention to the economic aptitude of women of color in Saint Domingue, found that legal records from Cap Français indicate that free women of color frequently bought and sold slaves for economic profit as well.¹¹ Simone Brocard was a free-born mulatto woman who by the age of twenty had become a merchant, property owner, and a slaveowner.¹² Brocard often bought and sold slaves and set the terms of the deal in ways that uniquely benefitted her, which showed her economic prowess. Brocard once sold a young, enslaved woman to a free Black mason who demanded a high price. However, Brocard imposed a condition upon the sale: if the man were ever to sell the slave, she would be offered to Brocard first.¹³ Her economic fortitude exemplifies the various economic opportunities for free women of color. According to Socolow, Brocard also used her legal independence to control her profits from the slave trade as she “also authorized her surrogate to settle her accounts, pay outstanding debts, collect monies due her, and reclaim ‘the different blacks which belong to her... actually runaways.’”¹⁴ Brocard’s economic liberties were not only rooted in her ability to own and sell enslaved men and women, but also in her ability to delegate power in a way that benefitted her economically.

9 Socolow, “Economic Roles,” 279.

10 Socolow, 284.

11 Socolow, 285.

12 Socolow, 290.

13 Socolow, 291.

14 Socolow, 290.

The ability for free women of color to own land, and its frequent occurrence, was a motivating factor for enslaved women to participate in the revolution. Notably, free women of color could own property that they either purchased themselves or inherited from their deceased husbands.¹⁵ Female landowners varied from former enslaved women living in cabins on a few acres of land to the primary “proprietors of coffee plantations with large families and forty or more slaves.”¹⁶ The varying amounts of land emphasized that free women of color could own land even if they were not wealthy. Similar to their white counterparts, free Black and mulatto women often appeared in the notary records as they entered into contracts to buy and sell both urban and rural property.¹⁷ Owning land was a sign of wealth, status, and freedom, as owners could cultivate their own properties and created jobs for themselves and potentially increased their income. Jeanne Blaise was a widowed free Black woman who sold a piece of property that she inherited from her free Black husband, Ignace Pompée. The property was located on the corner of Rue Royale and Rue de la Vieille Boucherie in the city of Haut du Cap.¹⁸ Marie, the free Black widow of Alexandre Scipion, purchased the property from Blaise.¹⁹ Not only does this demonstrate that Saint Domingue free women of color could accumulate wealth by buying and selling land, but it also exemplifies their legal right to inherit land. Although enslaved women were not able to enjoy the benefits of these freedoms, their knowledge and craving for the right to own land with freedom helps to explain their involvement in the revolution.

Free women of color participated in various legal actions in Saint Domingue. Their economic independence was not tied to that of a man, for instance these women were active in society, participated in the economy by buying and selling, and entered into wills and other contracts.²⁰ Free women of color could conduct economic and religious transactions and legally mark their marriages. Such documents preserved the transactions, and the gender,

15 Socolow, “Economic Roles,” 282.

16 Geggus, “Slave and Free Colored Women,” 270.

17 Socolow, “Economic Roles,” 282.

18 Socolow, 282.

19 Socolow, 282-83.

20 Socolow, 280.

race, and legal conditions of participating individuals.²¹ Free women of color frequently appeared in notary records, especially in Cap Français, proving their economic interactions. Therefore, legal documents and notary records allow us to trace and prove that women could actively participate in economic transactions.

Enslaved women viewed the Haitian Revolution as an opportunity to attain freedom and amass wealth like free women of color. Slaveholding brought prosperity and social distinction. Regardless of their occupations, Whites and free people of color alike purchased slaves.²² The purchasing and selling of slaves indicated that free women of color not only had the economic means to purchase slaves, but that they also were concerned with their social standing. In Saint Domingue, free people of color were frequently in similar social classes as white planters due to their economic, proprietary, and legal actions noted previously.²³ As an indication of this social demarcation, some free women of color invested in jewelry and lavish wardrobes. Women in Cap Français specifically were described as the most prosperous and glamorous.²⁴ Enslaved women were among those who witnessed free women of color climb the ranks of society first-hand. The elaborate wardrobes worn by free women of color signified not only their wealth but were a constant visible reminder to others of their rise in the social hierarchy. Therefore, enslaved women saw the Haitian Revolution as their opportunity to acquire independence and increase their position in the social hierarchy.

21 Socolow, 280.

22 Socolow, "Economic Roles," 286.

23 Foner, "The Free People," 420.

24 Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women," 270. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show examples of free women of color's elaborate fashion in Saint Domingue.



Figure 1: Fashions of Free Women of Color, Saint Domingue, late 18th century. This image shows the clothing worn by three free women of color in an urban setting. This is an engraving by Nicolas Ponce and emphasizes the elaborate and beautiful clothing free women of color wore.²⁵

Figure 2: Free People of Color Dressed Lavishly, Saint Domingue, late 18th century. This engraving by Nicholas Ponce depicts a free man of color and two free women of color wearing formal attire. Their elaborate outfits emphasize how free women did not hide their affluence but wore it proudly.²⁶

Constantly surrounded by freed women, enslaved women saw possible avenues for freedom and social mobility. Free women of color had a multitude of economic and proprietary privileges, and higher status, that were codified by law. Just prior to the beginning of the Haitian Revolution, an increase in newly freed women shows this trend emerging especially in Cap Français. The acknowledgment and desire for freedom grew as the revolution approached. Many enslaved women then viewed the Haitian Revolution as a means to achieve freedom and gain a higher economic and social status. Therefore, the actions of independence practiced by free women of color

25 "Free Women of Color, Saint Domingue, late 18th cent.," *Slavery Images: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora*, accessed April 26, 2021, <http://www.slaveryimages.org/s/slaveryimages/item/492>.

26 "Free People of Color, Saint Domingue, late 18th cent.," *Slavery Images: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora*, accessed April 26, 2021, <http://www.slaveryimages.org/s/slaveryimages/item/489>.

inspired enslaved women to actively participate in the Haitian Revolution to advance their standing in society.

Chapter 2 | Avenues of Independence: Enslaved Women's Involvement in the Haitian Revolution

Enslaved women directly and indirectly shaped the Haitian Revolution, and their active role in the revolution demonstrated their longing for freedom. Revolt was multidimensional, as it broke gender norms and challenged the status quo in Saint Domingue. Often, what appeared on the surface as female docility, was actually a subtle, calculated, and conscious form of resistance.²⁷ A prime example of this subdued yet effective form of resistance was seen through enslaved women exercising control over their pregnancies, which was much less public than fighting in battle. Further, whether inadvertently or perhaps purposefully, enslaved women's aforementioned actions transcended gender and societal boundaries.

Enslaved women had to endure sexual exploitation not only from white men, but also free men of color and enslaved men. The constant grief, frustration, and fear due to the lack of protection from sexual violence instilled a desire for control of reproductive liberty.²⁸ According to the French *Code Noir*, children belonged to the owner of their mother.²⁹ To encourage live births, planters provided incentives such as extra days off especially for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and also occasionally to enslaved men. In these conditions, men often tried to take control of sexual encounters, thus imposing pregnancies on their partners. Although enslaved women who aborted³⁰ their children made a conscious decision not to reproduce,

27 Bernard Moitt, "Slave Women and Resistance in the French Caribbean," in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 241.

28 Crystal Eddins, "'Rejoice! Your Wombs Will Not Beget Slaves!' Marronnage as Reproductive Justice in Colonial Haiti," *Gender & History*, Vol. 32 No. 3 (2020): 563.

29 Eddins, "'Rejoice!,'" 563.

30 Moitt, "Slave Women," 252. According to Moitt, midwives were open to charges of infanticide and abortion. "Planters believed that women who aborted made a conscious choice not to reproduce and that when they did give birth, they, along with midwives, killed the infants in the first few days of life."

they were punished violently and often put in iron collars.³¹ Their aversion to childbearing to meet plantation demands was not solely a tactic utilized during the revolution, but it certainly increased.³² Enslaved women's refusal to submit themselves to the desires of the plantation owner exemplified their participation in and fervent support of the revolution. Enslaved women chose to liberate their children before birth to save them from enslavement, but also to rebel against those in power during the Haitian Revolution. In this way, women broke the traditional slave system and limited the number of enslaved people a master could own, which was directly detrimental to the production of the plantation.

In "*Rejoice! Your Wombs Will Not Beget Slaves*," Crystal Eddins, a specialist in African Diaspora and Women and Gender Studies, describes how Napoleon Bonaparte's armies traveled to the French Caribbean in order to reinstate slavery. In the combat that ensued, an unnamed rebel woman and her two daughters were condemned to death.³³ As they walked in unison toward their death, the mother consoled her weeping daughters yelling, "Rejoice! Your wombs will not beget slaves!"³⁴ As an enslaved woman and a mother to two enslaved girls, her final statement must have been an accumulated amount of fear, anger, and constant grief that stemmed from the inability to control sexual violence as well as her destiny or the destiny of her children.³⁵ For these enslaved women, and many others, death meant freedom from bondage and reproductive injustice. The women's involvement in the war as rebels illustrated their willingness to fight and take an active role in the Haitian Revolution, even if it threatened certain death.

Conducting religious ceremonies and acting as *Voodoo* queens, enslaved women sought to provide sacred protection to male and female rebels.³⁶ One event in particular, the Bois-Caïman ceremony, was thought to be the ritual that started the Haitian Revolution. The ceremony was led by Cécile Fatiman, a Black mambo priestess whose family was separated by

31 Moitt, 252.

32 Eddins, "Rejoice!," 563.

33 Eddins, 562.

34 Eddins, 563.

35 Eddins, "Rejoice!," 563.

36 Eddins, 562.

slavery in Saint Domingue.³⁷ The Bois-Caïman ceremony took place two years after Moreau de St. Méry published his work regarding the “cult of Vaudoux.” In this account, what St. Méry failed to recognize, however, was that this “terrible weapon” actually exposed Black women’s intimate and effective forms of political consciousness.³⁸ In August 1791, enslaved men and women gathered in the woods of Bois-Caïman. Boukman gave a rousing speech while Fatiman honored ancestral spirits by sacrificing a pig.³⁹ Fatiman’s presence as a leader during this monumental ceremony emphasized enslaved women’s willingness to participate in the Haitian Revolution in order to change their enslaved status. Additionally, Fatiman’s presence and acceptance as a mambo priestess, and as a leader of the ceremony, broke traditional gender norms. Cécile Fatiman’s leadership role in the Bois-Caïman ceremony broke the gendered expectations that were placed upon enslaved women. Further, enslaved women’s involvement in the Bois-Caïman ceremony highlighted how their actions were on the forefront of the Haitian Revolution and not simply the background.

While most of the names of female enslaved rebels are unknown and their bravery and sacrifice unremembered, some female soldiers such as Sanite Belair appeared prominently. Belair, a maroon leader who bravely joined the ranks of other enslaved women fighting,⁴⁰ fought alongside her husband Charles, Toussaint L’Ouverture’s nephew. Both Sanite Belair and her husband were executed in 1802 and “died bravely, both of them, his wife facing the firing-squad and refusing to have her eyes bound.”⁴¹ Belair’s bravery and ferocity shone until her last moments; her willingness to fight and her leadership position in a maroon society no doubt inspired other women to join in the war efforts. Enslaved women regularly risked their

37 Finch, “Cécile Fatiman,” 293.

38 Finch, 301.

39 Finch, 293 and 301.

40 Jayne Boisvert, “Colonial Hell and Female Slave Resistance in Saint-Domingue,” *Journal of Haitian Studies* Vol. 7, No. 1 (2001): 73. One of the most common avenues of resistance for enslaved peoples in Saint-Domingue was marronage, a type of escape. Maroons could be individuals or groups who fled plantations. According to Boisvert, marronage was pivotal in unifying enslaved peoples to participate in more definite forms of resistance. Belair was a leader in a maroon society who eventually fought in battle with the men.

41 Finch, “Cécile Fatiman,” 74.

lives and participated in the fiercest of battles.⁴² Involvement on behalf of women in the revolution was by no means passive, as enslaved women chose a violent and dangerous path while fighting for freedom and independence. Unprovoked by the harsh cruelties of the French (e.g., burning slaves alive), enslaved women demonstrated as much courage as the men.⁴³ Enslaved women contributed greatly to the war efforts and their courage not only aided the revolution, but it also transcended gender boundaries.

While fewer women than men participated in battle, those who fought revealed a juxtaposition between enslaved women's expected societal gender boundaries and reality. Enslaved women did not simply resign themselves to supporting roles in the battle for independence. Some gallantly joined artillery soldiers in Haiti's war for independence against Napoleon.⁴⁴ Enslaved women were not only enlisted to fight or provide moral support, but also to intimidate the enemy. A history from the Médiathèque in Nantes by Listré, a French West Indian lawyer, offered a unique insight regarding enslaved women's actions in camps and in battle during the Haitian Revolution. In his history, Listré recognized the ability of enslaved women and their children to elicit fear in the enemy by dancing, screaming, and singing.⁴⁵ The passionate actions of enslaved women recorded by Listré indicated their fierce disdain for the soldiers they were fighting. This passion, coupled with a lack of reproductive justice and the desire for freedom and liberties, provided enslaved women with the courage and ferocity with which to fight. Further, neither bullets nor bombs shook their iron-clad demeanor; women held hands and chanted louder during the violent commotion.⁴⁶ Enslaved women's active role in battle, moreover, affirmed how the Haitian Revolution transcended existing gender boundaries. Participation of women in the war itself was a testament to this. Instead of sitting on the sidelines of war, which social norms prompted, enslaved women utilized their bravery to instill fear into enemies during war and challenge gender roles.

42 Moitt, "Slave Women," 242.

43 Moitt, 242.

44 Boisvert, "Colonial Hell," 73.

45 History by Listré, 1791, "Women in Rebellion," in *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History*, ed. David Geggus (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2014), excerpt B, 92.

46 Moitt, "Slave Women," 242.

There were many ways for enslaved women to participate in the revolution. As Eddins notes, African-descended women served as spies, nurses, and transporters of ammunition and weapons among other roles.⁴⁷ While these women did not fight directly in the war, their efforts behind the scenes contributed greatly to the revolution. Enslaved women kept spirits high and never succumbed to the pressure; they became the “stronger sex” during wartime, breaking gender boundaries.⁴⁸ Without the constant support, organization, and transportation enslaved women provided behind the scenes, the revolutionary slave troops would have crumbled.

Women, both white and enslaved, were forced to provide for themselves and their children. Interactions between these two groups of women in camps were often violent, as enslaved women challenged the status quo as they mocked white women, forced their service, and whipped them on a ladder.⁴⁹ Before and after the Haitian Revolution, enslaved women were below white men, white women, free men of color, free women of color, and even enslaved men in terms of the social hierarchy. The role reversal present in the camps indicated a shift in the status quo, but also exemplified how desperately enslaved women wanted and deserved freedom and power. While enslaved men and women often worked the same exhaustive jobs, enslaved women had fewer avenues to independence, skill, and prestige.⁵⁰ The accepted social dynamic in the camps was challenged, which emphasized how adamant enslaved women were to uphold their new independence and freedom.

Enslaved women actively participated in the Haitian Revolution in order to obtain freedom and, therefore, the liberties free women of color exercised. Their valiant participation had a crucial impact on the eventual success of the Haitian Revolution in 1804 when independence was declared, and Saint Domingue was named Haiti. Enslaved women often stretched the accepted gender boundaries and challenged the status quo in order to fight for their freedom. Their crucial involvement was due mostly to the desire for independence similar to that of free women of color and the constant oppression enslaved women faced as part of a rigid plantation economy.

47 Eddins, ““Rejoice!”” 562.

48 Moitt, “Slave Women,” 242.

49 Listré, excerpt B, 91.

50 Geggus, “Slave and Free Colored Women,” 262.

Conclusion

Women of color proved important to the victory of the Haitian Revolution. Prior to and during the revolution, free women of color in Saint Domingue enjoyed economic, proprietary, and legal liberties, especially in the wealthy city of Cap Français. The legal and economic records indicate the regularity with which free women of color purchased and owned land. It was these liberties that motivated enslaved women to participate with a grand ferocity during the revolution. Through their active participation and crucial involvement, enslaved women dared to challenge traditional gender roles, and occasionally the status quo. Their involvement in war raises questions as to how many women were involved in other wars throughout history, yet failed to receive proper credit for their efforts. Women of color and their role in the economic prosperity of Saint Domingue, as well as the success of the Haitian Revolution cannot be overlooked, but instead celebrated, shared, and analyzed to create a narrative that regularly includes women.

Paradise in Hell: The Identity of Burden in British Florida

KEVIN LY

ABSTRACT

Life in the provinces of 18th-century East and West Florida was as turbulent and chaotic as the hurricanes that haunted the peninsula. After the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, the Spanish Floridas were ceded to Britain for a short period. In the twenty years that the British governed Florida, the colony continued to be a backwater, unable to reach the socioeconomic prestige of its northern neighbors. Onslaughts of fever and attacks by natives, and eventually, patriot American forces contributed to a continued poor quality of life for British colonists. However, these factors were accentuated by the British parliament's overall indifference toward the colony, leading colonists to question their very own identities as British subjects. My research will analyze the factors that afflicted the colony's poor living conditions, arguing that British complacency and mishandling of the province lead to a shift in colonists' views of their identity as citizens of the Crown.

In 1763, when the British first began to arrive in Florida to see their new land gained from the Spanish, a sense of hope prevailed. In Britain, there was an initial rush for land grants in Florida to imitate the success of other southern colonies such as South Carolina or Georgia. This excitement stemmed from initial reports that emphasized Florida's potential for year-round agriculture. Lieutenant Colonel Robertson remarked that, in Florida, crops could grow "on the sides of rivers" where the soil was rich and "everywhere was productive." He predicted that indigo could be grown year-round.¹ London newspapers zealously advertised British land policies. "Industrious Protestant inhabitants, either from His Majesty's other colonies, or from foreign parts," according to the London Gazette, could profitably

1 "Letters concerning the state of East Florida, relations with the Creek Indians, and disagreements with the Chief Justice" (Correspondence, the National Archives, Kew, CO 5/568 1774/02/21-1774/12/30), 6.

settle the land.² A record number of laborers and immigrants came to Florida. In 1768, Governor Grant noted that Dr. Andrew Turnbull, another prominent planter, sponsored a record 1,403 Mediterranean immigrants. This, he remarked, “was the largest importation of white inhabitants that ever was brought into America at a time.”³ This colonial fervor convinced many that Florida was the next Carolina. In his letter, Colonel Robertson mentioned the “dilapidated” nature of St. Augustine, alluding to the lack of interest in the colony by its previous owners. In St. Augustine, the colonists sensed stale air from the nearby swamps made worse by the oppressive heat. Those who were swept into the speculative fervor believed that East Florida was a paradise, despite the hard labor needed to transform the marshland amid the challenges of fever and intense heat. Raids by Native Americans and, later, Spanish privateers and American rebels, also contributed to the colony’s undoing. However, its ultimate demise reflected internal problems. Prior to the colony’s cession to Spain in 1783, royal authorities had little interest in the colony and its inhabitants. To the British, those who attempted to colonize the diseased hellscape were on their own. Many colonists believed that their mother country had forsaken them with indifference, calling into question the integrity of what it means to be British.

Elizabeth Pilot, the wife of a British officer, arrived in Pensacola and commented on the lack of “free air” surrounding St. Augustine, noting that it “would have been impossible for us to have existed” had it not been for the fresh coastal winds.⁴ The belief that a lack of “free air” led to declining health reflected the popular but inaccurate miasma theory-- that disease resulted from “bad” air emanating from rotting matter. In 1764, when the British assumed control of St. Augustine, still-water swamps containing this mystical miasmic aura remained undrained. Maps from the period show a high density of swamped woodlands bordering crop fields to the west of the

2 *London Gazette*, December 17, 1763, 2.

3 “Letter written by Governor Grant, enclosing a record of the return of settlers embarked by Dr Turnbull for East Florida, listing numbers transported in each ship” (Correspondence; Report, the National Archives, Kew, CO 5/549 1768/07/02), 1.

4 Michelle Arentsen and Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Elizabeth Digby Pilot: Memoir of an Eighteenth-Century Officer’s Wife during His Service in North America: Part I,” *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 96, no. 386 (2018): 6.

city.⁵

Though miasma theory was ultimately debunked, there is truth to the connection between swamps and sickness that always seemed to pervade from behind the tree line. Dr. John Lorimer of British West Florida noted the wetland's role in spreading disease: "The close and marshy situation at Mobile at present is evidently the cause of these fevers."⁶ Specifically, Dr. Lorimer described the prevalence of disease-carrying mosquitoes.

The role of mosquitoes in spreading disease was not particular to Florida; neighboring colonies, such as those in Louisiana and Georgia, also had mosquitoes. What makes Florida's case unique, however, is its position both geographically and economically. The term "entrepot" describes a region that acts as a base for trade, whether by means of shipping logistics or where all goods are imported/exported. Since Florida has a large coastline, the colony became a logistical midway point between Britain, the West Indies, and the rest of the North American colonies. Shipping records kept by Gov. James Grant identify St. Augustine as an entrepot for those traveling between Jamaica, Barbados, and the Carolinas.⁷ However, because of Britain's close trading relations with the West Indies and Cuba, disease found its way alongside the usual cargo of sugar and indigo. In 1764, Governor Johnstone blamed an outbreak of yellow fever in Pensacola on trading ships from the Caribbean.⁸ In 1779, a ship from Jamaica carrying troops to West Florida was quarantined off the coast of Pensacola after smallpox had engulfed the ship.⁹

But what of the effects when disease spread? In 1765, when Dr. Lorimer arrived with a regiment of British troops in Pensacola, they brought yellow fever to the colony. This outbreak was deemed by an officer "beyond anything I ever saw in the West Indies." By the end of that summer, Dr. Lorimer's regiment had buried more than 100 people including four officers

5 William Brasier, George, III, King of Great Britain, and George, IV, King of Great Britain. "SCETCH of the CITY and Environs of S.T AUGUSTINE." Map. 1763. Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center.

6 Laura Harrell, D.S., "Colonial Medical Practice in British West Florida, 1763-1781," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 41, no. 6 (November 1, 1967): 545.

7 "Governor Grant's letter regarding lists of vessels entering and leaving ports of East Florida" (Correspondence, the National Archives, Kew, CO 5/550 1768/12/20).

8 Harrell, Colonial Medical Practice, 543.

9 Harrell, 550.

and five out of six of the officers' wives - 25 percent of the colony's population.¹⁰ Six months after the initial outbreak, half of Lorimer's 31st regiment had been buried.¹¹ Another document identified Elizabeth Pilot as the sole officer's wife who survived, but not before her infant daughter succumbed to the "malignant fever." As the swath of death swept through the colony, Pilot observed that "coffins could not be got to bury the dead"—instead, bodies were transported in makeshift "orderly coffins" that were deposited in mass graves.¹² The sheer scale of the pestilence cannot be overstated. The medical scholarship on the outbreaks indicates that the high fatality rates resulted from simultaneous epidemics of multiple diseases. A dangerous concoction of yellow fever, dysentery, typhus, and malaria made short work of those who contracted it.¹³

Central to the outbreak of disease was a general lack of shelter from the brutal Florida weather. Where there was shelter from previous tenants of the peninsula, it was in poor repair and not substantial enough to house the sudden surge of colonists comfortably. Elizabeth Pilot observed the colony's abysmal housing and described it as a collection of hovels, or "miserable huts covered with palmettos."¹⁴ The same sentiment was echoed in an edition of the London-based *Gentleman's Magazine* in which an anonymous "gentleman" wrote that he was "shocked to see so dismal a place."¹⁵ Amusingly enough, this letter was published directly underneath a promotional advertisement written by Gov. George Johnstone of British West Florida that promoted Pensacola's status as "the most pleasant part of the new world."¹⁶ It is important to note that these two accounts that described the housing situation were very similar in their descriptions. Both mentioned the governor's house and the three dwellings that accompanied it (separate from the temporary huts

10 Robert R. Rea, "Graveyard for Britons," *West Florida, 1763-1781*, *Florida Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1969): 347.

11 Elizabeth Digby Pilot, "Elizabeth Pilot, Autobiography," *Early Visions of Florida*, n.d., <https://earlyfloridalit.net/elizabeth-pilot-autobiography/>.

12 Deborah L. Bauer, "...in a Strange Place...": The Experiences of British Women during the Colonization of East & West Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 89, no. 2 (2010): 162. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29765165>.

13 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 348.

14 Arentsen and Hurl-Eamon, "Elizabeth Pilot," 120.

15 George Johnstone, "Proclamation," *Gentleman's Magazine* (February 1765): 75.

16 Johnstone, "Proclamation," 77.

that dotted the landscape). What is interesting about this similarity is that the letter in the magazine was written in October 1764, while Mrs. Pilot wrote her journal account in July 1765.

Wet summers and autumn rains in West Florida during the early 1760s contributed to ill health. In 1769, a hurricane tore through St. Augustine, critically damaging Elizabeth Pilot's hut. This incident took place in East Florida, arguably the more developed of the two sister colonies. Nearly seven years after initial British colonization, dwellings were typically constructed of palmettos, and these huts were susceptible to strong storms. For regiments tasked with guarding the colonies, the situation was no better. The 1769 hurricane toppled most of St. Augustine's military housing.¹⁷ In West Florida, both Mobile and Pensacola offered cramped barracks for those unfortunate enough to be stationed there. Major William Forbes observed that "miserable bark huts" lacking fireplaces or windows barracked soldiers in Pensacola.¹⁸ Three years later, in 1766, a makeshift army hospital had only a roof constructed with wooden boards and uncovered windows.¹⁹ The hospitals' cramped housing probably did more to spread disease and, along with other diseases, combined with what was called "hospital fever" that afflicted patients. In Mobile, Governor Johnstone described the wretched conditions in which the smell that emanated from the barracks and hospitals was "sufficient to knock a man down!"²⁰

In analyzing how Britons in Florida lived for the first ten years of colonization, there appears to be a striking theme of abandonment and of a general mishandling of the colony by the empire. Progress in building appropriate accommodations was at a standstill, seemingly without the help of Britain. To improve the care of soldiers in Mobile, a British officer, John Farmar, was forced into purchasing an auxiliary hospital with nearly £200 of his personal funds. Physicians were also scarce; only one surgeon and six hands attended the entire colony.²¹ The British did little to help practitioners to find work; the "extravagant expense" of living in West Florida quickly

17 Bauer, *In a Strange Place*, 160.

18 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 345.

19 Rea, 349.

20 Rea, 346.

21 Rea, 346.

surpassed the meager salary.²² In January 1764, the colony's only surgeon and one accompanying hand were assigned to 275 men in Mobile, twenty-two of whom were sick.²³ In East Florida, officials reported that the colony had only two hospital hands in 1766.²⁴ Imperial officials, indifferent to the outcome, compounded the problem by sending more soldiers during the middle of an epidemic. Despite the protests of Dr. John Lorimer, the empire sent "unacclimated troops at so unseasonable a time."²⁵ It is important to note that dysentery and smallpox were prevalent on the ships carrying troops to Florida. Contained in these cramped quarters, the "putrid bilious fever" became rampant. Uncharacteristically, the recommendations by Lorimer were heeded, and troop transports were temporarily halted between May and September to acclimate new arrivals.²⁶

Once the proper triages were established in makeshift hospitals, an issue arose for West Florida civilians. Though Governor Johnstone acquired the necessary amount of funds to construct the hospitals, the funds granted from King George only allowed official use of such facilities.²⁷ Such a provision was surely offensive to the civilian population no less susceptible to the fever. No record documents that the British Army constructed any accommodations for civilians, most of whom were exposed to the surrounding swamps and mosquitoes. In an appeal to the West Florida government, settlers complained of the "difficulties in the first clearing of a country, and so many diseases incident to such labor."²⁸ Between 1764 and 1765, 268 perished from fever, including women and children.²⁹ Limited medical

22 Hamilton, Peter J. *Colonial Mobile. An historical study, largely from original sources, of the Alabama-Tombigbee basin from the discovery of Mobile bay until the demolition of Fort Charlotte in 1821.* (Boston, New York, Houghton Mifflin and company, 1897), 204.

23 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 540.

24 "Correspondence between Governor Johnstone and Brigadier General Taylor regarding the appointment of assistant surgeons" (Correspondence, the National Archives, Kew, CO 5/584 1766/05/27).

25 Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 204.

26 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 353.

27 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 544.

28 Harrell, 544.

29 William S. Coker, "Pensacola's Medical History: The Colonial Era, 1559-1821," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 77, no. 2 (1998): 185. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30152247>.

facilities also existed in East Florida. Though married to an army officer, Elizabeth Pilot observed that medical aid and medicine remained “limited to the treatment of ill soldiers.”³⁰

At best, the British Empire was aloof in handling the viral epidemic. At worst, Florida was not profitable enough to warrant their attention, evident in sluggish attempts to ship medical supplies to the colony. Indeed, medicine became so scarce that regiments bargained for it. Lorimer secured £14 of medical supplies from Col. Edward Maxwell as compensation for a stolen tea kettle.³¹ Flustered, Lorimer appealed several times to those imperial authorities in Britain to reform the distribution of medicine in Florida. In January 1779, Lorimer proposed that West Florida be granted a “Deputy of the Hospitals in West Florida,” which would shift decision-making power from in distant England to one who would be able to act immediately in requisitioning medicine in Florida.³² Lorimer’s proposal went unheard.

In other instances, medicine was mishandled. A store of medicine in Mobile deemed to hold enough for one thousand men for two years was exhausted in a single year.³³ This mishandling resulted from humid conditions in which the medicines were stored. Military officers urged England to send supplies intermittently “in small quantities” in order to avoid having the medicine “damaged and spoilt by the climate.”³⁴ Despite incessant requests sent to London, the lack of sympathy and credence remained. Even well-respected colonists, such as Dr. John Lorimer, found dealing with Whitehall frustrating. Among an exhaustive list of recommendations for West Florida, Lorimer declared that “some years we have had no medicines or stores sent from England.” He also noted that, because of London’s haphazard seasonal shipping schedule, the arrival of medicine was something to be “guessed at.” Should medicine supplies run short in between shipments, he wrote, new stores could not be expected for a maximum of two years, leaving colonists and soldiers alike “at his own risk or expense.”³⁵ Military commander Frederick Haldimand spent his own money to pay for extra bread rations and to

30 Bauer, *In a Strange Place*, 163.

31 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 356.

32 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 552.

33 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 349.

34 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 542.

35 Harrell, 552.

finance the repair of huts damaged in a fire.³⁶ In taking care of the colony's practice and health, Dr. Lorimer had been put considerably "out of pocket" after spending much of his wages on Peruvian bark for medicinal use.³⁷

Medicinal cargoes destined for Pensacola first had to have braved the sand bars of the port in St. Augustine. The port remained accessible only by sea, and inlets constantly changed because of shifting sands and frequent storms. Consequently, navigating the shallows typically depended on luck. A map by John Lodge depicted the inlets entering the south channel as having water levels as low as eight feet.³⁸ Another contemporary estimated the water at four feet during low tide.³⁹ The variation of depth caught many off-guard. In 1764, the supply ship, the *Industry*, despite having prior experience evacuating Spaniards in 1763, was wrecked on the sand bars beyond the city.⁴⁰ Another ship carrying medicine from New York was also lost in a wreck.⁴¹ Navigating the west coast would only be marginally easier. Captains unfamiliar with the geography of Pensacola could spend indefinite amounts of time navigating the harbor.⁴² A map drawn in 1780 shows the Pensacola harbor measured shallows at the harbor's entrance at only three feet high at the very most.⁴³ The fate of ships like the *Industry* and the general geography of the peninsula resulted in the leisurely pace at which medicine arrived.

36 Robert R. Rea "Brigadier Frederick Haldimand: The Florida Years," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (1976): 528. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30147365>.

37 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 552.

38 Lodge, John. "Plan of the Town and Harbour of St. Augustin, in East Florida," Map. London: Published as the Act directs, Mar. 31st. 1783, by J. Bew Pater Noster Row., (1783), *Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center*, <https://collections.leventhal-map.org/search/commonwealth:z603vg859>

39 Carita Doggett Corse, "DeBrahm's Report on East Florida, 1773," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (1939): 219-26, 224, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30145316>.

40 Chuck Meide, "Cast Away off the Bar": The Archaeological Investigation of British Period Shipwrecks in St. Augustine," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 3 (2015): 359, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43487694>.

41 Rea, *Graveyard for Britons*, 353.

42 "Letter from a Gentleman at Pensacola," *Gentleman's Magazine* (February 1765), 75.

43 George Gauld and Joseph F. W. Des Barres (Joseph Frederick Wallet), "A Chart of the Bay and Harbour of Pensacola in the Province of West Florida," Map. 1780, *Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center*, <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:z603vv386>.

Under health officials such as Lorimer, British West Florida began to mobilize against viral catastrophe. For at least another century, there was no scientific determination that mosquitoes transmitted illness. The prevailing miasma theory meant that health officials targeted swamps, the breeding ground for mosquitoes and “bad air” alike. Indeed, mosquitoes were a pervasive part of living in Florida and were likely the main factor for the initial years of fatal disease in the colony. In a report to his colleague during his travels, William Bartram referred to the permanence of mosquitoes no less than nine times while navigating the Florida wilds.⁴⁴ With the assistance of Commander Frederick Haldimand, Dr. Lorimer and the colonists drained most of the swamps surrounding Pensacola by 1768 while also erecting several new makeshift hospitals.⁴⁵ While the rate of sickness itself did not improve significantly, deaths from fever began to fall by 1770 in Pensacola.⁴⁶ Though the haphazard climate would always present the possibility of fostering tropical ailments, locals minimized these public-health problems.

As tensions grew between the British Empire, the Spanish, Native Americans, and American rebels, Florida became a borderland cut off from the rest of Britain, increasing the unease of settlers and accentuating the already desperate situation. Elizabeth Pilot noticed these complex and inconsistent neighborly disputes firsthand while living in Pensacola and was made “uneasy by some apprehension of war with Spain.”⁴⁷ Within the Florida hinterlands, tension increased in response to the erratic actions of the Creek natives. Though the Picolata Congress of 1765 between the Lower Creek and Seminole tribes and Gov. Grant yielded mutual agreement of an indefinite peace under redefined territories, the agreement was purely symbolic, and native raids on colonists continued. Johnstone complained about Creek “depredations on our infant settlers.”⁴⁸ With the British on shaky ground with their colonial neighbors, the governor ordered a mobilization of West

44 William Bartram, “William Bartram, Report to Fothergill,” *Early Visions of Florida*, n.d., <https://earlyfloridalit.net/william-bartram-report-to-fothergill/>.

45 Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 544.

46 Coker, *Pensacola Medical History*, 185; Harrell, *Colonial Medical Practices*, 547.

47 Bauer, *In a Strange Place*, 179.

48 “Governor Johnstone to John Pownall concerning hostilities between settlers in Florida and American Indian tribes” (Correspondence, the National Archives, Kew, CO 5/584 1766/10/22), http://www.colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/CO_5_584_017.

Florida civilians in 1768.⁴⁹ To Pensacola residents, British troops became their only form of revenue and protection. With the troops gone, what was there left to do? Those who were ordered to mobilize were likewise unhappy about moving to East Florida, having gained somewhat of a loyalty to the land that they built out of nothing. Mrs. Pilot much preferred the breeze of Pensacola harbor, writing that “I should have preferred being at Pensacola, till the expiration of time we were to spend in America.”⁵⁰ Commander Frederick Haldimand of the British Army, though initially resentful of the colony and its “fat merchants,” also preferred Pensacola after experiencing the cramped conditions in St. Augustine.⁵¹ Within two years, orders were sent from Gen. Thomas Gage in New York to reinstate a garrison in West Florida due to an increase in tension with Spanish forces amassing in New Orleans.⁵² To St. Augustine residents, hardly anything was accomplished by the sudden flood of regiments. Plans previously made by Haldimand to remedy the crowding issue in the city were left unresolved and the 21st and 31st regiments left as quickly as they came, but not before pushing already limited resources to the brink.

By the late 1770s and early 1780s, British Florida had fought a war on two fronts: one against the Spanish in West Florida that resulted in the loss of Mobile and Pensacola, the other against intermittent groups of Americans from Georgia and the Carolinas. By 1783, the shores of St. Augustine resembled something much like the hellish River Styx of the Greek underworld, for it was “common to at St. Augustine to see [loyalist refugee] ships aground” and “within two days no less than sixteen vessels... went to pieces here and many persons lost their lives.”⁵³ It was clear that those escaping northern prosecution did so under severe circumstances, with many drowning at sea as a result of the hazardous St. Augustine bar. Those that did arrive safely did not live in comfort for long.

49 Rea, Brigadier Frederick Haldimand, 520.

50 Arentsen and Hurl-Eamon, *Elizabeth Pilot*, 129.

51 Rea, Brigadier Frederick Haldimand, 521.

52 Rea, 522.

53 Wilbur Henry Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785: The Most Important Documents Pertaining Thereto*. (London: DeLand Press, 1929), 119.

Under pressure from their loss in the American Revolution, Article V of the 1783 Treaty of Paris included provisions to unconditionally cede East and West Florida back to Spain.⁵⁴ For the British, ceding the colony back to Spain was only a formality. It was evident for the prior two decades that those in Whitehall simply did not care enough about the colony economically to invest much in the way of medicine or infrastructure. This proved to be the final nail in the coffin for those colonists who had bled many of their years for the home that they cultivated. A feeling of betrayal immediately flowed through St. Augustine, especially among recent arrivals fleeing northern prosecution. “Deserted as we are by our King, banished by our country,” wrote one loyalist from Georgia. “I shall ever tho’ remember with satisfaction that it was not I deserted my King, but my King deserted me” declared another.⁵⁵

Those who had invested in the land over the past decades found no compensation from the empire. One family found humble beginnings in 1767 within the walls of St. Augustine, following work opportunities at various farms until having enough to purchase an indigo plantation in 1779.⁵⁶ Despite spending at least £500 on their property, the Stouts were forced to sell at an extreme loss to the Spanish to arrange for resettling expenditures, without assistance from the empire.⁵⁷ Due to the low demand for property even after the arrival of the Spanish, it was very unlikely the Stouts received more than one-third of the value for their property. One Thomas Courtney, a refugee from South Carolina, sold his home in St. Augustine worth £400 for a measly £53.⁵⁸ The drastic loss of property value and Parliament’s inaction to compensate those in Florida quickly earned the ire of the colonists. This anger at the betrayal by their empire manifested in “The Case of the Inhabitants of East-Florida,” an unpublished pamphlet written anonymously by

54 Maya Jasanoff, “A New World Disorder,” in *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Knopf, 2011), 99-100.

55 Jasanoff, *A New World Disorder*, 100.

56 Barbara Gorely Teller, “The Case of Some Inhabitants of East Florida 1767-1785,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1954): 97-110, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30138991>.

57 Teller, “East Florida,” 103.

58 Carole Watterson Troxler, “Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida, 1783-1785,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (1981): 14, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30148549>.

several “gentlemen” residing in St. Augustine. The pamphlet began by listing the colony’s progress: “the Colony began to flourish, and the inhabitants to reap the fruits of their industry,” also citing that, despite the revolution, the colony “continued unshaken in her loyalty.”⁵⁹ The author(s) then adopted a sardonic, betrayed tone and accused the King of abandonment. They mention the colonists’ zealous defense of the colony and asked, “Are they then to have no compensation for their losses? Is this to be the reward of their past services and zeal?”⁶⁰ This pamphlet would encompass the majority’s sentiment, of all the Stouts and Thomas Courtneys who would flock to St. Augustine at the behest of Britain only to be forced to move once again without recourse or compensation. Now, pinned between the Americans they fled from and the advancing Spanish, the remaining British were wayward souls abandoned by their country.

The decision to cede Florida to Spain did much to undermine the nationalistic identity of the loyalists in Florida. To those loyalists who remained in Florida under Spain, the empire effectively permitted them to submit to Spanish rule, which meant a jettisoning of British values and converting to Catholicism. Such a betrayal of one’s morals seemingly struck a nerve. Governor Patrick Tonyn was accused of being “disgusted with the people who wish to remain in this country” after a George Arons was claimed to have been arrested for not wanting to evacuate the province.⁶¹ Even under Spanish rule, however, enclaves remained of those who still saw themselves as British. In an address to the Crown, some inhabitants respectfully argued against evacuating for the Bahamas or Nova Scotia, citing the “numberless difficulties” faced in colonizing Florida. The address reaffirmed that “whatever the case may be, we ever shall preserve our loyalty to the King” and was signed by about 120 of St. Augustine’s inhabitants.⁶²

Despite the colony’s cession to Spain, some attempted to continue British rule in Florida, favoring the possibility of forging their own splinter group by force. Under John Cruden, an insurrection formed in order to

59 *The Case of the Inhabitants of East-Florida (St. Augustine)*: John Wells, 1784), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044035011345>.

60 *The Case of the Inhabitants of East-Florida*.

61 Troxler, *Loyalist Refugees*, 18.

62 John Forbes, “Address of the “Principal Inhabitants of East Florida” to Governor Tonyn, June 6, 1783,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 8, (1929): 169-73.

protect their property and land from the Spanish—through violence if necessary. Cruden sought to establish a coalition of what he called the “British American Loyalists who took Refuge in East Florida”; he petitioned Spanish King Carlos III for autonomy. Cruden enjoyed a small following, but his efforts quickly spiraled beyond his original ambitions. Resembling terrorists and named the “banditti,” rumors were spread of their goal of overtaking the East Florida government.⁶³ Though Tonym dismissed Cruden as an eccentric, his rhetoric represents the other half of the loyalists in the colony who wished to continue British influence in Florida.

Betrayal, abandonment, hope. All words representing the splintering identities of those who sought refuge on the sandy shores of St. Augustine by the 1780s. Beginning in 1763, when British colonists came to the peninsula, feelings of an unsympathetic government lined with whispers of abandonment continually threatened the sickly province. Because of factors that included logistical incompetence and an unresponsive Parliament, the British colony of Florida was left to its own devices. Despite this, once loyalist refugees began to arrive, and, as word spread about Florida’s cession, it opened a new avenue for discussion about whether to renounce one’s identity or to forge a new one in the colony. It is undeniable the identity of burden that those such as Elizabeth Pilot, Joseph Stout, and Dr. Lorimer had carved out of a land “little better than a desert.”⁶⁴

63 Troxler, *Loyalist Refugees*, 9-13.

64 William Stork, “William Stork, Description of East Florida,” *Early Visions of Florida*, n.d., <https://earlyfloridalit.net/william-stork-description-of-east-florida/>.

Slavery in the Spanish Caribbean: Race, Resistance, and Regional Influence in Puerto Rico, 1800-1898

JESSICA ALVAREZ STARR

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I analyze how Puerto Rico, as a Spanish colony, experienced the Age of Atlantic Revolutions. To do so, I examine the social, economic, and political systems in place within Puerto Rico during the nineteenth century, focusing on the themes of slavery and sugar production, race and class tensions, and popular resistance. While centered within Puerto Rico's national context, I situate this analysis within trans-Atlantic historical studies to understand the island's position within and response to the Atlantic world more broadly. Using newspapers published at the time, as well as government documents, legal records, personal accounts, and existing secondary, scholarly works to gain insight into various local and regional perspectives, I examine the extent to which the Puerto Rican context reflected and responded to other Atlantic revolutions. In particular, I posit that the shared experience of slavery connected Puerto Rico to other colonies in the Americas, in which the plantation economy also served as the basis for local sociopolitical structures, and that regional developments greatly influenced the island's context, ensuring the continuation of both slavery and colonialism in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico.

From 1493 until 1898, Puerto Rico was an extension of the Spanish Empire, along with other colonies in the Americas. During the period of colonial subjugation, slavery significantly impacted Puerto Rico's economic, political, and sociocultural context. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, many colonies across continental Latin America had achieved independence from imperial domination, while the Caribbean islands remained under Spanish control. Liberation movements in other parts of the world, however, influenced the development of nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments in these territories, as the revolts of 1868—the *Grito de Yara* in Cuba and the *Grito de Lares* in Puerto Rico—suggest. In spite of the growing revolutionary fervor, traditional racial and class hierarchies

continued to dominate Puerto Rican society, strengthened by the persistence of slavery until 1873. The island's position within the Atlantic world meant that emerging abolitionist movements and events such as the Haitian Revolution of 1791 had a significant influence on Puerto Rico. The shared experience of slavery connected Puerto Rico to other colonies in which local sociopolitical structures were based on the plantation economy as well, and these connections impacted Puerto Rico's national context to a great extent. Independence movements in surrounding countries influenced the burgeoning Puerto Rican nationalist movement, while global circumstances shaped other aspects of society as well, including existing economic and cultural frameworks. Therefore, regional developments during the Age of Atlantic Revolutions—and the local response to such events—served to ensure the continuation of slavery and colonialism in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico.

The History of Slavery in Puerto Rico

Nineteenth-century Puerto Rico relied on slavery as the basis of its economy, but the impacts of this institution extended beyond the economic realm to define the island's sociopolitical context as well. To study slavery in Puerto Rico or the Spanish Caribbean, one must also confront the concept of race as an aspect of the hierarchies defining Puerto Rican society.¹ Puerto Rican society, from the first moment of colonial domination until current day, has been intrinsically linked to racially charged notions of humanity due to the reliance on slavery as the principal form of economic and sociopolitical organization; it is this institution, therefore, that connects Caribbean territories and has historically defined the region.

During the period of Spanish colonialism, settlers exploited the labor of Indigenous Carib and Arawak populations and forcibly imported enslaved Africans to support Puerto Rico's economic and agricultural development. Slavery, the institutionalization of such exploitative systems, solidified racial and class hierarchies as a key factor defining economic and sociopolitical realities, as well as Puerto Rico's position within the Spanish Empire.² An

1 Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 3.

2 Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874*, 8.

analysis of slavery in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico highlights the legacies of racial and colonial subjugation and suggests the institution's influence on the development of the broader Atlantic world, as the shared history connects otherwise diverse nations' past and current contexts.

Scholars refer to the iterations of slavery in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico and Cuba as 'second slavery,' recognizing the new, distinct characteristics of the institution, such as stricter slave codes and the expansion of technology on plantations.³ Differences in the scale of the slave trade and the implementation of slavery highlight the progression of the institution across geo-temporal bounds, despite the continuities that connect the Atlantic region and its history. Second slavery in the Spanish Caribbean, for example, is inseparable from the Haitian Revolution of 1791—the largest slave rebellion in global history—which challenged the institution of slavery throughout the Atlantic world and provided an opening for other colonies to take over as the center of sugar production.

This shift sparked the intensification of slavery within Cuba and Puerto Rico, among other territories, as colonial authorities aimed to take advantage of this opportunity. After 1791, the number of enslaved individuals brought to the Spanish Caribbean islands—Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Hispaniola—rose drastically. In Puerto Rico alone, this value increased by 849% between 1776 to 1825, with disembarkation numbers growing from 474 enslaved individuals to 4,500.⁴ The scale of the institution was not the only aspect that distinguished second slavery from earlier iterations. The conditions under which enslaved individuals lived also reflected colonists' intensified fears of rebellion, as Spanish officials imposed stricter slave codes and harsher punishments to avoid repeating the events of the Haitian Revolution.⁵

Despite these concerns, the new market opening led many coun-

3 Concept created by Dale W. Tomich in *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004) and explained by Ada Ferrer in *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

4 "Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade - Database," Slave Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, accessed March 7, 2021, <https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database#tables>.

5 Andres Ramos Mattei, "Las condiciones de vida del esclavo en Puerto Rico: 1840-1873," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 43 (1986): 377-390.

tries to expand their use of forced labor in search of economic prosperity; daily work hours increased, overseers prohibited breaks, and owners raised production expectations. Additionally, colonial authorities implemented severe penal codes, often enforced arbitrarily, to provoke fear and promote compliance among enslaved individuals.⁶ For Puerto Rican elites, the increasing population of slaves represented a “constant source of anxiety” as these wealthy colonists “feared a St. Domingue-style racial war.”⁷ Balancing the fear of rebellion with their desire for profit, plantation owners encouraged the development of oppressive legal systems in order to maintain and enhance their control over the enslaved population, in turn influencing economic, political, and social conditions across the island, the Spanish Empire, and the Atlantic world more broadly.

The emergence of second slavery in the Antilles also “forced Spain to refashion its centuries-old colonial regime, in effect constructing a ‘second empire,’” a concept which draws attention to the features distinguishing early Spanish imperialism from that of the nineteenth century, such as the increased presence of colonial officials and the inclusion of creole elites in traditional power structures.⁸ These efforts to reshape society forced Puerto Rican authorities to confront established racial and class divisions, as well as colonialism. Just as the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution represented the opportunity for Puerto Rico and Cuba to develop their economy around slavery and sugar production, the rebellion also clearly depicted the threats posed by a large population of enslaved individuals. Spanish colonial officials recognized the duality of the matter, frequently debating how to balance conflicting economic and sociopolitical interests. These discussions expanded in scope as international pressure to end the slave trade increased, evident in the writings of Spanish and Puerto Rican abolitionists.

The *Sociedad Abolicionista Española* (SAE) played a vital role in informing popular narratives of slavery in the Caribbean colonies during this time. The document titled *La cuestión social en las Antillas Españolas*, published in Madrid on February 26, 1872, reflects the harsh nature of slavery

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- 6 Jorge Flinter, *Examen del estado actual de los esclavos en la Isla de Puerto Rico* (New York: Impresora Española del Redactor, 1832).
 - 7 Luis Martínez-Fernández, “The Sweet and the Bitter: Cuban and Puerto Rican Responses to the Mid-nineteenth-century Sugar Challenge,” *New West Indian Guide* 67, no. 1 (1993): 51, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41849495>.
 - 8 Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874*, 3.

in Puerto Rico, while also suggesting the limitations of abolitionist rhetoric in challenging the racial hierarchies present in society. Formed in 1864 by Julio de Vizcarrondo, the *SAE* sought to promote abolition from a legal and sociocultural standpoint. The 1872 publication represents the organization's dual focus by discussing the moral arguments against slavery as well as the economic and political implications of the institution.⁹

This text also suggests the influence of regional connections, as the authors—upper-class Spaniards—reference slavery and abolition in other societies as a frame of reference by which to analyze these themes in the Puerto Rican context. For example, the document discusses the history of legislation regarding slavery in the Americas, including the Abolition Act of 1833, which freed over 800,000 enslaved individuals in the British colonies.¹⁰ By analyzing the progression of such policies within the Spanish Empire and the broader Atlantic world while also contrasting written law with reality, this document provides meaningful insight into the chronology, logistics, and impacts of slavery in Puerto Rico.

The existence of abolitionist literature from the Spanish perspective, and the strong reaction that it received from Puerto Rican creole elites, illustrates the connection between slavery and empire. As one scholar writes, the “effort by the Spanish Abolitionist Society to abolish Cuban and Puerto Rican slavery met with massive resistance, both in the colonies and in Spain, as it threatened the very basis of economic and political hegemony within the imperial system.”¹¹ This connection highlights the significance of slavery to the Spanish Empire as well as the legacies of racial and colonial tensions within Puerto Rico.

Colonial Conceptions of Race and Class

The racial hierarchies constructed over centuries of slavery continued to impact Puerto Rican society long after abolition in 1873. Racial conscious-

9 Rafael María de Labra and the Sociedad Abolicionista Española, *La cuestión social en las Antillas Españolas: discurso pronunciado en la conferencia del 26 de febrero de 1872* (Madrid: Secretaría de la Sociedad Abolicionista Española, 1872), 4-5.

10 María de Labra, *La cuestión social en las Antillas Españolas*, 12.

11 Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874*, 1.

ness has influenced Puerto Rico's history since the first moment of national formation as citizens competed for control of political power structures. Even after breaking away from Spain in 1898, colonial hierarchies and traditional beliefs regarding race continued to shape Puerto Rican society.

In order to maintain their power as the Black population grew throughout the nineteenth century, many creole elites manipulated the cultural narratives defining Puerto Rican national identity in a way that excluded Afro-Caribbean people, restricted their rights and opportunities, and enforced traditional racial inequalities. Spanish colonists in Puerto Rico utilized various methods to ensure the continued disenfranchisement of people of color, exploiting science, legislation, and the idea of *mestizaje* to silence discussions of race and its influence on political, economic, and cultural realities.¹² Racial discrimination, deeply entrenched within Puerto Rican society since the colonial period, influenced the conceptualization of power and citizenship during the process of national formation. These evolving, racially charged values have historically characterized Puerto Rico and the surrounding region.

While race played an important role in defining the structures of power in colonial Puerto Rico, it was not the only factor that influenced an individual's position and their possibility for social mobility; ethnicity, nationality, and socioeconomic class status were significant aspects of the hierarchies defining society as well. Nineteenth-century Puerto Rico's economy revolved, to a large extent, around slave labor on plantations to produce raw materials for other nations. This agricultural, export-oriented focus meant that the colony witnessed little industrial development during the nineteenth century and remained economically dependent on the metropolis, Spain. While the government abolished slavery in 1873, Puerto Rico's economy still relied on cheap, often unfree, labor from countries such as Barbados, Jamaica, and China.¹³ Puerto Rico also relied heavily on foreign investment to support this export economy, meaning that during periods of global recession, Puerto Ricans experienced a severe economic crisis as other countries could not purchase sugar and other exports at a normal price. However, even

12 Kathryn R. Dungy, "A Fusion of the Races': Free People of Color and the Growth of Puerto Rican Society, 1795-1848" (PhD diss., Duke University, 2000).

13 Jorge Luis China, "Race, Colonial Exploitation and West Indian Immigration in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico, 1800-1850," *The Americas* 52, no. 4 (1996): 497.

in periods of prosperity, economic growth did not reach the majority of the citizenry, who remained impoverished.

Puerto Rico's national context reveals considerable power imbalances; even during the colonial era, these inequalities were apparent in the discord between creole and Spanish-born elites and the refusal of both sectors to challenge other aspects of the fundamental hierarchies within society due to the fear of losing their own privilege. Throughout the nineteenth century, these racial, ethnic, gender, and class divisions remained largely unchanged despite the construction of a new, supposedly unified national identity.¹⁴

Aside from the substantial racial and ethnic inequalities that plagued the nation, Puerto Rico also saw notable gender and class divisions that furthered the traditional social hierarchy. Even within nineteenth- and twentieth-century feminist movements advocating for gender equality, one cannot ignore the impact of racial, ethnic, and class divisions. In the case of activist organizations such as the *Liga Femenina* in Puerto Rico, there were rigid barriers in which the "relationships between women were not only mediated by a strict hierarchy of social class, but defined by color lines as well," restricting the extent of popular liberation movements.¹⁵ Similarly, the Puerto Rican independence movement confronted the creole elites' desire for freedom from Spain with their desire to maintain the traditional hierarchies present during the colonial era. Many of the intellectual leaders behind the Puerto Rican independence movement, from the beginning of the nineteenth century until present day, have failed to recognize the reality of racial discrimination on the Black population and often neglected to address this issue in their activism.¹⁶ In this way, the conceptualizations of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and power have historically been interwoven, representing a cultural phenomenon tied to the legacies of slavery and colonialism and their broad political and social ramifications within Puerto Rico.

Despite the tendency of white, creole elites to monopolize nationalist independence movements, not all Puerto Rican citizens viewed race in the same light. In the Spanish Caribbean colonies of the nineteenth century,

14 José Trías Monge, *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 83.

15 Magali Roy-Fequiere, "Contested Territory: Puerto Rican Women, Creole Identity, and Intellectual Life in the Early Twentieth Century," *Callaloo* 17, no. 3 (1994): 981.

16 Mariano Negrón-Portillo, *El autonomismo puertorriqueño: su transformación ideológica, 1895-1914* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1981), 56.

certain sectors of the population expressed nuanced understandings of race, ethnicity, and nationality which influenced their impact within the broader society as well. Legislation from colonial Puerto Rico reflects the complexity of racial identification and expression; under Spanish rule, race was commonly determined by heritage rather than appearance, as “one drop of white blood meant you were white and better than your Black compatriot,” yet people with darker skin faced disproportionate levels of violence and discrimination no matter their biological origins.¹⁷

Interestingly, accounts from colonists in Puerto Rico also note instances of division among the Black community, suggesting that in many cases, individuals identified more with their nationality than with their race or ethnicity. This phenomenon is evident in the frequent conflicts between Afro-Puerto Rican laborers and other plantation workers, more recently arrived enslaved individuals or Black immigrants from surrounding Caribbean nations. Puerto Rico had served as a “sanctuary for fugitive slaves fleeing the harsh social and working conditions of the neighboring non-Hispanic Caribbean colonies” since the seventeenth century and, with the expansion of sugar production after the Haitian Revolution of 1791, the island experienced a “significant influx of free, non-white immigrants.”¹⁸ With the growing population of free people of color in Puerto Rico, many white elites expressed fears of these communities siding with enslaved individuals, heightening the potential for racial conflict. Despite the “growing apprehension toward foreign immigrants” on the part of Puerto Rican and Spanish officials, these groups often turned against each other rather than organizing along racial lines, a phenomenon that supports the nuanced nature of colonial perceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality.¹⁹ Understanding the various factors influencing social hierarchies, as well as the evolution of conceptualizations of race over time, helps one consider how these concepts play into the sociopolitical contexts of Puerto Rico and the Atlantic world as a whole.

17 Darrel Enck-Wanzer, ed., *The Young Lords: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 137.

18 Chinae, “Race, Colonial Exploitation,” 496-500.

19 Chinae, 509.

Puerto Rican Perspective on Atlantic Revolutions

Internal developments within nineteenth-century Puerto Rico did not exist in a vacuum, but rather reflected significant interactions with external forces from the surrounding region. Notable connections—the shared ideological background, the analogous geotemporal contexts, and certain socioeconomic similarities—suggest the interconnected nature of revolutionary movements throughout the Atlantic world. Commonalities such as the unpredictable nature of these conflicts, metropolitan attempts at reforms, and the role of economic and political crises link regional developments and highlight the influence of trans-Atlantic connections on the local context of individual countries.²⁰ In particular, the Haitian Revolution of 1791 stands out as one of the most influential events within regional history, an occurrence recognized across the globe and which factored heavily into the context of Puerto Rico in the nineteenth century and beyond.

The Haitian Revolution represented both an opportunity and a cautionary tale in the eyes of Spanish colonial elites. Wealthy plantation owners “regarded the destruction of Haiti’s plantation economy as a golden opportunity to accelerate” the island’s economic development, but they were also “wary about the effects that rapid plantation development could have on existing social relations.”²¹ This is evident in the writings of San Juan’s mayor, Pedro Irisarri; in his 1809 *Informe*, Irisarri claims that the Haitian Revolution might serve to “embolden Puerto Rico’s slaves, who would find in Saint Domingue’s insurgent Negroes, an aid in force,” a statement that conveys the common fear of revolutionary contagion spreading from Haiti to enslaved communities across the Atlantic world.²² Similarly, the Spanish Abolitionist Society publication, *La cuestión social en las Antillas Españolas*, reflects the important influence that regional developments during the Age of Atlantic Revolutions had upon Puerto Rico, albeit from the limited perspective of white, upper class Spaniards. In discussing race and slavery

20 Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 4-5.

21 Juan González Mendoza, “Puerto Rico’s Creole Patriots and the Slave Trade after the Haitian Revolution,” in *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David Geggus (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 58-59.

22 González Mendoza, “Puerto Rico’s Creole Patriots and the Slave Trade after the Haitian Revolution,” 63.

along with specific mentions of events such as the Haitian Revolution, this document supports the argument that regional developments influenced the institution of slavery in Puerto Rico and within the realm of Atlantic history more broadly.²³

However, the Haitian Revolution did not only influence the upper class, creole elites and colonial authorities of Puerto Rico; this event also had a significant impact on the nation's enslaved population and free people of color, both ideologically and tangibly. While there is a notable lack of sources from the perspective of marginalized communities within nineteenth-century Puerto Rico, the fact that the Haitian Revolution "resulted in the exile of a good number of mulattoes" suggests the island's shifting racial demographics as well as the communal knowledge that arose from such migration.²⁴ The Black population in Puerto Rico—consisting of free people of color, immigrants working as indentured laborers, and enslaved individuals—often recognized their common experiences of racial discrimination and, despite the occasional language barriers, these connections fostered the creation of local Black communities that shared knowledge, ideas, and resources.

Certain leaders incorporated this racial solidarity into the Puerto Rican independence movement as well; Ramón Betances, a notable revolutionary of African heritage who fought to liberate both Cuba and Puerto Rico, drew much inspiration from the Haitian Revolution and sought to unite the islands' populations to fight against imperialism. In his 1871 essay encouraging independence for the Antilles, Betances praised Alexandre Pétion, president of Haiti, for transcending racial difference and fostering unity between 'pure Blacks' and other people of color.²⁵ Betances also invokes a sense of the shared regional history and shared struggle among the Black community in his 1868 essay "A los puertorriqueños," promoting national independence while also expressing "a politics of emancipation that situates slavery and colonial conditions in Puerto Rico within a broader struggle for

23 María de Labra, *La cuestión social en las Antillas Españolas*, 12.

24 González Mendoza, "Puerto Rico's Creole Patriots and the Slave Trade after the Haitian Revolution," 67.

25 Ramón Emeterio Betances, "A Cuba libre. Ensayo sobre Alejandro Pétion," in *Las Antillas para los antillanos* (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 2001), 64.

liberty.”²⁶ Such connections also existed outside the nationalist sphere, with examples of local Black communities’ mutual aid in the collection of funds to ‘purchase’ freedom for enslaved individuals, but also in the transfer of ideas via art, music, and popular culture. In this way, the influx of immigrants to Puerto Rico following the Haitian Revolution corresponds with the significant impact of abolitionist, anti-colonial, and revolutionary ideologies within the Atlantic world.

In addition to the 1791 Haitian Revolution and its aftermath, other regional developments such as the British abolition of slavery, the American Revolution, and the Spanish-American wars of independence also impacted nineteenth-century Puerto Rico. The emergence of new political visions—especially the conception of anti-imperialist movements—reflected the shared ideological influences stemming from the Enlightenment, while trans-Atlantic trade and migration patterns reveal the more easily perceptible connections between countries.²⁷ Despite the diversity within the region, the similarities among nations impart a sense of their common history, one in which slavery, racial hierarchies, and colonial oppression are all factors influencing the countries’ economic, political, and sociocultural contexts. It is this connection that characterizes the Atlantic world as a whole, distinguishing the region from other, less closely linked areas of the globe and, ultimately, representing the legacies that racial and colonial tensions have imparted within the realm of Atlantic history more broadly.

Conclusion

More than a century past the abolition of slavery, the negative impacts of the institution continue to influence Puerto Rican society to a great extent, as evidenced by the persistent racial inequalities that characterize the nation. These legacies, remnants of slavery and imperialism, reflect the nineteenth-century conditions of colonial subjugation which Puerto Rico experienced. During this time, racial tensions greatly impacted the colony’s sociopolitical structure,

26 Kahlil Chaar-Pérez, “‘A Revolution of Love’: Ramón Emeterio Betances, Anténor Firmin, and Affective Communities in the Caribbean,” *The Global South* 7, no. 2 (2013): 29.

27 Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History*, 2-3.

as well as the systems of forced labor that supported the island's economy. Such systems of exploitation and oppression—including, but not limited to, slavery—relate the Puerto Rican context to that of the Spanish Caribbean colonies and the Atlantic world more broadly.

The island's position within the Atlantic world meant that the emergence of abolitionist movements and other momentous occurrences, particularly the Haitian Revolution of 1791, had a significant influence on Puerto Rico. With such events featured heavily in writings coming out of Puerto Rico at the time, from official government reports like the *Actas del Cabildo* to local newspapers such as *La Gaceta*, it is clear that Puerto Ricans had a general awareness of the happenings around them, and that the regional context influenced life on the island. The economic opening afforded by the Haitian Revolution vied with the heightened fears of Black rebellions that arose from it, but both concerns represent conflicting interests that factored into economic policies, political decisions, and the sociocultural reality in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean countries. In this sense, the Age of Atlantic Revolutions alludes to the various developments that influenced the regional context during this time period; it was the local response to these events and circumstances that, in turn, ensured the continuation of slavery, racial hierarchy, and colonialism in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico.

Between Slavery and Freedom: Jamaica in the Eyes of Abolitionists 1839–1862

RONAN HART

ABSTRACT

The abolition of slavery in the British Empire was a tremendous leap forward in the recognition of universal human dignity, made possible by the agitation of slaves, former slaves, and White anti-slavery activist philanthropists. Those abolitionist activists recognized that the course of emancipation in Jamaica, Britain's largest slave colony, would have repercussions for abolitionist struggles around the world. As emancipation exacerbated the island's existing crises, and created new ones, abolitionists had to 'spin' events to portray success, rather than failure. This meant challenging the pro-slavery narrative that formed after abolition and finding novel ways to demonstrate that emancipation was truly a step forward.

Three decades after the Haitian Revolution and three decades before the Emancipation Proclamation in the United States, slavery in the British West Indies was ended by parliamentary decree. Emancipation in Jamaica did not follow a sudden slave insurrection or come during a bloody civil war. Instead, decades of slave unrest, abolitionist campaigning, and shifts in British public consciousness coincided with a loss of patience among the parliamentary elite with the demanding plantation-owning class. Emancipation was jubilantly celebrated or tensely feared by different sectors of society. Despite liberal convictions that free, self-motivated workers would ultimately be more profitable than slaves, the Jamaican sugar industry collapsed after emancipation. Though this collapse had as much to do with the repeal of British sugar tariffs, planter insolvency, and the labor market finding its equilibrium, commentators in Europe and America were quick to

attribute it solely to the “sentimental folly” of emancipation¹. The Jamaican catastrophe became a rhetorical tool in the fight to maintain plantation slavery where it persisted: Brazil, Cuba, the United States, and elsewhere.

At the outset of the nineteenth century, slavery was a foundational part of the global economy. By the century’s end, slavery was abolished in all but the most remote corners of the world. This remarkable transformation was born from a complex web of factors, making it difficult to evaluate the significance of each one. Contradictions permeated slavery. Sabotage and escape consistently undermined plantation profits. Despite their wealth, planters tended to sink into debt, often mortgaging their estates for far more than they were worth. In Britain, the tariffs that planters demanded and the military investment against slave insurrection that they required created a heavy burden on metropolitan Britons. The emerging commercial-industrial bourgeoisie rejected the protectionist policies slaveholders demanded as incompatible with their free-market ideology. An industrial sector, powered by free labor, provided a lucrative counterexample to slavery. The milieu of merchants and industrialists prospering off this change overlapped with dissident Protestant sects that railed against slavery on moral terms. Liberalism and evangelical Protestant morality complemented each other and provided an all-encompassing worldview with no place in it for slavery. As Thomas Holt shows in *The Problem of Freedom*, it was Quakers, a dissident sect of evangelical Protestants, who were at the forefront of both the industrial revolution and the Abolitionist movement.² This is not to say that economic transformations put slavery on a predetermined path to extinction. The advocacy of abolitionist philanthropists and the agitation of slaves themselves were crucial in making emancipation a political possibility. As planters became proportionally less powerful in British politics, they became vulnerable to the campaigns of these activists.³

British and American abolitionists charged themselves with defending the free society created by emancipation in Jamaica. They tried to change

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- 1 “Agricultural and Horticultural Journal: Practical Effects of Emancipation. Eight Years’ Experience in British Guiana—Moral to Be Drawn by the Southern States, etc,” *DeBow’s Review and Industrial Resources, Statistics, etc. Devoted to Commerce, Agriculture, Manufactures* (1853–1864), (1855).
 - 2 Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 30.
 - 3 Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, 2224.

the narrative around the sugar economy's collapse and propose alternative metrics for measuring emancipation's success. They pointed to the free men and women's industriousness, consumption habits, piety, eagerness for education, improving morals, sobriety, and even the loss of African phenotypes as markers of progress. The criteria abolitionists used to evaluate former slaves tell us more about the values of the abolitionists themselves than they tell us anything about Jamaica. This is not to say that what they report from Jamaica is necessarily untrue. However, the lack of primary sources written by emancipated slaves requires us to look critically at the sources we do have. To those invested in the debate over slavery in America and elsewhere, Jamaica was more important as a symbol, an inspiration, or a negative example than as a real place where people lived their lives. Investigating the ways in which the anglophone abolitionist community saw Jamaica reveals the underlying assumptions and tensions of nineteenth century liberalism as a social movement.

These philanthropists projected their own set of values—and the expected values of their audience—onto Jamaican freemen society. They used the resulting image to advocate for abolition in the United States and elsewhere. Abolitionists understood the importance of Jamaica in the rhetorical battle over slavery, and their writings reflect this, showing an active tension between faithful reporting and rhetorically expedient exaggeration. Often, their reports are conscious counter-narratives to the dominant perception of emancipation in Jamaica as a catastrophe.

This essay will discuss the abolitionist perspective on Jamaica, split into three periods, 1836 to 1838, 1839 to 1849, and 1850 to 1862. These three periods present different rhetorical challenges, from assuaging fears of impending emancipation, to explaining the failure of their idealized future to materialize.

Hope: 1834–1839

Rather than freedom, the first year of emancipation brought a limbo-state known as apprenticeship. Freed men and women were no longer slaves and were to be paid wages, but they were still compelled to remain on their former masters' estates. Apprenticeship pushed the contradictions of emancipation within a colonial framework into full view. The Jamaican state created new and employed entrenched punitive instruments to replace the

private coercion of masters and overseers⁴. Many apprentices made the risky choice to leave the plantation for the countryside, where they might, for the first time, work only for themselves. This was a turbulent period, cut short by an expedited emancipation when colonial officials saw that their half-in, half-out policy was unsustainable.

Abolitionists did not report the tumult many expected. The abolitionist newspaper *Philanthropist's* unnamed source in Jamaica described a peaceful and orderly society amid a spiritual and moral transformation.⁵ The specter of slave insurrection had been used as a rhetorical bludgeon against abolition for decades. Rumors of impending freedom often spurred slave unrest in Jamaica and elsewhere, especially the suspicion that the masters were hiding the “truth” of a royal proclamation of freedom.⁶ Fear of unrest was especially prevalent in Jamaica given the recency of the 1831 Baptist War, the largest-ever slave rebellion in the British Caribbean.⁷ It is then no surprise that the first thing the reporter noted was that the colonial military had retired to their barracks, with no cause to leave them: “The soldiers have had one quiet winter, for the first time within recollection.”⁸ The reporter also noted that Whites no longer slept in fear of an explosive revolt. His reporting confirmed the argument that emancipation would bring peace to a society familiar with rebellion.

Insurrection was not the only concern for Whites. They feared emancipation would bring on overly zealous celebrations that threatened public order. *Philanthropist's* unnamed reporter remarked about an unusually peaceful Christmas day that used to involve the “greatest disorders.”⁹ Abolitionists were eager to correct this misapprehension. American Benjamin Lubock's published account, *Jamaica, Enslaved and Free*, details how the day of emancipation was a clean, respectful, peaceful affair, without any dancing,

4 Diana Paton, *No Bond but the Law: Punishment, Race, and Gender in Jamaican State Formation, 1780-1870* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

5 Evan, N Y. “Anti-Slavery Intelligence: Things in Jamaica,” *Philanthropist* (1836-1843) 1, no. 12 (1836): 0-4.

6 Julius S. Scott and Marcus Rediker, *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution* (London: Verso, 2020).

7 B. W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

8 Evan, “Anti-Slavery Intelligence.” 0-4.

9 Evan, 0-4.

gambling, or excessive merriment.¹⁰

The *Philanthropist* article also provided a glimpse of conscious counter-narrative elements within abolitionist writing about Jamaica. It mentions “horrid stories” promulgated by the American pro-slavery press exaggerating the disorder on the island. To counter these fictions and exaggerations, the paper extensively quotes the authors of the *Jamaica Watchman*, supposedly the most trustworthy publication on the island. The authors of *Philanthropist* understood that the outcome of emancipation in Jamaica would have important implications for abolitionist struggles elsewhere. Both sides of the debate over slavery were incentivized to tell an incomplete or exaggerated version of the truth. The tension between this pragmatism and the desire to tell the whole truth would intensify in the coming decade as Jamaica’s sugar economy continued to decline.

The Anglophone world awaited full emancipation anxiously. While the slaves longed for their freedom, the masters dreaded the general chaos, disorder, or even rebellion that freedom would surely bring. White abolitionists were caught somewhere in between. They were excited for their activism and philanthropy to come to fruition but could not say for sure that the day slavery ended would pass without any of the planters’ suspicions being confirmed.

The Baptist Missionary Society’s account appeared in *Freedom in Jamaica, or The First of August 1838*. It recorded emancipation celebrations from around the island. Freed people and abolitionists alike celebrated emancipation mostly in churches and limited themselves to feasting and singing religious and patriotic songs. Congregants gave three cheers for the queen and buried a coffin containing handcuffs and an iron collar.¹¹

Beyond the festivities, celebrants used the opportunity to describe the future that they saw on the horizon and how it would differ from what those who opposed emancipation predicted. “The overseers and the book-keepers say that the ships will come from England and go back with nothing but ballast,” former slave Edward Barrett declared, “but I say to them, look out, we shall have more to send home than we ever had; sugar, pimento, ginger, and coffee.” Barrett went on to say that the free men and women would do all

10 Benjamin Luckock, *Jamaica: Enslaved and Free* (New York: Lane & Tappitts, 1846), 206.

11 “Freedom in Jamaica, or, The First of August, 1838,” *Baptist Missionary Society* (1838), 2-3.

that they could to support the church and the teaching of the gospel.¹² Freeman Thomas Gardner said, "Now the black man can unite with the white.... No distinctions now, only of character."¹³ This prediction would not come true. The bleak fact of continuing racial inequality after emancipation would contribute to the Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865.

Writings from the apprenticeship and early emancipation period maintained that free labor was more profitable than slave labor. The *Quarterly Christian Spectator* said in 1838,

Free labor is of greater profit than slave labor on any system can be. Property will rise, and many whose eyes are thus first opened to the truth will look back on their former opposition to the call for emancipation with surprise and regret.¹⁴

Abolitionists stopped making this argument in the years after emancipation. Jamaica's industry would not soar to new heights on the back of free labor, but crumble into irrelevance.

A public meeting in Rio Bueno passed a resolution including a provision that foreshadowed the labor problems Jamaica would experience in the years to come. Provision II states,

That the laborers now present pledge themselves that that conduct which during the Apprenticeship, obtained for them the praise of their Rulers, both in this Colony and in the Mother Country, shall be continued in a state of Freedom, and that, notwithstanding the malicious and unfounded reports which have been spread to the contrary, they will, willingly and honestly, work for their present employers for fair and reasonable wages.¹⁵

This idealized future failed to materialize. The employers would not pay fair and reasonable wages. Without wages, many freemen chose lives applying

12 "Freedom in Jamaica," *Baptist Missionary Society*, 10.

13 "Freedom in Jamaica," 10.

14 "ART. VII.--Emancipation in the West Indies: Emancipation in the West Indies: A Six Months' Tour in Antigua, Barbadoes, and Jamaica, in the Year 1837," *Quarterly Christian Spectator* (1829-1838), Aug 1, 1838, 440, <https://login.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/magazines/art-vii-emancipation-west-indies/docview/127810535/se-2?accountid=10920>.

15 "Freedom in Jamaica," *Baptist Missionary Society*, 20.

the knowledge gained from the provision grounds to a personal plot in the island's interior.

For freed people and abolitionists, the advent of emancipation and the start of apprenticeship became euphoric moments of victory. After decades of slave unrest, parliamentary petitioning, and missionary work, the beast of slavery was dead. In those moments, the bright future they hoped for seemed imminent. But if emancipation held the seeds of something great, it also promised future frustrations. Already, the missionaries realized that many planters were unwilling to accept the new status quo. While financially minded abolitionists might have despaired at the flight of former slaves into the countryside, freed people must have seen this as exactly what they had been hoping and fighting for. However, this future of economic autonomy included other frustrations. The colonial authorities resisted freeman independence and political participation. Conflict and tension between these two groups, amid parliamentary developments and global economic trends beyond their control, would define the next decades of Jamaica's history.

As witnesses to the economic turmoil and political struggles of the 1840s, anglophone abolitionists faced a problem. How would they preempt the pro-slavery press in America and elsewhere in reporting on the crisis in Jamaica? Surely the proponents of slavery would use the case of Jamaica as a rhetorical bludgeon in their countries. Abolitionists had to create a competing narrative surrounding Jamaica that highlighted the successes of emancipation, while identifying reasons for its failures. This narrative would have to play on the values of its audience and assuage White fear, while also being subject to competing attitudes about how strictly to adhere to the truth when exaggeration was expedient.

Frustration: 1839–1849

The period from 1839 to 1849 saw the continuing application of abolitionist tropes about emancipation, as well as emerging contradictions within their camp. Benjamin Luckock's *Jamaica, Enslaved and Free* quotes Joseph John Gurney as encountering "a good-looking young negro" who owned a horse, handsome clothes, and a cottage, thanks to wages from his job on a coffee plantation, and was on his way to get a marriage certificate for him and his bride. "This is one specimen among thousands of the good-working freedom

in Jamaica,” Gurney assured readers.¹⁶ This freeman’s success in this new free labor economy was measured by his material possessions, along with his participation in the institution of marriage—all essential ingredients in the Protestant, bourgeoisie system of values.

Abolitionism was supported by an emerging bourgeois industrial-commercial class and typically articulated through their specific language and ideology.¹⁷ They had no inherent hostility toward employers of labor, so long as those employers followed the law, offered fair wages and treatment, and respected the terms of employment. Abolitionists expected, or at least hoped, that Jamaican sugar planters would meet these criteria. Those who gave planters the benefit of the doubt may have been doing so sincerely, but no doubt it was also an effective rhetorical strategy. In a section of his *A Winter in the West Indies* (1840), published in the *Slavery Monthly Reporter*, Gurney argued for the adoption of a free labor system in the American South by comparing it with what he witnessed in the British West Indies. Amid claims about free laborers working six times harder than slaves, he asserted the kindness and generosity of slave masters. In a move typical of abolitionists in this period, he scapegoats overseers as the main drivers of cruelty toward slaves.¹⁸

Abolitionists responded differently to the dilemma of factual reporting versus rhetorically expedient exaggeration. The article “Religious State of Jamaica” exposed the tension between those who represented Jamaica in an idealized way and those who thought fidelity to the truth would better serve their political interests. The article criticized Reverend James Phillippo, English Baptist missionary and Abolitionist, for exaggerating the piety and adherence to Protestant moral norms among the freemen. The author demanded:

...its [Phillippo’s writing] loose inaccuracies and gross exaggerations be exposed, before the reaction which they must inevitably invite, shall overwhelm the friends of the slaves with calamities of which

16 Luckock, *Jamaica*.

17 Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, 30-36.

18 “Slavery in the United States Contrasted with Freedom in the West Indies” (1840), *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter* (23), 278-79. Retrieved from <https://login.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-periodicals/slavery-united-states-contrasted-with-freedom/docview/2966085/se-2?accountid=10920>.

they were unsuspecting, and for which they were unprepared.¹⁹

Renshaw feared that proponents of slavery would use these exaggerations to undermine the cause of abolitionism. This fear reflects the degree to which representations of Jamaica were a key part of a highly self-aware social project. Despite refuting Phillippo's claims of total moral and religious transformation, Renshaw still celebrated the progress made since emancipation, calling it "all that could have been hoped, more than could have been reasonably anticipated."²⁰

The 1840s were rife with contradictions. The equalization of sugar duties, initiated in 1846, forced British planters to compete with Cuban and Brazilian slave sugar and reduce prices. This compounded emancipation's shock to an economy plagued by insolvency.²¹ Though freemen enjoyed the autonomy that came with tending to their own lands, they were still affected by the stagnating economy. This recession hindered the social progress that abolitionists counted on to vindicate their arguments against slavery. During the 1840s, abolitionists could acknowledge these problems while still pointing to the very real successes of emancipation. By the 1850s and early 1860s, it became much more difficult to ignore the depth of the crisis in Jamaica.

Reassessment: 1850–1862

Due to the growing question of emancipation in the United States, tensions mounted between the North and South in the 1840s and 1850s. Meanwhile, conditions in Jamaica continued to deteriorate, giving the pro-slavery press rhetorical ammunition. Increasingly pushed into the spotlight, abolitionist writers had to advocate for the feasibility and desirability of emancipation in the United States while also explaining Jamaica's crisis without blaming emancipation. Achieving this involved changing their metric of success from the formation of a wage-labor economy to the growth of a class of landed freeholders. Abolitionists countered the pro-slavery press's arguments by showing how planter malfeasance and hostility to the new social order caused

19 Renshaw, "Religious State of Jamaica," 11.

20 Renshaw, "Religious State of Jamaica," 11.

21 Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, 117-18.

Jamaica's recession. They also resorted to their older strategy of painting the freemen as largely adherent to Protestant moralism and liberal philosophy.

Abolitionists claimed that emancipation would begin a smooth transition to a free labor system that preserved Jamaica's sugar-export economy. Planter insolvency and failure to provide wages, the equalization of sugar duties, and freed peoples' access to land for their own cultivation made this impossible. While sources during or immediately after apprenticeship praised the suitability of the former slaves for wage labor, by the 1850s and 1860s, they acknowledged the reconstitution of former slaves into a free, landed, peasant class. In an 1862 article from *The Moravian*, A. Lichtenthaeler compares the Jamaican peasantry favorably with that of other countries.²² Other abolitionists compared them to American pioneers. American Abolitionist author Lydia Maria Child quoted Charles Tappan as saying: "Their [the freemen's] neat, well-furnished cottages compared well with the dwellings of pioneers in our own country."²³

Abolitionists seem to have lowered the bar for the success of free Jamaican society in this period. *The Liberator* provided a bizarre claim:

A great improvement has taken place in the features of the negro descendants of Africans. The thick lips, flat nose and receding forehead are fast disappearing, and the physiognomy of the Jamaican negro is slowly assimilating to the European type.²⁴

Rhetorically, this claim played on White racism by implying that Black features were essentially undesirable and that their elimination is of benefit to the freemen. With our modern understanding of genetics and heritability, we can say this claim was baseless, but it still demonstrates one attempt to reframe the debate over Jamaica.

Abolitionists became more likely to point to the planters as the cause of Jamaica's woes than in previous periods. The abolitionist publication *Circular* accused planters of having "arrayed themselves against the laboring

22 A. Lichtenthaeler, "Emancipation in Jamaica: Was It a Failure? Or Was It a Success?" *The Moravian*, in *Friends' Review; a Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* (1847-1894) 15, no. 46 (1862): 731.

23 Lydia Maria Child, *The Right Way, the Safe Way: Proved by Emancipation in the British West Indies and Elsewhere* (New York: American Anti-slavery Society, 1860), 81.

24 "Selections," *The Liberator*.

class” by turning them into serfs through tenancy. The author declares, “The planter is still little better than the besotted would-be tyrant that slavery left him.”²⁵ Child asserts that planters, having predicted the ruin that emancipation would bring, were determined to make it so. During the apprenticeship, they acted more cruelly than before, thus driving their labor force into the forest and undermining the possibility of free labor keeping plantations afloat.²⁶ Bigelow accuses White Jamaicans of lacking the initiative to make their plantations more efficient. He argues that their prideful refusal to work trickled down through the culture and made the freemen lazier.²⁷

Despite the changes that this period brought in Jamaica, abolitionist rhetoric clung to some of the tropes of the previous decades. Lydia Maria Child refers to the freemen as “orderly and industrious,”²⁸ and she quoted antislavery activist Charles Tappan as describing their sobriety and eagerness for education.²⁹ Lichtenthaeler adopted a rhetoric of Black docility, saying: “...our own negroes in Jamaica show all deference to the White man; and continue to regard his superiority over themselves...”³⁰ The irony of this statement would become apparent three years after it was published. The explosive 1865 Morant Bay rebellion made it clear that freemen did not passively capitulate to White supremacy.

Conclusion

Though a boon to all but the owners and overseers of slaves, emancipation was a messy process that was bound to disrupt people’s livelihoods. That disruption was surely worth it for freed people, but those who valued profit and economic growth above nearly all else felt otherwise. Before the

25 “West India Emancipation: The Commercial Aspect of Freedom,” (1861, May 02.) *Circular (1851-1870)* Retrieved from <https://login.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/west-india-emancipation/docview/137686245/se-2?accountid=10920>.

26 Child, “The Safe Way,” 55-61.

27 John Bigelow, *Jamaica in 1850: Or, the Effects of Sixteen Years of Freedom on a Slave Colony* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1851), 75-76.

28 Child, “The Safe Way,” 63.

29 Child, 81.

30 Lichtenthaeler, “Emancipation in Jamaica.”

realization of emancipation, there was no tension between economic and moral concerns over slavery. Abolitionists claimed the obvious moral good of emancipation would correspond to an increase in profit. When that reality failed to materialize, liberals who valued profit over freedom abandoned the project. Opponents pointed to this rift as evidence of abolition's sentimental folly. With the ideal of profit no longer on their side, abolitionists forged new rhetorical tools or repurposed old ones. They identified factors that led to Jamaica's recession, aside from emancipation. They pointed out the deviousness of planters in undermining the interests of the islanders. They doubled down on religiosity and pointed to piety among freemen, sometimes to a hyperbolic degree. They suggested that former slaves' self-sufficiency was just as praiseworthy as participation in a wage labor economy. They highlighted freeman industriousness, sobriety, restraint, docility, and deference to authority—all traits that many Whites assumed slaves would lose upon their freedom.

If one uncritically accepted the testimony of abolitionists who visited Jamaica, a bizarre understanding of freeman life might result. The benefits of emancipation were only communicated on White terms and in relation to Eurocentric values, and specifically the values that the British and American Bourgeoisie wanted the Jamaican working class to possess. Freed people were "good" because they conformed to those values. Though they made note of their happiness and appreciation of freedom, abolitionists preferred to portray freemen as obedient workers without a critical thought in their heads. That kind of worker was the one the new liberal capitalist order tried to mold people into: freed from the physical shackles of slavery, the new class of free laborers would instead exercise self-discipline inculcated by Protestant teaching and the coercive capacity of the state.

Of course, the abolitionists knew their audience. Whether northern bourgeoisie or southern slave owners, the targets for abolitionist rhetoric would also have wanted a servile working class. Were they projecting what they personally wanted to see onto the freemen in their writing, or were they just playing to an audience? Were they characterizing the freemen in this way to garner the support of the classes that could act on behalf of slaves? The conflict between abolitionists over how closely to adhere to the truth showed that they sometimes valued effective rhetoric over objectivity. Whatever their opinion towards the ultimate results of emancipation, abolitionists recognized their moral duty to join with slaves and make decisive progress towards a world where no person is property.

RACE *and* JUSTICE
in the UNITED STATES

Walking Through Walls: Black Women's Involvement in the Illinois and Des Moines Chapters of the Black Panther Party

EASTON BRUNDAGE

ABSTRACT

The Illinois Black Panther Party (ILBPP) and the Des Moines Black Panther Party (DM BPP) took monumental steps toward advancing women's participation in political organizing and leadership. These chapters of the BPP challenged misogyny and worked with women in their rank and file to address their political ideas and organizing strategies. The ILBPP and DM BPP's accomplishments toward women's leadership and participation did not negate how these same chapters perpetuated societal misogyny through sexual harassment, exploitation, and public erasure. The combination of these truths creates a complicated and nuanced history of women's representation in political organizing during the Black Power era. Historical research on political organizing must study how labor is distributed and whose work is uncredited and erased throughout history. Moreover, this research examines how political organizations, and particularly the history of the Black Panther Party, were often misrepresented, critiqued, and even demonized because of their political opposition to dominant social institutions.

The Black Panther Party (BPP) opened its Oakland headquarters in 1967 for young Black men to organize against racism in urban environments after the Second Great Migration.¹ Among men discussing radicalism and armed resistance was Tarika Lewis, a defiant sixteen-year-old girl who had attended every biweekly BPP meeting since its formation. Although cofounders Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton prided

1 Robyn C. Spencer, *The Revolution Has Come: Black Power, Gender, and the Black Panther Party in Oakland* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2016).

themselves on creating a male-oriented organization, Lewis' presence at the biweekly meetings pressured the leadership to reconsider the motivation behind gender separation.² Seale and Newton melded their philosophies of Black male dominance in both sexual and familial relationships with their definitions of progress, which created a rigid view on women's place in the BPP. Nonetheless, Lewis became the first woman to join the organization, and soon after, women's membership boomed-- not just in Oakland, but across the country.³

Panther chapters from Omaha to New Haven to Houston grew so quickly that the Oakland headquarters did not possess the organizational infrastructure to exert any real control over them. As a result, many chapter leaders became fiercely independent from the national headquarters and often responded to local conditions and addressed community problems without input or guidance from national leaders.⁴ With their priorities oriented around local issues and politics, most chapters became less susceptible to the influences of the national headquarters, particularly regarding women's role in the BPP. The Illinois Black Panther Party (ILBPP) and the Des Moines, Iowa, chapter of the Black Panther Party (DM BPP) were both seen as historically revolutionary for their gender dynamics. Although the ILBPP and DM BPP did much to encourage gender equality; the Oakland chapter did not always eliminate misogyny. The reality was that all major political organizations did little to stimulate Black women's participation.

2 Antwanisha Alameen-Shavers, "The Woman Question: Gender Dynamics within the Black Panther Party," *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men* 5, no. 1 (2016): 33-62. Alameen-Shavers discusses BPP's changing ideology from a national perspective.

3 Angela D. LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job: Black Panther Party Women, 1966-1982," in *The Black Panther Party*, edited by Charles Jones (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998), 305-334.; Ashley D. Farmer, "The Black Revolutionary Woman, 1966-1975," in *Remaking Black Power: How Black Women Transformed an Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 50-92.

4 Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, "North Side Revolutionaries in the Civil Rights Struggle: The African American Community in Des Moines and the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, 1948-1970," *The Annals of Iowa* 69(1), (2010): 51-81.

Illinois Black Panther Party (ILBPP)

In August 1968, Chicago's West Side organizers Drew Ferguson and Jewel Cook, and Chicago's South Side organizers Bobby Rush and Fred Hampton, gathered activists at the Senate Theater. Former members of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, Vice Lords, and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-four, gathered y to discuss local needs and decided to join forces and requested that the BPP recognize them as the ILBPP.⁵

As with all new chapters, Oakland advised the ILBPP on structural components so that the chapter would mirror the leadership and organization of its parent chapter with a seven-part central staff. Of seven positions in the ILBPP, three women were selected as the most qualified leaders for the roles based on their participation and leadership experience in earlier radical student activist groups that involved Rush and Hampton. Iris Shin was head of communication (later replaced by Ann Campbell), Dianne Dunn was head of labor (later replaced by Yvonne King), and Christina "Chuckles" May was head of culture.⁶ The ILBPP took a formative step in shaping women's roles and responsibilities in the chapter when electing women to these three prominent leadership positions, which would fundamentally differentiate the ILBPP from its national headquarters. Although this laid the groundwork to secure women's voices in decision-making processes, without also creating significant policy changes to address structural misogyny, the ILBPP failed to support and protect Black women in the organization.

Within the ILBPP's rank and file, although women spearheaded committees and programs, they were erased from the public eye in favor of the men overseeing them. As a result, the credit for many of the ILBPP's successful programs went to the organization's male leaders rather than the female rank and file.⁷ For example, one of the BPP's successes, the free breakfast program, is often credited as Fred Hampton's idea, but its success was

5 Jakobi Williams, "'Don't No Woman Have to Do Nothing She Don't Want to Do': Gender, Activism, and the Illinois Black Panther Party," *Black Women, Gender + Families* 6, no. 2 (2012): 29-54, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/blacwomegendfami.6.2.0029>.

6 Joan McCarty, interview by Jakobi Williams, October 19, 2009.

7 Jakobi Williams, "'Don't No Woman Have to Do Nothing She Don't Want to Do': Gender, Activism, and the Illinois Black Panther Party," *Black Women, Gender + Families* 6, no. 2 (2012): 29-54, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/blacwomegendfami.6.2.0029>.

dependent on the women of the ILBPP who implemented much of his plan. Women made up much of the original free breakfast program's staff, but their contributions to the success were instead credited to their male superiors, and without this credit, women had no clear path to leadership roles.⁸ Among these women was Wanda Ross, who secured and managed resources, and Barbara Sankey, who directed three of the initial breakfast facilities.

Although women composed most of the rank and file by 1969, men in the ILBPP's leadership had little confidence in independent female leadership. As a member of the central staff, Yvonne King, for example, greatly influenced the ILBPP and used her power to advocate for further inclusion of women in ILBPP leadership. Along with being deputy minister of labor, King served as the ILBPP's field secretary because of her extensive background and talent as a community organizer.⁹ She often worked with little sleep; she became known for her ability to go toe-to-toe in disagreements with the men of the organization. As a result, King was widely recognized for her excellence in organizing and her work ethic, particularly as she worked closely with Hampton through ILBPP's most active years. Among the men of the central staff, however, King's dedication to her role in the ILBPP was seen as an exception to the typical woman's role as a Panther. Comments about King's successful attributes were often followed with the phrase, "despite being a woman," which implied that King's example was atypical.¹⁰ Instead of seeing her success as an example of the potential of women leaders, the men of the ILBPP only saw King as the exception to the rule.

Because women experienced fewer opportunities for leadership, sexual harassment became an important issue for women, and despite various tactics attempting to prevent it, few were successful. Committee leaders sometimes exploited their positions in order to sexually harass and even rape women under their authority. Thus, it fell to women to stand up to the abuser or to seek help. When becoming a Panther, all members underwent entry training with tactical and self-defense lessons, which women used to fight against abuse through physical protection and assertive confrontation

8 Donna Jean Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807895856_murch.

9 Jakobi Williams, "Don't No Woman," 29-54. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807895856_murch.

10 Henry "Poison" Gaddis, "Presentation on the Illinois Black Panther Party," Fortieth Reunion of the Black Panther Party, Oakland, October 13, 2007.

skills. Panther Lynn French recalled using this tactic by telling her comrades “Not in Chicago, we would not accept it,” when men attempted any form of abuse.¹¹ Through entry-level training, women were empowered to defend themselves with the knowledge that the ILBPP did not tolerate sexual harassment among the rank and file. Although this helped in individual instances, this approach did not engage the organization’s systemic issue of harassment.

In some instances, members of the central staff, particularly the other men in leadership, would become involved in stopping harassment. For instance, when Hampton learned that some younger men were harassing women in the chapter, he summoned them to an emergency meeting, where he angrily scolded them, “You lazy ass punks,” he said, “you couldn’t get no pussy on your own so you gonna try to force somebody to have sex with you? . . . This is not gonna happen here.”¹² This assertion made it clear that there would be no instance of harassment within the chapter, but in reducing women to their sexuality, he still normalized sexist language. Furthermore, in another case of sexual harassment, Hampton and Rush concluded that a conversation was not enough. They rounded up the harassers and gave any woman who wanted to participate a stick and permission to hit the harassers as a public punishment.¹³ Although Hampton and Rush swiftly handled harassment, they perpetuated the use of nonconsensual touch and humiliation as punishment for mistreatment. It did not challenge or prevent patriarchal structures of domination, and it distinctly did not create a precedent for proper disciplinary action if harassment were to happen again. If the central staff discovered or was informed about harassment, it was not dealt with consistently, a posture that allowed unreported coercion and covert harassment. For the most part, in addition, the burden of pursuing justice lay with the women who were victimized.

Some women thus concluded that they had little choice but to endure harassment from their male counterparts. In some instances, women who spoke out, against harassment were even expelled from the party. Despite the central staff’s condemnation of harassment, men in the ILBPP

11 Jon F. Rice, “Black Radicalism on Chicago’s West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party” (PhD diss., Northern Illinois University, 1998).

12 Bernard Farber, “Purpose of Black Panthers Outlined by Panther Speaker Here,” *Roosevelt Torch* (Chicago, IL), Dec 9, 1968, 3.

13 Joan Gray, “Women and the Black Panther Party,” Panel, Dusable Museum of African American History, Chicago, May 13, 2010.

exploited the threat of women's expulsion from the organization to coerce, manipulate, and abuse the victims. In several instances, women recalled abusive comments. While some men called women who complained "prostitutes," others made comments about their figures. Brenda Harris recalled that she was called a "banana face bitch" after a disagreement with one of her comrades. To Harris, the level of sexual harassment depended on proximity to leadership. Women in leadership positions were less likely to experience sexual exploitation than she and other women in ILBPP's rank and file.¹⁴ Although many members noted that harassment rarely went unnoticed and that the central staff often intervened, there were still instances of women who were repeatedly harassed and chose not to report their harasser.¹⁵

Meanwhile, women also experienced sexual harassment from male members of other chapters and even party leaders from Oakland. On multiple occasions, BPP headquarters sent representatives to the ILBPP's central staff. Although this likely happened in numerous instances, on one visit, an official from Oakland's BPP told the male leadership that he planned to have sex with someone in the rank and file. The ILBPP's leaders were appalled at this person's arrogance, and they told the women that they were under no obligation to have sex with him.¹⁶ The negotiation of power between different levels of leadership in the BPP, the differences in how sex was viewed in different chapters, and the implication of what likely would happen if the central staff did not intervene reveals how differently the ILBPP treated women compared to other chapters.

Fred Hampton's leadership was crucial to increasing women's involvement. Yvonne King stated that Fred Hampton had a way to "make you believe you could walk through a wall and get to the other side" by encouraging Black youth, and particularly young Black women, to join the organization.¹⁷ To Hampton, it was not enough to declare women as equals to men within the ILBPP. He prioritized making space for them within

14 Brenda Harris, interview by Jakobi Williams, September 21, 2009.

15 Yvonne King, "Women and the Black Panther Party," Panel, Dusable Museum of African American History, Chicago, May 13, 2010.

16 Brenda Harris, interview by Jakobi Williams, September 21, 2009.

17 Yvonne King, "Presentation on the Illinois Black Panther Party," Fortieth Reunion of the Black Panther Party, Oakland, October 13, 2007; Yvonne King, "Women and the Black Panther Party," Panel, Dusable Museum of African American History, Chicago, May 13, 2010.

ILBPP's rank and file. Hampton's activist background and recruitment of students and other grassroots activists meant that most of the rank and file were familiar with the leadership's priority of collectivism.¹⁸ As Yvonne King stated about ILBPP's most active years: "This was the 1960s and 1970s, and even in progressive organizations women were . . . [relegated] to stereotypical roles. . . And here was [the ILBPP] that not only provided the opportunity [for women as leaders] . . . but it was a policy . . . [that] men and women were treated the same."¹⁹

Hampton was not perfect; he once described washing dishes and sweeping floors as "women's work," nonetheless, he did his part to make sure women played a role in the ILBPP and fulfilled the same responsibilities as Panther men.²⁰ However, although he encouraged women to gain responsibility, leadership, and equality, after Hampton's assassination in 1969, there was a shift in the ILBPP's ideology as a majority male leadership could not keep up with the demands of the Oakland headquarters, falling short particularly in terms of women's participation. In 1972, Oakland sent a memo to all active BPP chapters that encouraged policies for pregnant women and mothers and sponsored the creation of an infirmary,²¹ but the ILBPP central staff never followed up with a discussion at their meeting.²¹ Most ILBPP women lived communally with other Panthers, but the increasing demands of activism and their growing families forced many of them to move to Oakland, where the BPP chapter promised to provide childcare and support for new mothers.²² Meanwhile, the ILBPP separated mothers from their infants for weeks on end without providing childcare. As a result, many left the BPP altogether.²³

18 Jakobi Williams, "Don't No Woman," 29-54.

19 Yvonne King, "Women and the Black Panther Party," Panel, Dusable Museum of African American History, Chicago, May 13, 2010.

20 Bernard Farber, "Purpose of Black Panthers Outlined by Panther Speaker Here," *Roosevelt Torch* (Chicago, IL), Dec 9, 1968, 3.

21 Robyn C. Spencer, "Inside the Panther Revolution: The Black Freedom Movement and the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California," in *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America* (New York City: New York University Press, 2005), 301.

22 Joan McCarty, interview by Jakobi Williams, January 5, 2011.

23 Lynn French, interview by Deanna M. Gillespie for Black Women Workers and "Comrade Sisters": Gendering the Labor and Black Power Movements.

Most of the central staff's solutions to women's problems proved ineffective. when there was little help for women in the organization. As effective as the individual attempts to bring women into leadership and prevent sexual harassment were in the formative years of the ILBPP, without concrete and substantial policies, the organization failed to support Black women when it mattered most.

Des Moines Black Panther Party (DM BPP)

Although short-lived, the DM BPP created fundamental change in Iowa's state legislation and local policies. In the post-World War II era, much of Black culture in Des Moines thrived on Center Street, a segregated hub of flourishing economic and social life. But into the first half of the 1950s, white people, particularly teenagers, flocked to this area of town to take part in drug use, prostitution, and crime, which led to increased policing in the area. As a result, incarceration rates allowed the local government to declare Center Street as a future site for white urban development. Meanwhile, a newly constructed freeway destroyed much of the affordable housing.²⁴ In July 1966, racial conflict culminated in the Good Park Rebellion after police officers assaulted two Black students. Over 200 youths protested over the Fourth of July weekend, and seven were arrested.²⁵ To the Black community, the Good Park Rebellion became an act of resistance against decades of racial unrest and police brutality, and there was an immediate demand for political organization of the Black community. As a result, the Good Park Rebellion inspired the creation of multiple Black student activists, including DM BPP founder Mary Rhem.

Rhem (known in the later part of her life as Sister Haadasha) grew up on Center Street and experienced the Good Park Rebellion firsthand. After graduating high school, Rhem traveled to California to visit her brother and attended several Black Panther Party political education sessions.²⁶ The

24 Hobart DePatten, interview by Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, August 8, 2008.

25 Ashley Howard, interview by Andrea May Sahouri for the *Des Moines Register*, June 15, 2020; "Youths Battle Police Here: 200 Negroes Throw Rocks in Good Park," *Des Moines Register*, July 5, 1966.

26 Sister Haadasha, interview by Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, October 13, 2007.

Oakland BPP provided valuable insight on community organizing and inspired Rhem to form her own chapter when she returned to Des Moines later that summer. Rhem knew her community intimately, so she had an insight into local needs, and her training with the Oakland BPP legitimized her leadership. Most importantly, by registering with the Oakland headquarters and taking the Black Panther Party name, Rhem's organization secured an identity held in high esteem to the Black community of Des Moines, solidifying her status as a legitimate organizer at nineteen years old.

As Rhem started to gain community interest in the DM BPP, she met Charles Knox, a stranger to her community from Chicago. Knox was interested in putting his street organizing experience to use. Rhem's local insight, combined with Knox's organizing experience, made their alliance strategic, and the two formalized the creation of the DM BPP in June 1968. Knox made clear that Rhem was the leader and founder of this organization.²⁷ Knox took orders from Rhem and new men joining the DM BPP followed his lead, which solidified Rhem's authority. Once registered with the national headquarters, Rhem organized Knox's and her leadership among ten other Directors, similar to the central staff in Oakland. The chapter leadership consisted of three women and nine men.

Although Panthers in the DM BPP saw Rhem as in charge, the wider Des Moines community was less confident about her leadership. Other organizations, particularly those outside of the Black community, often went around Rhem to discuss collaborative projects with Knox. He attempted to bring other Directors into these conversations because there was no sole leader of the DM BPP. Knox valued Rhem's contribution and leadership, but it was difficult not to overstep, given the stakes of the proposals.²⁸ Although many political organizations avoided Rhem because of their misogyny, others did so unintentionally because of how the press discussed the chapter. Print media often ignored her and instead depicted Knox as the DM BPP's face. For instance, Rhem spearheaded DM BPP's most popular success: the free breakfast program. Not only did she pitch the idea to the Directors with a program plan based on its successes in other cities, but she also became a leading advocate of free breakfast. However, when Des Moines' most-read

27 Sister Haadasha and Charles Knox, interview by Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, October 13, 2007.

28 Charles Knox, interview by Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, October 13, 2007.

newspaper, the *Des Moines Register*, wanted to cover the free breakfast program, they did not feature Rhem. The newspaper instead described Knox as the program's leader.²⁹

Despite misogyny from other political organizations and the press, Rhem used her identity to create strong friendships and alliances with other Black women in Des Moines. Not only did these friendships advance the DM BPP's agenda, they also bettered the lives of Black women throughout Iowa. Rhem formed a close friendship with activist Katherine Bryson, president of Mothers for Dignity and Justice. The two women tirelessly advocated for Black families in city meetings and worked together to create survival programs for Black mothers.³⁰ The interactions of misogyny and racism meant that Black women had to rally around themselves for their voices to be heard. If not for these alliances among Black women in leadership roles, no organized group would willingly advocate for Black mothers in Des Moines. By creating a close bond with another Black woman, Rhem could define the DM BPP as an organization that prioritized the health and treatment of poor Black women and worked against the city's history of breaking up Black families and communities.

Rhem's leadership in the DM BPP and Cheatom involvement in the Black Mobile Street Workers organization allowed the two to work together to protect Black families by changing Iowa's participation in the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children program so that it would . Moreover, Cheatom's link with the National Welfare Rights Organization and the Model Cities program created an emphasis on public housing projects and mutual aid programs, a success that was important in Des Moines to offset the damage the city had inflicted on Black community housing projects the decade before.³¹ But by far, Cheatom's most notable contribution to the DM BPP was her attempt, with Knox, to burn the Jewett Lumber Company in

29 Sister Haadasha and Charles Knox, interview by Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, October 13, 2007; *Des Moines Register*, October 10, 1968, December 1, 1968, December 28, 1968. The *Des Moines Register* ran several articles on the breakfast program of varying opinions and was eventually used to shape Iowa's public policy.

30 "Mothers Camp in Shelter of Statehouse," *Des Moines Register*, (Des Moines, IA), July 1, 1969.

31 Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson, "North Side Revolutionaries in the Civil Rights Struggle: The African American Community in Des Moines and the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, 1948-1970," *Annals of Iowa* 69(1), (2010): 55-60.

1968 in a public protest of Black treatment in Des Moines. Joeanna and Marvin Cheatom, as well as Charles Knox, used arson and attacks on property as a form of political theater to denounce fascism in the local government. Although courts acquitted them, they were ultimately held in contempt of court.³² Overall, Cheatom's partnership with Knox and the respect she garnered from everyone in the community showed how women and men worked alongside each other to protect their livelihoods. Additionally, Cheatom's inclusion of her teenage son in her activism showed how intrinsic the family was to the DM BPP's activism. Unlike other chapters, many of the women in DM BPP's rank and file were not full-time activists but members of the community who came together in a brief period to resist racial injustice.

To the DM BPP women, the organization became a lifeline to their friends, family, and community. Mary Rhem hosted DM BPP meetings at the Forest Avenue Baptist Church, which connected political organizing to Black identity and culture by exemplifying how closely activism was tied to personal and community needs. Forest Avenue Baptist Church provided a forum not just for the DM BPP but most Black political organizations in Des Moines. Most of all, this church served as a woman-dominated location where most of these alliances developed.³³ In all, the DM BPP was unique in that it sought to better the lives of Black women, while most other BPP chapters rarely, if ever, made women a priority or consistently took their needs into account.

Conclusion

The ILBPP and the DM BPP created programs to serve their local communities through political organizing and the activists' hard work, yet Black women's contribution to these efforts was undermined as they often remained uncredited for their participation and leadership. This phenomenon

32 Associated Press, *Daily Iowan*, Apr 22, 1969, 1; Jon Van, *Des Moines Register*, Apr. 19, 1969; Jon Van, *Des Moines Register*, Apr. 22, 1969; Hearings before the Committee on Internal Security, 4792–4797.

33 Reynaldo Anderson, "Practical Internationalists: The Story of the Des Moines, Iowa, Black Panther Party," in *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: New York University Press, 2005) 282–99.

is not unique to these political organizations. Rather, it was a phenomenon that continues to be seen throughout political organizing today. In the Black Lives Matter movement, its creators Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi are regularly erased in the popular media and within the political network.³⁴ When reviewing the history of political organizing, it is crucial for historians to scrutinize where labor, and not just leadership, is distributed. Moreover, the history of political organizing must also include the emotional labor of Black women, which remains neglected throughout historical texts. It is the responsibility of historians to break this pattern of erasure and create a more accurate depiction of history, not just by including but by centering those erased and ignored throughout time.

34 Janice Gassam Asare, "The Erasure of Black Women's Contributions: From Past to Present," *Forbes*, Oct. 8, 2021.

The Unseen Victims of Metal Detectors: Impacts of Punitive Discipline on the Bronx's Community School for Social Justice

RACHEL SALVATORI

ABSTRACT

This essay examines the impact of punitive measures on students by investigating the influence New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's roving metal detector policy in 2006 had on the Bronx's Community School for Social Justice. In an effort to maintain a safe environment in New York City schools, Bloomberg enforced this zero-tolerance policy, which relied heavily upon the New York Police Department, school safety agents, and metal detectors. CSSJ, a school composed primarily of Black and Hispanic students, feared they would become a target of these unannounced scans. By drawing on my interview with CSSJ's founding principal, Ms. Sue-Ann Rosch, in combination with sources such as the New York Civil Liberties Union, the *New York Times*, and *Deviant Behavior*, I argue that this policy was a self-perpetuating system that contributed to the criminalization of New York City classrooms and was profoundly detrimental to staff's relationships with students as well as students' academic, social, and personal development.

One day after promising to crack down on disruptions in New York City schools, Mayor Michael Bloomberg exclaimed, "Let's not look to the past. Let's not point fingers.... If I don't fix this, don't vote for me. But I am going to fix it."¹ Yet it is necessary to look to the past to understand why dangerous schools persist in New York, twenty-three years after the New York Police Department (NYPD) took control of school safety.

1 David M. Herszenhorn, "Mayor Says He'll Increase Security at Dangerous Schools," *New York Times*, December 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/24/nyregion/mayor-says-he-ll-increase-security-at-dangerous-schools.html>.

Looking to the past reveals a long history of social injustice, by which many New York schools remain segregated, underfunded, and deprived of resources. This long history is what is truly responsible for dangerous classrooms. Instead of immediately resorting to the removal of disruptive students, perhaps an examination of *why* they were disruptive would be more effective in finding solutions to NYC's problems with school safety.

When the students and staff at the Community School for Social Justice (CSSJ) heard about the new roving metal detector policy imposed by Bloomberg in 2006, they were scared. According to this policy, police officers and school safety agents would conduct unannounced sweeps of students at any secondary school in New York City without permanent metal detectors. Officers would come in the morning with metal detectors and would depart shortly after.² As a high school located in the South Bronx composed primarily of Black and Hispanic students, CSSJ feared they would be targeted for extra scrutiny.³ CSSJ's founding principal, Sue-Ann Rosch, expressed how she wished that she could have protected her students more—not from each other, but from the agents and metal detectors that invaded their school.⁴

At CSSJ, where Principal Rosch (known as Sue-Ann by students) felt very safe with students, Bloomberg's approach criminalized already-struggling inner-city kids. When the agents and the NYPD came into CSSJ with metal detectors, the school felt like a prison. This policy was just one facet of Bloomberg's zero-tolerance approach to handling school safety, which incorrectly upheld the notion that the true danger to students was themselves, rather than the systemic inadequacies within New York's school system. His punitive approach to handling disciplinary problems at secondary schools in New York City not only failed to protect CSSJ students, but it also damaged the relationships between staff and students, forced students into the criminal justice system, and perpetuated discrimination against minority groups.

2 David M. Herszenhorn, "Students to Get No Warning Before Searches," *New York Times*, April 14, 2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/14/education/students-to-get-no-warning-before-searches.html>.

3 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

4 Rosch, 2021.

A Brief History of School Safety in NYC and CSSJ

In 1998, the New York City Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to transfer its responsibility of school safety to the NYPD. This choice was made in spite of the fact that school crime had been declining and student enrollment was at its lowest point in over a decade.⁵ Prior to the vote, over twenty-four speakers explained how this decision “would create a prisonlike atmosphere in the schools.”⁶ These objections were particularly stressed by Black leaders who explained that Black students already had strained relationships with the NYPD. The mayor of NYC at the time, Rudolph W. Giuliani, dismissed these arguments, maintaining that police presence would increase school safety. This MOU, which was intended to be updated every four years, was not updated for twenty-one years.⁷ Although the revision in 2019 called for fewer arrests, an increased emphasis on conflict resolution, and more social workers, it did not decrease the number of police officers in schools.⁸

Many of Bloomberg’s decisions about school safety were guided by his belief that removing disruptive students would solve the problem of dangerous classrooms. In a speech made in January 2003, Bloomberg commended the New York City Department of Education for working toward implementing a “new zero-tolerance for disruptive children in the

5 B.H. et al versus City of New York. June 11, 2010, https://www.nyclu.org/sites/default/files/Amended_Complaint.pdf. This amended complaint from the United States District Court in the Eastern District of New York explains how the NYPD School Safety Division constitutes the fifth largest police force in the country, with more officers than the police departments in Washington, D.C., Detroit, Dallas, Phoenix, Boston, or Las Vegas. It also says that there are over 5,200 police personnel in public schools and only approximately 3,000 guidance counselors.

6 Lynette Holloway, “Board Votes to Give Police Control over School Security,” *New York Times*, September 17, 1998, <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/09/17/nyregion/board-votes-to-give-police-control-over-school-security.html>.

7 Jessica Gould, “New DOE Agreement with NYPD Attempts to Take School Security Past the ‘Giuliani Days,’” *Gothamist*, June 21, 2019, <https://gothamist.com/news/new-doe-agreement-with-nypd-attempts-to-take-school-security-past-the-giuliani-days>.

8 Gould, “New DOE Agreement.”

classroom.”⁹ Later that year, Bloomberg promised to crack down on violence in school by imposing stricter safety measures, which included bringing more safety agents and police officers to schools, as well as removing students who had been suspended twice within the past two years. Bloomberg’s crackdown even included students guilty of only minor infractions, like using profanity.¹⁰ During a news conference at a high school in Queens in December of 2003, the mayor announced, “The days of tolerating the few who hurt the many are over, starting now!”¹¹ He had little sympathy for the disruptive students themselves, however, exclaiming, “Feel sorry for them? How about those they prey on?”¹²

CSSJ was born into this era of over-policing schools. In the early 2000s, in an effort to reform education, Bloomberg and New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein committed to closing historically low-performing schools and opening smaller, more specialized secondary schools.¹³ Thus, in 2002, ninety-two planning teams were given the opportunity to found a high school in the Bronx.¹⁴ Rosch’s application to open CSSJ was one of nine that was accepted in the 2002-2003 school year.¹⁵ When Mayor Bloomberg’s roving metal detector policy took effect in 2006, Rosch had no jurisdiction in hiring, supervising, or evaluating the school safety agents that came to CSSJ.

Since its opening in 2002, CSSJ has used its own model of preventing and addressing school safety issues that has proven to be more effective than Bloomberg’s policy. Despite the fact that CSSJ was listed as one of New York’s most dangerous schools in the 2015-16 school year, Rosch took issue

9 Michael Bloomberg, “Mayor Bloomberg’s Education Reform,” education address, January 15, 2003, New York City, New York Urban League’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium, www.gothamgazette.com/index.php/archives/1621-mayor-bloombergs-education-reform.

10 Herszenhorn, “Security.”

11 Herszenhorn, “Security.”

12 Herszenhorn, “Security.”

13 Laura Kurgan, *From Large School Buildings to Small School Campuses: Orchestrating the Shift* (New York: New Visions for Public Schools, 2005) https://www.newvisions.org/page/-/Prelaunch%20files/PDFs/NV%20Publications/masterplanbookred_web.pdf.

14 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

15 Rosch, 2021.

with this assessment in an email to the author.¹⁶ Although there were several serious incidents, what put CSSJ over the top that year “were some minor incidents that were inaccurately written and then coded in the occurrence reporting system as major incidents.” When the state education department visited CSSJ after landing on this list, “the official report was very quick to say that our school did not feel dangerous at all! It actually praised the school culture and climate.”¹⁷

One of CSSJ’s philosophies is, as Rosch stated: “You broke it? We’re going to help you learn how to fix it.”¹⁸ Under the “Restorative Justice” tab on CSSJ’s website, there is a page titled “100% Respect Campaign—100% Respect for 100% of the People 100% of the Time.”¹⁹ This campaign listed rules of respect for staff to students, students to students, and students to staff. These lists, which included rules like “Give us the benefit of the doubt, and assume we have good intentions,” and “Look for compromise—agree to disagree—and resolve conflicts privately,” were the principles by which the restorative justice model is formed.

CSSJ’s family groups were a foundational part of the school’s approach to handling and preventing issues. “Each student at CSSJ is a part of a small advisory class called family group,” CSSJ’s school website declared. Each family group consisted of approximately fifteen students and one advisor, who met four times per week throughout the four years of high school.”²⁰ In these groups, students were able to receive individualized guidance from their advisor and peers. After traumatic experiences with metal detectors, students were sent to this advisory class where they could process the troublesome events.²¹ Most importantly, however, family groups granted students a sense of community and fostered long-lasting relationships.²² As

16 Emily Frost, “Number of ‘Persistently Dangerous’ City Schools on the Decline, State Says,” DNAINfo, August 13, 2015, <https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20150813/upper-west-side/number-of-persistently-dangerous-city-schools-on-decline-state-says>.

17 Sue-Ann Rosch, email to author, April 20, 2021.

18 Rosch, 2021.

19 “Community School for Social Justice: A NYC Outward Bound School,” CSSJ, Accessed March 24, 2021, <https://www.cssjbronx.org/>.

20 “Community School for Social Justice.”

21 “Community School for Social Justice.”

22 Rosch, 2021.

a four-year program at the school, teenagers had a permanent “family” on which they could depend while they were students at CSSJ. Rosch explained how this was one of the most important things to her when founding the school: “Family group...is a buy-in to culture. It’s a buy-in to how we think our community should look like.”²³

School issues can and usually should be dealt with internally. In her experience, Rosch expressed that “[n]inety-nine percent of the time, when a kid does something that puts them outside of the school community values, you can handle it at a school level.”²⁴ Students at CSSJ felt safe—not because of the metal detectors or the agents, but because of the support that staff provided. Rosch read a letter written by one student who toured the school prior to attending. The student wrote, “When I came to the school, I saw teachers helping kids. They seemed to care about the kids’ performance in school and in class. I talked to the principal Sue-Ann...She made me really want to go there...because the kids and teachers get along really well.”²⁵ The student then remarked how they were afraid of being around “big kids,” but after seeing the hallways at CSSJ, they were no longer scared. This student came from a school that had its own lunchroom, had a gym, and allotted students their own computer. Though CSSJ does not offer these, this student still wanted to attend because of its great environment and the relationships between students and staff.

Individual and Institutional Racism

The roving metal detector policy promoted the targeting of students of color at the individual level. To address this, CSSJ brought in individuals who would talk to students about their rights as citizens, what to expect if they were stopped by the police, and how not to resist in order to avoid getting hurt.²⁶ When the metal detectors came to CSSJ for the first time in November 2006, agents and officers made several racist and classist comments toward students of color. One officer demanded that a student explain where he had

23 Sue-Ann Rosch, email to author, April 20, 2021.

24 Rosch, 2021.

25 Rosch, 2021.

26 Rosch, 2021.

gotten his nice coat, shouting, “I know your mom ain’t buy that!”²⁷ Another officer, upon discovering a blank CD in a student’s bag, remarked, “Is this rap? Then it’s probably why you’re being searched.”²⁸

Beneath targeting of people of color, there existed racial discrimination at the institutional level. The metal detectors were used more frequently in schools that were deemed to be at high risk for criminal activity, and most of these schools—like CSSJ—had primarily non-white student populations. As indicated by GreatSchools, a national non-profit organization that provides information about PK-12 schools and education, CSSJ’s student population is 71 percent Hispanic, 27 percent Black, and only 1 percent white.²⁹ Rosch recalled that when this policy was initially implemented, CSSJ was distraught. “We probably were one of the first schools to get them because we’re in the South Bronx, we’re in a rough neighborhood,” she recalled. “You target poor neighborhoods; you target Black and brown people.”³⁰ When these metal detectors repeatedly searched underfunded schools with primarily non-white student populations, the number of incidents at these schools inevitably rose.³¹ This promoted a vicious cycle of over-surveillance in which certain schools were chronically targeted. It is worth noting that, in 2007, seventeen new schools were added to New York State’s list of persistently dangerous schools, one year after the policy was implemented. Sixteen were from New York City, and all had a primarily non-white student population.

Inadequacies of School Safety Agents and Officers

27 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom: The Over-Policing of New York City Schools,” March 2007, https://www.nyclu.org/sites/default/files/publications/nyclu_pub_criminalizing_the_classroom.pdf.

28 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

29 “Explore Community School for Social Justice in Bronx, NY,” GreatSchools, <https://www.greatschools.org/new-york/bronx/8340-Community-School-For-Social-Justice/>.

30 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

31 Jennifer Medina, “School Names 17 More ‘Persistently Dangerous’ Schools,” *New York Times*, August 22, 2007, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/22/nyregion/22schools.html>.

The agents present at CSSJ were not adequately trained to work in educational settings. These agents were considered NYPD, reserving the power to arrest, cuff, and take down students. However, they did not receive the same training as police officers.³² Rosch explained how these agents were “eminently less qualified and less suited than a regular NYPD person,” and were trained to “think of everybody as a criminal until proven otherwise.”³³ Although Rosch noted that there were some well-intentioned agents, they were not the majority.³⁴ Agents were known to violate rules and abuse their power. As stated by the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), when agents came to CSSJ’s campus with metal detectors for the first time in November 2006, a number of male officers searched female students. The Chancellor’s Regulations did not permit this.³⁵ Many girls were forced to squat for male agents who searched them with handheld metal detectors.³⁶ One male officer “repeatedly traced his handheld metal detector up [a female student’s] inner thigh until it beeped on the button of her jeans,” while questioning her repeatedly, “making her fear a cavity search.”³⁷

Some administrators felt it was necessary to protect students from agents’ gross misconduct. Michael Soguero, a principal at a different Bronx secondary school, was arrested after inserting himself between an agent and an unruly student. His arrest, along with that of school aide James Burgos, attracted criticism from the community, as many students and staff members at the school knew the principal to be a skilled mediator who was simply trying to calm the disruptive student.³⁸ It is worth noting that the officer who arrested Soguero and Burgos, Juan Gonzalez, had a history of misconduct: he had a complaint filed against him the previous month for “gripp[ing] another

32 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

33 Rosch, 2021.

34 Sue-Ann Rosch, email to author, April 22, 2021.

35 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom: The Over-Policing of New York City Schools,” March 2007, https://www.nyclu.org/sites/default/files/publications/nyclu_pub_criminalizing_the_classroom.pdf.

36 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

37 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

38 Elissa Gootman, “City Faces Criticism after Bronx Principal’s Arrest,” *New York Times*, February 9, 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/09/nyregion/city-faces-criticism-after-bronx-principals-arrest.html>.

student by the throat because the student was caught wearing a headband.”³⁹ Because school staff members were denied the official rights to manage school safety, they were often left with the responsibility of guarding their students from the inadequately trained and insensitive agents.

A clear lack of integrity existed in the task forces that brought the metal detectors. The agents and officers did not want their actions to be observed or documented. When the metal detectors came in November 2006, the NYCLU recorded an incident between an officer and a student: upon the officer’s emptying of his wallet, a student protested that his Fourth Amendment rights were being violated. After the student made this protest, the officer removed his badge so he could not be identified.⁴⁰ As Leah Wiseman Fink, an English teacher at CSSJ, perceptively stated, “If I were treating kids like criminals, then I would do it in secret as well.”⁴¹

When the metal detectors returned in March 2007, Karim Lopez—CSSJ’s after-school program coordinator and the director of the school’s social action club—invited Donna Lieberman from the NYCLU and two of her colleagues to observe how the agents treated students.⁴² After the agents and officers saw the NYCLU members and realized what they were doing, they removed Lieberman and her colleagues from the school. Lieberman and her colleagues instead resorted to standing across the street and taking pictures from outside. The officers forced them away from there as well.⁴³ Soon after this occurrence, Principal Rosch was directed by her superior to terminate Lopez for inviting the NYCLU. Rosch explained that “this is what happens with roving metal detectors. [CSSJ] lost an amazing young man who was a great role model for our kids.... Roving metal detectors breed these incidents.”⁴⁴

39 Gootman, “Criticism.”

40 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom: The Over-Policing of New York City Schools,” March 2007, https://www.nyclu.org/sites/default/files/publications/nyclu_pub_criminalizing_the_classroom.pdf.

41 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

42 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

43 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

44 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

Negative Impacts on Students

At the most basic level, this policy failed students by robbing them of time that they could have spent learning. This occurred through delays in the class schedule caused by the metal detectors, students not attending school when the agents and metal detectors were present, and the higher suspension rates associated with zero-tolerance policies. These time-consuming procedures changed the trajectory of the day for students and staff alike, and attendance rates dropped significantly.⁴⁵ Students who were present, however, were ordered to walk through a gauntlet of agents, were forced to remove their belts and shoes, had their bags searched, and were subject to more intrusive scans by hand-held metal detectors at the agents' discretion.⁴⁶ On both days the metal detectors were present at CSSJ in November 2006, classes started late, and students and staff reported difficulties focusing once instruction began.⁴⁷ When detectors returned in March 2007, Rosch explained how they disturbed the schedule of the entire day, noting how "it could take until 10 o'clock to get the kids into the building."⁴⁸ So, instead of having instructional periods after these sweeps, CSSJ put students into their designated family groups to process the experience and heal as a community.⁴⁹

In addition to short-term dips in attendance rates, punitive policies such as the roving metal detector policy also had the potential to decrease school attendance. The primary goal of implementing this policy was to ensure school safety, which should have promoted a good learning environment. If statistics showed that this policy decreased attendance, however, then there was a clear problem. Additionally, when issues with students were handled by an external force, such as the NYPD, students were much more likely to be taken out of school both temporarily and permanently.⁵⁰ Students who were regularly taken out of school as a form of punishment also tended to have fewer opportunities for academic achievement and experienced lower

45 New York Civil Liberties Union, "Criminalizing the Classroom."

46 New York Civil Liberties Union, "Criminalizing the Classroom."

47 New York Civil Liberties Union, "Criminalizing the Classroom."

48 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

49 Rosch, 2021.

50 Rosch, 2021.

graduation rates.⁵¹

Though CSSJ students had not committed any crimes, they felt criminalized, uncomfortable, and demeaned by this policy. One student remarked, “After the metal detectors came in, I felt like [CSSJ] was a different school...It just doesn’t feel right anymore.”⁵² Another student described how they were “tired of having to go through [random security scans],” spurring CSSJ’s social action club to meet and decide that they would refuse to go through them again.⁵³ This same student observed that their club “wanted to show the rest of New York that [they] don’t have to be treated like criminals.”⁵⁴ In schools where students had to interact with the NYPD more frequently than they did with counselors, they were forced to question what society perceived them to be. Were they students or criminals? The constant looming threat of metal detectors and the daily presence of agents in the halls who could arrest, cuff, and humiliate students “goes to the core of who [the students] are, [their] essence. And [they] have to do battle with that.”⁵⁵

This criminalization caused self-esteem issues in students, potentially impacting them later in life. Unjust treatment forced students to doubt themselves and question their own character. As Rosch sadly remarked, when she “ask[s] kids to tell [her] something wonderful about themselves, they have a hard time.”⁵⁶ Even if a teenager is able to avoid being funneled into the criminal justice system as a student, they still are at a higher likelihood to be incarcerated as an adult with this policy. One study conducted by Carrie Mier, an assistant professor of Criminal Justice at Indiana University East, and Roshni Ladny, a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida State University, revealed a linkage between self-esteem issues in one’s formative years and increased delinquency in

51 Paul Hemez, John J. Brent, and Thomas J. Mowen, “Exploring the School-to-Prison Pipeline: How School Suspensions Influence Incarceration during Young Adulthood,” *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 18, no. 3 (2020): 235-55, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1541204019880945>.

52 New York Civil Liberties Union, “Criminalizing the Classroom.”

53 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

54 Rosch, 2021.

55 Rosch, 2021.

56 Rosch, 2021.

later years.⁵⁷ Mier and Ladny conducted a quantitative meta-analysis of the impact of self-esteem on delinquency and crime that spanned between 1990 and 2015. By drawing on various studies, articles, theses, and dissertations, Mier and Ladny concluded that, as one's self-esteem increases, the likelihood that they will be delinquent later in life decreases. Rosch argued that it was nonsensical to impose strict, zero-tolerance policies when students really need “multiple tolerance policies... You're saying we don't want kids to learn from mistakes, we want to put them in the criminal justice system immediately after mistakes.”⁵⁸

Upsetting the Relationships between Students and CSSJ Staff

The relationships that CSSJ worked so hard to build were damaged by this policy, as the school was allotted little to no power in overseeing the city-wide rules. Rosch explained that CSSJ “did not supervise these people, we did not hire the SSAs in the school, we did not get to say yes or no to the SSAs in school.”⁵⁹ Schools' staff members felt that they had the moral responsibility to protect students from the vicious agents. Without reserving the official power to hire, fire, train, or discipline agents as they saw fit, CSSJ staff members were forced to spend their time following agents and standing between them and students when necessary.

Despite their efforts to stand between agents and students, CSSJ staff members often felt powerless in protecting students from this policy. The school was forced to uphold the rules that came along with the metal detectors, agents, and NYPD, even though it went against the values that CSSJ worked to instill in their students. This made students feel like they had no one left to trust. As discussed above, it even resulted in the termination of one of students' most trusted faculty members, the leader of their social action club—Karim Lopez. When the metal detectors came, Rosch recalled

57 Carrie Mier and Roshni T. Ladny, “Does Self-Esteem Negatively Impact Crime and Delinquency? A Meta-Analytic Review of 25 Years of Evidence,” *Deviant Behavior* 39, no. 8 (2018): 1006-22, DOI: [10.1080/01639625.2017.1395667](https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2017.1395667).

58 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

59 Rosch, 2021.

that students would be grumbling, “Sue-Ann, why are they doing this?”⁶⁰ She went on to say that students “felt like a sacred trust with [CSS] staff] had been broken...they felt like ‘why didn’t you protect us?’ And now, of course, as a school leader, I’m thinking, ‘why couldn’t I protect them?’”⁶¹

Conclusion

Investigating the effect of Mayor Bloomberg’s roving metal detector policy on the Community School for Social Justice reveals the ineptitude of the NYPD and school safety agents as well as the detrimental effects the policy has on students’ development. Inadequate training of agents contributed to the targeting of racial minorities on the individual level, pushing people of color into the criminal justice system and limiting their opportunities as students and citizens. The policy also targeted racial minorities on an institutional level by focusing upon what the city deemed as persistently dangerous schools—schools that were chronically underfunded and mostly attended by Black and Hispanic students. Instead of punishing students with this policy, the Community School for Justice has exhibited success in its restorative justice model, by which students learn from their mistakes and receive ample support from faculty. By diverting money away from zero-tolerance metal detector programs and instead putting it toward schools’ communities and resources, New York City would simultaneously be making an investment in school safety and in the youths’ future.

“The stories people tell about us are powerful, right? Whether it’s the media, or whether it’s your parents who don’t believe in you, or do believe in you, they’re powerful...Negative words eat away at self-esteem.”

Sue-Ann Rosch, founding principal of the
Community School for Social Justice in the Bronx

60 Sue-Ann Rosch, Zoom interview by author, April 9, 2021.

61 Rosch, 2021.

The Klanswoman: Racism in the Feminine Social Consciousness of Early Twentieth-Century America

SAM JOHNSON

ABSTRACT

White women have played a role in racial discrimination throughout American history, but to what extent did female society mobilize around the rhetoric and action of the Ku Klux Klan? The shrouded history of the second Klan, active during the mid-1910s through the 1940s, obscures the lives and deeds of Klansmen, and even less of a historical narrative exists for Klanswomen. Using press sources from the era and archival materials obtained by famed Klan infiltrator Stetson Kennedy, this paper offers a preliminary examination of the historical role of women in the second Ku Klux Klan. Additionally, rhetorical analysis of materials published by Klanswomen's associations aims to classify the nature of racist ideology as it pervaded twentieth-century white female society in America.

Historical perceptions of the early twentieth century American woman, with her homefront wartime victories and gleaming suffrage banners, rarely include the gruesome image of the burning cross. The Ku Klux Klan, though offering an example of what occurs at masculinity's terrifying extremes, found solace and support with white women. Even among this virulently masculine white supremacist organization, white women were critical in disseminating racial supremacy into everyday white society. The participation of women in the second Ku Klux Klan shows precisely how the bounds of patriarchal society could be stretched in the name of protecting white solidarity. Although the Klan enfranchised its women to an extent that the female members identified with the oppressor over the oppressed, the subordinate relationship of women remained unquestioned. Even in a society where women and non-whites were being denied the same basic rights, the women of the Klan illustrate a chilling, unshakable principle of American society: Whiteness overpowered all else.

The image is now well known to history: on October 16, 1915, a fiery cross shone down from Stone Mountain, ushering in the terrifying reign of the second Ku Klux Klan. Its ideological predecessor had fiercely inflicted terror onto the South in the Reconstruction era-- then, the organization had been an instigator of white supremacy and outlaw violence toward the formerly enslaved black population and those who sympathized with them politically. Klansmen aimed to “neutralize black suffrage” through a variety of means—political attacks, seizure of property, brutal assault, and murder—until the formal dissolution of the first Klan in 1870.¹

The ideology of the second Klan, as displayed in the available body of historical materials both published and unpublished, exists against the backdrop of a rapidly evolving, highly racialized American society. This, combined with the rampant “racist, nativist, and anti-radical sentiments” already present at the core of white American identity, provided the ideal conditions for the Klan to gain traction with its platform of racism and exclusion. Amidst these exclusionary ideologies, certain social positions could emerge: the white Klansman as the guardian, the white woman as the helpless victim, and the non-white other as the key threat-- an enemy for the Klan to identify and eradicate in the greater American crusade to reinforce white supremacy.

The maxims of William Joseph Simmons, the second Klan’s founder, underscore a greater rhetorical pattern within the Klan’s gender dynamics. White, masculine fraternalism is cemented into the collective conscience first and foremost--not as a sword by which Klansmen will avenge the white Protestant American, but as a shield taken up to protect the superior white race. However, in a critical divergence from the first Ku Klux Klan of the nineteenth century, Simmons’s organization embraces modernity and abandons the positioning of the helpless white woman. The first Klan, according to Klan historian Katherine M. Blee, “characterized rape equally as a metaphor for Southern white male disempowerment as an atrocity committed against women.”² Though Simmons emphasized sexual purity and insisted that males should protect white femininity, the Klan’s second iteration could not

1 Michael Newton, *The Invisible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan in Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 13; Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 16.

2 Blee, 16.

rely solely on the image of the female as victim. Blee attributes this change to the woman suffrage movement of the early twentieth century, which shifted social attitudes toward a greater degree of female agency. According to a Simmons-era Klansman's manual, "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan demands reverence for American womanhood and insists that her person shall be respected as sacred, that her chastity be kept inviolate, and that she not be deprived of her right to the glory of an unstained body."³ "Chastity" set expectations for female behavior within the social sphere of the Klan, becoming the oft-repeated ideal of womanhood. "The glory of an unstained body" became an unseen threat, and it provided a convenient justification for exclusion.

Many of the primary sources used in this paper come from the Stetson Kennedy collection of documents at the University of Florida Special Collections. Kennedy, an activist who infiltrated the Klan under an alias in the 1940s, created a trove of documents on the second Klan. Women can be parsed out from his narratives to a certain extent; for example, Kennedy's primary account of how he infiltrated the Klan mentions the Betsy Ross chapter of the women's auxiliary group sewing Klansmen's uniforms. Later in the twentieth century, Kennedy also collected published materials from the Women of the Ku Klux Klan as he prepared to write his 1990 retrospective *The Klan Unmasked*. Although these materials are immensely useful to this project, they are flawed because Kennedy's materials were mostly second-hand. The photocopied national WKKK documents offer fewer leads into the individuals who practiced and published the ideology of the organization but provide a basis for understanding the relationship between women and the Klan.

Material about women in the Klan is thinly scattered across the landscape of Klan history, but this does not make the task of a cohesive narrative impossible, nor does it negate the overwhelming historical importance behind doing so. Within the scope of research for this paper, through the documents in the Stetson Kennedy collection alone, a story emerges about women in the local Klan chapters of Florida and Georgia. Kennedy's investigations, which will soon be explored in greater depth, say little themselves about the organization and operation of women. The Women of the Ku Klux Klan, as well as Simmons's less successful offshoot women's group the

3 *Klansman's Manual*, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., undated.

Kamellia Klub are not mentioned in Kennedy's writings; this is most likely because Kennedy primarily participated during the 1940s, when the heyday of organized women's groups had already passed.

In general, historical accounts about the Klan commonly minimize the contributions of women within the organization. Academic publications on the Klan in Florida and Georgia also only briefly acknowledge the presence of women. David Chalmers, for example, cites a free day nursery run by the women of George B. Baker Klan No. 70 in Lakeland. One can understand the selective focus on Klan men—after all, its rhetoric advocated principles of fraternity and brotherhood. Katherine Blee demonstrates this in her general history of the Klan, most notably through the story of Elizabeth Tyler, who undermined Simmons's very standing as the founder.

Elizabeth Tyler, the First Klanswoman

The events that transpired around the second Klan's rise to power illustrate a complicated series of power exchanges along gendered lines. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan only extended beyond Simmons's loyal group of followers and conspirators with the help of the Southern Publicity Association, an Atlanta-based business venture by Edward Y. Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler. Membership boomed, and across the United States the Ku Klux Klan of Reconstruction days was revitalized. The Klan expanded its emphasis on post-Civil war anti-Black thought into a campaign against Roman Catholics, Jews, nonwhites, Bolsheviks, and immigrants."⁴ Yet, despite Tyler, hypermasculinity dominated the inner workings of Klan leadership.

Tyler and Clarke's leadership notably brought about a defamation scandal that greatly damaged the Klan's credibility. In 1919, Clarke's wife accused her husband of infidelity with Tyler; the controversy first appeared in a 1921 exposé by *New York World*.⁵ The scandal which ensued repeatedly appeared in national newspapers. During Tyler's September 1921 visit to New York City, she spoke at length to *The Christian Science Monitor*, where she used the publicity to characterize her organization as a non-violent anti-hate

4 Blee, 20, 21.

5 Blee, 21.

group that only sought the enforcement of the law.⁶ In this interview, as well as in an account of a September 24 speech before a meeting of Atlanta area Klansmen, Tyler feared for her life; this was no exaggeration of the strong emotions she and her organization had stirred up among Americans. In mid-October, she survived an assassination attempt at her home.⁷ Within the Klan, a polarization occurred regarding opinion about Tyler. Some applauded her courage and capability as a leader, while others explained her influence as part of her ability to “handle” men’s “appetites and vices.”⁸ At an Atlanta meeting in September 1921—the first time that a woman had appeared before a body of Klansmen—a local leader describes the extent of support for Tyler in the face of public defamation:

I would like for the citizens of the invisible empire and the public at large to know that during Mrs. Tyler’s talk there was absolute silence in the klavern and at the conclusion of her talk... Mrs. Tyler bowed her head with tears in her eyes and stayed silent during the long period of cheers and applause, at the conclusion of which Mrs. Tyler arose, and looking over the vast sea of faces said “Do you mean that from the bottom of your hearts you will stand by me?” and two thousand voices answered “Yes” in unison.

This account, credited to an author only via the status of a “communication from the Klan,” shows the immense support present for Tyler by one group of local Klansmen. The environment it depicts beneath the surface, however, reinforces the expectations of gender rooted in Simmons’s patriarchal, hyper-masculine ideals. Tyler casts herself fully into the image of a “pale and trembling woman,” ridiculed by the Jewish enemy press and begging for the mercy and support of Klansmen lower in rank than she was within the organization.⁹

The Klan would continue on the path Simmons, Clarke, and Tyler set forth for it, but Elizabeth Tyler’s ascent into power captivated the public eye and intimidated male Klan officials. Eventually, Simmons tasked Tyler

6 “Ku Klux Klan Aims Defended,” *Christian Science Monitor*, September 23, 1921.8-)

7 “Mrs. Tyler Given Confidence Vote by Atlanta Klan; Attacks on Character,” *Atlanta Constitution*, September 24, 1921; “Five Shots Fired at Klan Official,” *Atlanta Constitution*, October 12, 1921. 4

8 Blee, 22.

9 “Mrs. Tyler Given Confidence Vote.”

with the formation of women's auxiliary groups. Though she would not accomplish this goal, the action suggests the desired compartmentalization of women away from the main Klan by the powerful male leader of the group. Edward Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler would eventually be cut out from any influence in the Klan with the institution of Hiram Evans as the second Imperial Wizard.

In 1923, two years after Tyler ensured the male Klan's success, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan was nationally chartered in Little Rock, with Lulu Markwell as head. This group, a brainchild of Simmons's successor Hiram Evans-- ironically, Tyler and Clarke drove the first leader out-- would dominate the sphere of women's groups operating alongside the Klan.¹⁰ Blee and Klan historian Linda Gordon make the argument that women's auxiliary groups initially became institutionalized into the main Klan apparatus due to male leaders' fears that female participation would spiral out of male control if left separate. The Women of the Ku Klux Klan and related organizations, including William Simmons's attempt at a women's club, provided a more innocuous indoctrination into Klan ideology, and strengthened solidarity with the goals of the KKK on a mass scale. The WKKK and the Kamellia Klub offered a political identity that was not in any way at odds with white female society; on the contrary, under the WKKK's ideology, womanhood and Klanswomanhood were perfectly complementary. When women entered the spheres of the Klan concerned with political affairs, leaving the domain of white womanhood, their roles were critically contradictory-- heavily gendered, yet highly impactful as women found ways to work within the Klan's male network.

The Klanswoman: Hatred as a Moral Virtue and Social Necessity

The greater acceptance of women as agents of political and social enfranchisement brought women into the Klan's in-group, no longer solely regarded as victims in the disintegration of white American society. As the image of a helpless Elizabeth Tyler before a room of sympathetic Klansman illustrates, however, the second Klan did not fully reject the traditional notion of womanhood, especially when the goal involved bolstering solidarity among male

10 Blee, 22.

Klansmen. The result was a rhetoric which lauded women's achievements but always kept the needs of patriarchal society in mind, essentially promoting women's empowerment within the boundaries of male prosperity. The Women of the Ku Klux Klan would express this ideology faithfully in their active years, and moreover, the rhetoric of the WKKK would reimagine the ideology of white supremacy into a doctrine of racism rooted in an image of white American society as a superior environment for women's rights.

In terms of mobilizing white female society toward the Klan's white supremacist end goals, the WKKK was quite successful nationwide in the 1920s. White women united under the Klan's banner in traditional Klan strongholds, like the Southeast and Midwest. Beyond these, however, a 1925 *New York Times* article describes a street parade in Neptune Township, New Jersey, with a reported expected attendance of between ten and fifteen thousand women.¹¹ By what means did the WKKK appeal to the American woman? For one, the broader Klan found such a level of success because it did not have to create a newly convincing form of racism; as Gerald W. Johnson says in *South-Watching*, "The soundness of Ku Klux doctrine seemed... to be beyond debate, for had not its essentials been expounded for years by his pastor, his paper and his political boss?"¹² With anti-white sentiments already driven into the core of the white Protestant consciousness, the Klan could focus on the appeal of a fraternal order, where brotherhood built solidarity and political mobilization. The magnetism of group identity made the Klan exceedingly successful, and the WKKK shared many tactics with its male counterpart.

Through an involved system of rituals and beliefs, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan affirmed their loyalty to white American Protestantism. However, as was the case for the male Klan, the WKKK made no attempt to separate or conceal the fact that racism was a foundational tenet of the organization. Some WKKK materials are more subtle, such as the Preamble included in the "Constitution and Laws of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan," which alludes only to "holy principles" and "patriotic and fraternal achievements" as the Klanswoman's central motivations.

11 Special to the *New York Times*, "Women of the Klan to Parade," *New York Times*, May 29, 1925.

12 Gerald W. Johnson, *South-Watching: Selected Essays* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 11.

This passage evokes whiteness, womanhood, and Christian duty, but it primarily functions to promote loyalty to the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and to the WKKK. The rhetoric becomes more forward in more familiar materials, like the *Song Book for the Women of the Ku Klux Klan*:

We shall ever be devoted to the sublime principles of a pure Americanism, and valiant in the defense of its ideals and institutions. We avow the distinction between the races of mankind as decreed by the Creator, and we shall ever be true to the maintenance of White Supremacy and strenuously oppose any compromise thereof.¹³

Here, White Supremacy is named specifically alongside the values of patriotism and Christian fidelity. In the majority of WKKK literature, racism folds seamlessly into the Klanswoman's sense of self. Often, this includes a participatory element as well. Prospective members of the WKKK were expected to recite the following: "I will forever oppose all who would destroy the Nationalism of my Country and turn me from loyalty to my flag; and ... I will resist to my last breath any and all attempts to control this Nation by those whose ideals are foreign and alien to the ideals of free Christian America."

As an organization, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan expressed a terrifying rhetoric of racial annihilation that helped to create a firm loyalty and solidarity on the basis of a common identity. The WKKK's song book exemplifies how Klanswomanhood became a social identity. Protestant hymns, patriotic anthems, and secular pop songs of the day all appeared in the song book, most with lyrics changed to honor the Klan. Notably, the hymn "Old Rugged Cross"-- originally about humility and gratitude for the salvation granted by the crucifixion of Christ--concluded with an exaltation of the "Bright Fiery Cross."

(Verse 1)
All over the U.S.A the fiery cross we display,
The emblem of Klansman's domain
We will be forever true to the Red, White and Blue,
And Americans always remain.

13 Ku Klux Creed, *Song Book for Women of the Ku Klux Klan*, undated.

(Verse 3)

In the Bright Fiery Cross, a great beauty I see
As it shines its light so divine
For the hope it will give may forever it life
To be loved to you and yours and me and mine.

The song book trivialized the hate group's most extreme rhetoric and helped with the process of indoctrination in which an innocuous social identity became inseparably intertwined with the annihilation of non-whiteness. Many songs attack particular minority groups, such as in "The Little Red School House," an anti-Catholic anthem positioned in the part of the song book oriented specifically toward Klanswomen:

We Sang Hail Columbia instead of Hail Mary,
"And never a once to the pope did we kneel;
No crossing ourselves in the little red school house,
Then why let the Romans our treasury steal;
Our teachers had Bibles and led our devotion,
But now all such teachers and Bibles must go."

This song incorporates the threat of the non-white person, positioning Catholicism as the cause for deterioration of American education and rejecting modernity for the sake of conservatism and an idyllic past. A final function of the Klanswoman's song book is parody solely for the purpose of entertainment and merry-making, crucial in forming the ties of a truly exclusive community, resulting in the hivemind loyalty that makes violent political ends possible. The 1918 song "K-K-Katy" becomes "K-K-K---Klanswomen:"

You're the only g-g-girls that I adore,
When the K-k-k-Kross burns out on the hilltop
I'll be waiting at the K-k-k-Klavern door.¹⁴

The male and female national leaders of the Klan engaged Klanswomen in a psychological experience of total war against the Klan's enemies. Disagreement with the Klan meant social disenfranchisement and alienation from one's peers. The most innocuous and intimate frontiers of individual experience become a battleground against non-whiteness, and culture is entirely reframed in a Klannish perspective. Christian morals stood synonymously

14 Song Book, 19.

with white supremacy, and Protestant servitude is corrupted into loyalty to actively violent racism.

Conclusion: Klanswomen, Innocuous and Violent

Klanswomen promoted the Klan's ideology across white female society, but the women of the Klan inside and outside of organized auxiliary groups are rarely found to be direct harbingers of violence. Instead, the female body of Klanswomen acted as a silent solidarity through which racist ideas and their violent ends could gain support. The boundaries of gender relegated violence as a duty of masculinity, and there are far fewer instances of women interacting with the Klan's directly violent apparatuses in the historical record.

The lack of violence inherent to Klanswomanhood does not indicate a lack of hate. The sources presented in this paper should repeatedly indicate the contrary; women of the Klan showed up time and time again, as marchers, seamstresses, wives, and sisters of the organization. However, the hatred of the Klanswoman ideology occurred subtly, and the consciousness of a woman within the Klan often posits white supremacy as an afterthought. Blee's interviews with Klanswomen speak of their days in the organization as "a time of friendship and solidarity among like-minded women."¹⁵ The main Klan celebrated the white woman as the educator and nurturer of a healthy, white Protestant society. No longer was the woman a victim of a deteriorating society; the twentieth-century Klanswoman instead carried "moral" virtue back into American society.

Women of the Klan proudly advocated white supremacy and saw no connection with any sort of sexism present in white patriarchal society. The Women of the Klan lived within a system of male subjugation, yet found an empowered, holistic identity through their participation in the KKK. Elizabeth Tyler's early conceptions of gender within the organization forever determined the character of gender relations, in which women could move freely along the Klan apparatus so long as they were not a threat. The creation of the Klanswoman involved loyalty to gender, religion, and race, all of which were inseparably tied to a violent form of white supremacy. Klanswomen were not bombing apartment complexes that housed people of different

15 Blee, 1.

races, nor were they getting publicity from a public lynching. This does not make them less important to the movement; on the contrary, the women who dedicated themselves to the cause created an environment ideal for the incubation of hate, where horrific acts of white supremacy were as natural as listening to the radio.

The Female Labor Force and the American Railroads During World War I: A Case Study

SKYE JACKSON

ABSTRACT

During the volatility of the years immediately preceding and including the United States' entrance into World War I, the female labor force expanded throughout the country. As men left in large numbers to fight abroad, women quickly filled positions across many industries in order to keep up with the increased wartime production. The experiences of these new women workers were varied and, in many ways, dependent on their socio-economic status and race. Because of the nature of the American railroad industry at the time, it serves as a valuable case study of the experiences of female workers, as well as the trends of their employment, during and after the war. Here, the records of the Women's Service Section (1918-1920) of the United States Railroad Administration preserve some of these women's perspectives. Additionally, these records capture these women's everyday working environments as they navigated sexism, racism, and classism in addition to economic turbulence and the uncertainty of being at war.

When the United States entered the First World War in 1917, the female labor force increased significantly. In response to the many job positions that opened as men left to fight in the war, women workers entered previously male-dominated industries. In *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (2017), historian Lynn Dumenil argues that there was a significant cultural shift, not only within the female labor force, but also in how Americans perceived female employment. While American women entered many sectors of employment during the Progressive Era, their experiences varied based on their socio-economic status. It is significant to note that in conjunction with the overwhelming impact of World War I there were also other social movements and changes occurring simultaneously such as the Woman Suffrage (and Anti-Suffrage) Movement and the Great Migration of Black people from southern states to the North

and West. The interaction of these movements with American involvement in the First World War is undeniable, as the increase in industrial production as a result of the war created labor shortages filled by both white and Black women. The changing labor demographics highlight further the significant role that a woman's economic and racial status played in determining her experiences as a wage-paid employee.

In the period between 1917 and 1920, over ten million American women worked in industries experiencing war-related productive growth. One of the largest domestic sectors of World War I in the United States was the railroad industry. Indeed, female labor on the railroads grew approximately 321 percent between 1917 and 1920. The evolution of the female industrial labor force begs the following questions: how did women fit into traditionally masculine spheres of employment, and how did women of various classes and racial identities fit differently? The American railroad industry acts as a valuable case study in exemplifying the larger trends in the shifting female labor force during and after the end of the First World War. A woman's race and social class directly affected her experience with employment. Using the available documentation in conjunction with information pertaining to the labor trends and the cultural context of the early twentieth century, the diverse experiences of female railroad employees offer valuable insights into the larger experiences of women in the labor force during World War I.

It is imperative to begin this analysis by contextualizing the volatility of the professional environment. A period of instability occurred after 1906 when the Hepburn Act empowered the Interstate Commerce Commission to set maximum shipping rates. Eventually, one-sixth of the nation's railroad tracks owned by companies went into the receivership of United States.

Railroad unions sought higher wages and safer working conditions during the period before American intervention and, afterwards, labor tensions and strikes occurred. In response, Congress passed the Adamson Act, mandating an eight-hour workday for railroad workers. On April 6, 1917, the United States Congress declared war. There was an attempt to establish a Railroad's War Board following this declaration, but it ultimately failed due to anti-trust regulation. Further turbulence resulted from the incompetence of the railroad managers and changing rules of federal regulation. Ultimately, the federal government chose to deal with the congested war-time production traffic by nationalizing railroads. On December 28, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson created the United States Railroad Administration (USRA) to control and operate them. Wilson chose to nationalize the railroads

because they played a central role in the increased wartime production and American economy. The USRA raised wages not only in response to the unstable railroad unions, but also to encourage workers to join the booming industry. Despite the signing of the Armistice ending World War I in November 1918, the USRA continued to maintain the nation's railroads and established the Women's Service Section (WSS) on August 29, 1918.

The Women's Service Section (WSS) was created to handle issues of wages, hours, discrimination (on the basis of both sex and race), sexual abuse and harassment. It was managed by suffragist and labor-reform activist Pauline Goldmark. The USRA divided the nation's railroads into three districts: East, West, and South. In 1918 alone, 20,000 additional women began working in the railroad industry, primarily in the West and East districts. During the period in which railroads were nationalized, women worked as telegraphers, railroad shopkeepers, railway checkers and callers, railway cleaners, train dispatchers, yard workers and numerous other jobs associated with the railroads. Goldmark herself reflected on the purpose of the WSS in a report published in 1919, stating, "They [WSS inspectors] are reporting on the exact character of the work required, its suitability for women, the observance of the state labor laws as to hours of work, and... the application of wage rates ensuring equal pay." The WSS found their purpose in not only being an investigative body, but also in making their own regulations on several occasions in order to increase the "general welfare of female employees." While there were certainly external social conditions that resulted in female railroad employees' diverse experiences on the basis of their race and class, the contemporary social conditions were visible in the policies and attitudes of the WSS. To be sure, the WSS embodied the contradictory goal of providing special protection to female workers while ensuring they were viewed as equal to men in the workplace.

Depending on their class and ethnicity, white women found different types of employment on the railroads. The types of employment a white woman had available to her was heavily determined by her socio-economic status. One of the most common ways that white women were employed in the railroad industry during World War I was in "pink collar" work: skilled or semi-skilled work consisting of the clerical, secretarial, and administrative positions that had come to be associated with female labor. The white women most likely to hold the semi-skilled section of these jobs were young, unmarried members of the middle-class that left the industry once they were married. The increased employment of middle-class white women in railroad offices

and stations was accompanied by increased stock ownership by women. This was especially true for the Pennsylvania Railroad where many educated middle-class women were tasked with managing train schedules and ensuring both the train and the crews safe travel as railroad dispatchers. Clerical and secretarial work became increasingly feminized in the nineteenth century due to the “safe, clean, and respectable” environment it offered for white women, but this change was also probably exacerbated due to the increasingly expensive and limited supply of male labor. Included within this realm of employment were female train dispatchers, ticket agents, office assistants, station agents, and more. In fact, the telegraphic training given to many white women by women’s section of the Pennsylvania R.R. School of Telegraphy was some of the most specialized training given to women in railroad employment during the war. Much of this work did not pertain to the war so much as it was a trend of the twentieth century. The effect of World War I on the American economy did, however, offer these pink-collar railroad workers better working conditions through the regulation and investigatory services of the WSS.

In conjunction to their middle-class counterparts, white immigrant and working-class women also worked in regulated environments. It was among this group of white women that jobs viewed to be masculine in nature—and, thus, inappropriate for a woman—became available. The number of white women holding these jobs, however, was still much less than the number of Black female workers. Many working-class white women found work as internal car or shop cleaners, waitresses in railroad clubs, or salesclerks at railroad stations. A smaller number of working-class white women found work as maintenance workers in specialized manufacturing, or as manual laborers in the railroad shops and yards.¹ Older or married immigrant white women were the most likely to remain in cleaning and domestic services or other forms of unskilled labor as younger immigrant and working-class white women were frequently able to obtain jobs in semi-skilled clerical work. Younger women of the working class could also find semi-skilled jobs in factories creating parts to build and repair trains and engines.² Despite this,

1 “Using More Women on Heavy Work: Railroads Putting Them in Men’s Places, Miss Goldmark Tells Wage Commission,” *New York Times* (NY): March 1, 1918.

2 National Archives (War Department), “Women’s Activities - Industry - Public Service and Trades - Painters, Railroad Service, and Postwomen,” 1918. [165-WW-595D-13]

72 percent of the employed women were in clerical and secretarial positions.³

Working-class white women were less likely to be educated and were paid lower wages than white middle-class female employees, many of whom had received a certain degree of formal education or training. With this being said, WSS studies found that many of the women employed by the railroad industry during World War I had worked prior to the war in a related career. Only one-fifth of female railway clerks had never worked prior the United States' entrance into World War I.⁴ Historian Maurine Weiner Greenwald offers insight into this statistic by highlighting that, due to declining marriage rates during the war, employment for young, working-class women could have become more necessary, and the railroads offered plentiful opportunities for clerical work deemed appropriate for white women.

Most Black female laborers employed in the railroad industry were poor and were far more likely to be working out of necessity than their white counterparts. While Black women found increased employment opportunities in the railroad industry during World War I, the types of jobs that they worked were often more dangerous and laborious than those done by white women. Black women earned lower wages than their white counterparts. While many working white women were young and unmarried, the majority of Black women who worked were married and older. The Great Migration of African Americans from the South into northern and western regions of the United States is reflected in the large numbers of Black female railroad employees.⁵ Because many working-class white women moved into semi-skilled sectors of railway labor, jobs in cleaning and domestic services opened up to Black women.⁶ Once the railroads were nationalized, however, the dwindling supply of male labor became a problem. Black female labor could be found in roundhouses, railroad shops, or on the tracks as section laborers, where they were often required to lift crossties of up to 150 pounds. Black laborers—both male and female—worked in unskilled or semi-skilled positions on the railroads; in the shops they typically did custodial work,

3 Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 166.

4 Greenwald, "Women Workers and World War I," 159.

5 Women's Service Section, Nov. 1919, file 97-28-262, Record Group 14, U.S. Railroad Administration, National Archives.

6 Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 166.

and, as section laborers, they could sometimes find semi-skilled positions.⁷ Black female laborers were also more likely to have abusive foremen, as they worked in conditions less regulated to protect them from “moral hazard.” In Chicago, for example, Black women worked on the Wabash Railroad as cart operators and truckers alongside male co-workers. Although they made the same wage rate, they were subjected to abuse.⁸

Contrary to the variety of jobs that white women held on the railroads, racist stereotypes prevalent in American society painted Black women as “being capable of only manual labor.” Though, to be sure, even as section laborers—a position capturing some of the most physically demanding work one could do on the railroads—they were not truly required to do what their male counterparts were. Typically, they were employed in “maintenance of way operations,” and inspected the lines for any damage or potential obstruction.⁹ Despite the high wages Black female workers earned as section laborers and freight truckers, the WSS eventually passed regulations that prevented the hire of women in this line of railroad employment. Though many of the policies created by the Women’s Service Section helped create safer work environments and better paid jobs, they also—in many ways—negatively impacted Black female workers. Their new policies regarding the employment of women of any race in environments perceived as “too dangerous” or “inappropriate for women” resulted in thousands of Black women losing their jobs, with 400 female section laborers fired from one railroad alone.¹⁰ While some Black women were transferred to other areas of railroad-related employment where they were paid lower wages, a much larger portion lost their employment entirely.¹¹ With the types of work deemed “improper to women” forbidden by the WSS in 1919, the few opportunities that Black women had to acquire semi-skilled employment and wages were gone. Similarly, the few groups of white women employed in these sectors of railroad work lost their jobs but were transferred to other forms of railroad-related employment at disproportionately higher rates than their Black counterparts.

7 Theodore Kornweibel, “Not at All Proper for Women”: Black Female Railroaders,” *Railroad History*, No. 201 (2009): p.10.

8 Kornweibel, “Not at All Proper for Women,” 7.

9 Kornweibel, 1.

10 Greenwald, “Women Workers and World War I,” 157.

11 Kornweibel, “Not at All Proper for Women,” 12.

The impact of these employment policies was far-reaching. The number of Black women working in low-paying domestic and cleaning-services jobs on railroads, for example, increased in 1919 as these were some of the only jobs left available to them.¹² While white working-class women were likely to be employed as interior cleaners for stations and for train cars, Black women were much more likely to work as engine cleaners, exterior car cleaners, or as maids for passenger lines. Black women worked as “Pullman maids,” a position created in the earlier years of the twentieth century that did not become prevalent until 1920. Engine and exterior car cleaning was notoriously hard work, with long hours and low wages. In response, the USRA limited the work week to 6 days and raised the wages of these workers.¹³ As for jobs with overlap between the employment of white and Black women, white women typically worked fewer hours and made higher wages than Black women—even those who had worked there longer.

Complex cultural factors were at play in determining the various ways that female railroad workers were both received by and perceived within American society. Railroads, at the time, were viewed as the “life blood” of the American economy. Despite the targeted advertisements encouraging women to fill the quotas of labor required to operate them at wartime production levels, Americans had mixed reactions to women working on the rails. Older, white women of the middle-class, for example, often raised concerns pertaining to the safety of such an environment, particularly from the risk of “moral hazard.” This concern reflected the early twentieth-century women’s movement associated that had new ideas about female sexuality. In response, the WSS attempted to monitor women working closely with men, such as in the railroad shops.

While the Women’s Service Section was created to advocate for women on issues pertaining to wages and hours, the agency also investigated claims of sexual abuse, harassment, and deviance.¹⁴ WSS reports convey numerous complaints of sexually motivated abuse in the workplace made not only by female railroad workers, but by older white women in the form of letters sent directly to the WSS. Young female workers complained that they

12 Kornweibel, “Not at All Proper for Women,” 14.

13 Women’s Service Section, Nov. 1919, file 97-28-262, Record Group 14, U.S. Railroad Administration, National Archives.

14 Goldmark, “Women in the Railroad Service,” 151.

were both victims of sexual abuse and “rampant sexual impropriety.”¹⁵ This demonstrates a common suspicion about women who worked in male-dominated environments and with male coworkers. The WSS’s suspicions sometimes undermined the authenticity of these claims of abuse. Historians such as Mary Frost Jessup have explored sexual violence among railroad workers.¹⁶ The WSS frequently discounted the problem, however, perhaps because of the compounding effects of both sexism and racism.

After the November 1918 Armistice, when men began returning from overseas, many women railroad workers lost their jobs. The loss of female jobs became especially prominent in 1920 once the United States denationalized the railroads. With the return of the nation’s railroads to their owners in March 1920, the United States Railroad Administration, and its Women’s Service Section, came to an end. This had several notable implications. Many of the WSS’s regulatory policies and protections for workers were ignored. Women were fired from their positions, sometimes by the hundreds, and many who were not fired and did not depend on the income they received left voluntarily to avoid the hostilities of the returning male workers.¹⁷

The women most likely to keep their jobs in the railroad industry were those who held positions such as railroad clerks, secretaries, or administrative assistants that underwent a feminization process during the war. Additionally, women who were employed in work viewed as traditionally feminine prior to the war such as interior car or shop cleaners were less likely to lose their jobs. Women who worked in positions typically filled by men were especially affected by the austerity program inaugurated by the USRA immediately before the railroads were reinstated. This program favored workers with seniority, and—because many of the female laborers joined railroad employment or moved from their original jobs to higher paying ones during the wartime period—the previous male employees were reinstated. Female workers were either moved back to their original positions (which had much

15 Janet F. Davidson, “The Goosing of Violet Nye and Other Tales: White Women and Sexual Respectability on the Pennsylvania Railroad”, *Labor History*, No. 4 (2000), 438.

16 Mary Frost Jessup, *Women in the Railroad Industry During and After World War I*, Historical Study Number 70, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Washington, DC: June 1944)

17 Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 163.

lower wages) or were fired.¹⁸

Other women employed as telegraphers on the railroads were able to join the Order of the Railway Telegraphers, a labor union that began admitting women as members in 1905. This union even had female district representatives, such as Katherine Davidson, who represented the B&O Railroad. Though this particular career path opened up for some young women, employment opportunities declined with the introduction of new automated control systems in 1920.¹⁹ However, it was challenging for female railroad workers to unionize independently due to many prevailing ideas of women as strikebreakers (which they frequently were).²⁰ Black female railroad workers found it especially challenging to unionize as the few brotherhoods which allowed female membership did not allow Black women to join. Further, unions for Black railroad workers were hostile toward Black women. Some railroad managers preferred Black men, who they believed could be more productive, and some preferred the labor of Black women, who were less expensive to hire. This trend was exacerbated by the return of the railroads to their original management as many of the equal-pay policies of the USRA (and WSS) were removed.²¹

The experiences of female workers in the American railroad industry serve as a valuable case study of how the female labor force changed during the First World War. Work opportunities opened for both white and Black women during the wartime period but, with the signing of the Armistice at the end of 1918, female employment on the railroads began to decrease. The demobilization of female workers occurred across many sectors of industry, such as in steel and manufacturing. Black women traditionally worked in more laborious, and often dangerous, settings than their white counterparts and frequently for lower wages. White women employed in industrial sectors were subjected to different conditions and expectations based on their respective socio-economic status. White middle-class women frequently were employed in skilled clerical and administrative positions. White women who were young, unmarried, and of the working-class were often employed in semi-skilled clerical positions and, in some cases, factory labor and manu-

18 Jepsen, "Women Telegraphers in the Railroad Depot," 152.

19 Jepsen, 152.

20 Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 163.

21 Greenwald, "Women Workers and World War I," 159.

facturing positions. These trends in the employment of white women can extend to other industrial sectors during World War I, such as the Chicago meat-packing industry.²²

Women who worked in male-dominated industrial sectors were regarded suspiciously, with wartime federal agencies—like the Women’s Service Section—regulating both “moral and physical hazard.” The Federal Women’s Bureau, for example, had committees dedicated to the protection of working women, while the Women’s Branch of the Ordnance Department of the U.S. Army was created to ensure fair treatment of female employees working in defense-related industries.²³ The temporary nature of these organizations reflects another wartime trend in the female labor force: although it was a period featuring increased employment of American women in skilled positions, many of these changes were temporary in nature. Although the war heightened women’s claims to voting and officeholding, the return of the male labor supply and post-war contraction of the American economy undermined women’s economic progress.²⁴ Clerical and cleaning positions were the least likely to fire their female employees across most job sectors and, even so, between 1919 and 1920 female clerical work decreased by 32 percent.²⁵

While the records of the USRA and the WSS provide some insight into the experiences of women employed on the railroads during World War I, the experiences of women in many other sectors of employment went unrecorded. To be sure, information pertaining to the railroading women both prior to and after the end of the USRA is scarce. By analyzing conditions of female railroad employment—such as the origins, inner workings, and, ultimately, the end of the Women’s Service Section of the United States Railroad Association—the interaction of these specific features with a woman’s race and social class can be extended to other sectors of women’s employment during World War I.

22 Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 166.

23 Dumenil, 166.

24 Dumenil, 166.

25 Greenwald, “Women Workers and World War I,” 159.

EUROPEAN HISTORY

Medieval Italian Identity, Historiography, and the Roman Republican Past

LANCE MAULSBY

ABSTRACT

This paper is the product of an examination of two histories from two different periods in the medieval history of the Italian peninsula, *Historia Langobardum* by Paul the Deacon (eighth century) and *Nuova Cronica* by Giovanni Villani (fourteenth century). The goal was to see if either author could provide evidence of identification with the ancient Roman past. The era of the Roman Republic was of particular interest, considering the emergence of republican forms of government via the communal movement as well as the anti-imperial sentiment harbored by the Guelfs. What is revealed in the analysis of these two sources ultimately is a lack of contemporary identification with Republican history at two distant points in the medieval history of Italy. Rather, it appears that the Roman republican history was relevant to medieval Italians only in a broad, pragmatic sense—expressed in the institutions they kept in order to face the contexts through which they lived—as opposed to something with which they could identify themselves and couch their own perceptions of Roman-ness.

The study of medieval Italian history often elicits the image of fiercely independent city states, operating largely in a fractal political landscape—a far cry from the centralized ancient Roman state that dominated the peninsula for centuries. How did medieval Italians, both as early as the eighth century and as late as the fourteenth century, perceive the Roman history of antiquity, the remains of which still filled their streets? Was there any identification with the ancient Roman past? If so, did it affect the development of the political situation in medieval Italy?

To address those questions and, in a more general sense, the way in which Roman antiquity informed how medieval Italians thought, the analysis of primary sources from two different periods of medieval Italian history proves invaluable. Historical writings particularly allow for inference as to how contemporary authors thought of the content that they were cataloging.

Paul the Deacon and *Historia Langobardorum*

Paul the Deacon (720s–799?) wrote *Historia Langobardorum* in the late eighth-century (between 787 and 795) in order to create a definitive history of the Lombards. By the time of its publication, the Lombards had ruled Northern Italy for over two centuries. However, the Carolingian conquest diminished the Lombards' political prominence and thus affected the way in which Lombards, including Paul himself, viewed their past. Paul the Deacon's motivations for writing *Historia Langobardorum* appear to extend beyond wanting to envision a definitive history for the Lombards. Rosamond McKitterick suggests that *Historia Langobardorum* was made for Carolingian audiences rather than Lombard audiences because of the context of the Carolingian conquests.¹ The idea that the Carolingians requested *Historia Langobardorum* coincides with my own analysis of Paul the Deacon regarding the implementation of ancient Roman history into Lombard historiography. The insistence on communicating Roman-ness to an audience that wished to learn more about the people they had just subjugated is manifested in multiple ways in *Historia Langobardorum*. One such way was the frequent use of ancient Roman names, e.g., Mediolanum for Milan. Paul employs anachronistic place names throughout the entire history, especially in geographical descriptions.²

Paul also referred to Roman history when describing the Lombards' mythical origins. He mentioned Roman authors and alluded to their works to frame the fantastic origins and early history of the Lombards as something that would appear familiar in Carolingian literary culture during the late eighth century. The knowledge of ancient Roman authors, such as Virgil, appears to have been a part of Carolingian literary culture.³ Paul mentions Virgil when describing how the Lombards had to face Charybdis, much like

1 Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 70.

2 Paul the Deacon, *History of the Lombards* II 71-72, trans. William Dudley Faulk (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2003), p. [53-93]. Padua is *Patavium* and Bergamo *Pergamus*.

3 John Contreni, "Carolingian Renaissance: Education and Literary Culture" *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Rosamund McKitterick, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 735.

Aeneas.⁴ Pliny the Elder is also mentioned in the first two books of *Historia Langobardorum*. Paul cites his *Naturalis Historia*.⁵ The frequency of those citations implies familiarity of the Carolingian educated circles with Pliny. This knowledge of authors, such as Virgil and Pliny, would make the allusions to Roman myth resonate with informed readers. Because of this awareness of ancient Roman literature among educated Carolingians, Paul's use of such parallels for his Lombard history appears as carefully planned.

Linking the foundational myths of the Lombards to the ancient Romans is seen in Books I and II. It is no mistake that Paul includes two brothers who establish the line of kings for the Lombards, Ibor and Aio.⁶ Allusions to ancient Roman history, however, are much scarcer, especially of the Roman Republic. Julius Caesar is mentioned in passing to describe a placename. Imperial Roman history appears much more prominently in *Historia Langobardorum*.⁷ King Authari, whom Paul describes favorably, assumes the name Flavius, directly claiming a part of the imperial Roman heritage.⁸

Paul's use of imperial Roman history, however, coincides with his linking Lombard history with Christianity. This identification took the form of allusions to Biblical episodes or events in the history of the early Church, or of reference to martyrology. *Historia Langobardorum* mirrored the meeting of Leo I and Atila with its own episode of the meeting between Felix, Bishop of Treviso, and Alboin. Paul's intent appears to have been to legitimize the Lombards in the context of their relationship with Christianity, with Alboin respecting the rights of the bishop.⁹ Paul uses the story of the Seven Sleepers, already renowned in Western Europe through Gregory of Tours, to communicate the Lombards' relationship both to Roman-ness and Christi-

4 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 9, pp. [1-52].

5 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 26, pp. [1-52].

6 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 5, pp. [1-52]. Note the similarity to Romulus and Remus.

7 Paul, *History of the Lombards* II 71-72, pp. [53-93]. Paul mentions Nero, implying his audience's familiarity with the emperor. Caesar is the earliest historical figure mentioned in the *Historia*.

8 Paul, *History of the Lombards* III 113, pp. [94-150].

9 Francesco Borri, "Arrivano i barbari a cavallo! Foundation myths and *origines gentium* in the Adriatic arc," in *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Walter Pohl and Gerda Heydemann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 230.

anity - arguably linking the two. Paul refers to the reposed martyrs both as “Roman” and as “Christian.”¹⁰ The deliberate pairing of those descriptions in the same chapter appears to imply the way in which Roman-ness is characterized by Paul, which is by simultaneous identification with Christianity. To strengthen the idea that Paul’s writing was intended for a Carolingian audience, the Sleepers in that area remain in repose in the anticipation that those Christians may awake and one day evangelize them.¹¹

The importance of Christianity in the Lombards’ relationship to ancient Rome is paramount in *Historia Langobardorum*. In instances where the ancient Roman character conflicted with the Christian character of the Lombards, Paul cleverly addressed them. For example, when describing the origin of the Lombards’ name, he not only relegated Gotan to a “silly story” but also distanced Gotan from the Romans by comparing the deity to Mercury.¹² This comparison, however, is an attempt at communicating the alterity of Gotan to the Carolingian audience by providing a comparison to something they would be familiar with, the Roman god Mercury. The Arianism of the Lombards is also subject to criticism. This was characterized as something that was limiting to the legitimacy of the rule of Lombard kings before Aripert I.¹³

Historia Langobardorum revealed an attempt to present a history to the Carolingian audience that resonated with the literary culture of the incoming Franks. This was communicated in the form of identifying the Lombards with the ancient Roman past, both mythical and historical - though with a clear emphasis placed on the imperial past. Paul, by couching the Lombard past as a part of the ancient Roman heritage with which learned Franks were familiar, strove to cement his people in the broader history of the Italian peninsula. For even though the Carolingians had come and taken Lombardy, the *History of the Lombards* is also a story about the Romans before them, and the two, according to Paul the Deacon, are inseparable. The ultimate seal of that identity with the ancient Romans was Christianity. Without that, no medieval concepts of Roman-ness seemed appropriate to

10 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 6, pp. [1-52].

11 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 7, pp. [1-52].

12 Paul, *History of the Lombards* I 19, pp. [1-52].

13 McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 71.

adopt.¹⁴ Undoubtedly this would have been paramount to the Carolingian elites who had been a part of spreading Christianity during Charlemagne's conquests.

Giovanni Villani and *Nuova Cronica*

The historical context within which the *Nuova Cronica* was written, in fourteenth-century Florence, can be characterized as a part of a greater rise of the collective civic character. The medieval communes, created as sworn associations by townspeople for the common defense and independence of their city, had been in place for over three centuries. In what ways would a more recent history inform us about how later medieval Italian authors and audiences identified with the ancient Roman past? Was the Roman republican past looked at in a particular way on account of the contemporary context of the urban communes and their republican forms of government?

In tracing the origins of the Florentine people, *Cronica* alluded, like *Historia Langobardorum*, to the Roman legendary past. As in *Historia*, this fusion of local history with the ancient Roman legend was employed alongside Christianity. Villani directly references Virgil as a source alongside a description of Noah's descendant being the first ruler of Fiesole, the town that would eventually become Florence.¹⁵ Villani, like Paul, addressed the presence of deities in ancient Roman mythology. And, like Paul, Villani removed them from the Roman context. However, he avoided turning them into nonsensical or absurd characters, as Paul does with Mercury in the story

14 Roman-ness and Christianity as inextricably united precludes the pre-Christian, Roman republican past. This reality is presented in the *Historia*, in which no republican histories are related. There is likewise nothing suggesting that republican histories, such as those of Livy, were present in or even known by the Carolingian lettr   (see Contreni, "Carolingian renaissance").

15 Giovanni Villani, *Villani's Chronicle, Being Selections from the First Nine Books of the Croniche Fiorentine of Giovanni Villani*, ed. Phillip H. Wicksteed (London: Archibald Constable and Co. Ltd, 1906), I 2-7, text available at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/33022/33022-h/33022-h.htm#Page_4 (visit of May 6, 2021). Villani's description of Atlas as descendant of Noah as well as father of Dardanus is of note. He clearly mixes Greco-Roman mythology with Biblical characters.

of Wotan. Instead, Villani places them in a historical context.¹⁶ Once this legend was prefaced in a biblical background, Villani continued with his retelling of parts of Virgil's *Aeneid*. He couched the legendary prehistory, however, in an overarching theme of a diaspora. The founder of Fiesole's descendants would eventually establish Troy, and the legendary Roman past in Villani's account is used by Villani as a return of this Trojan diaspora.¹⁷ Villani uses this to present Florentine history as inextricably linked to the course of Roman history.

In the *Cronica*, ancient Roman history following the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus is a cursory stroll through 450 years of republican history. Villani relegated the Republic's history to a single passage in the very first book. The summary concluded halfway through that passage by mentioning that Caesar ended the civil wars and that Augustus "ruled in peace [...] at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ."¹⁸ Villani in the same passage mentioned that 450 years of history can be explained by Livy and "many other authors." Here Villani, who mentions Livy by name, revealed at least the familiarity of his audience with Roman republican history.

The passages regarding the destruction of Fiesole and Florence's creation express this interconnected nature. Villani's citing of Sallust, whom he describes as "the great scholar," implies the familiarity that fourteenth-century Florence had with that author. Villani's account of the Catiline Conspiracy became the focal point for the destruction of Fiesole, which would then serve as the medium through which the republic turns into empire.¹⁹

In these passages regarding Florence's creation, Villani emphasized Cicero's importance in foiling the Catiline Conspiracy with an emphasis on his ability as a statesman.²⁰ It is here that Villani seems to appeal to the

16 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, Book 1, s. 8. Referring to Jove as a king of Crete accomplishes the effect both of framing the legendary world of ancient myth in history as well as distancing them from the Romans, even using the *Aeneid* to affirm it.

17 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, Book 1, s. 23. Villani refers to the Latinus of the *Aeneid* and claims he was a descendant of Saturn, which helps serve the narrative of a diaspora of Trojans returning to their home.

18 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, Book 1, s. 29.

19 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, Book 1, s. 39. Similar to 29, the mention of Augustus reigning "when Christ was born" alongside the *Pax Romana* is repeated and is worth noting.

20 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, Book 1, s. 29. Contrast this with how Caesar is presented, in which martial qualities are emphasized.

notion that late medieval civic identity was contingent upon identification with the Roman republican past. This can be explained, however, in the context of fourteenth-century Florentine literary culture and its familiarity with Cicero.²¹ With that in mind, it is not surprising to see Cicero's unique position communicated through his ability to orate. Otherwise, Villani described the history of the republic as fractious and destructive. The wars and republic's struggles end with the creation of the empire. Rather than extolling the virtues of the republic, Villani instead favorably described the empire's Christian character.

Villani's identification with the ancient Roman imperial history accompanies his description of the Christianization of the empire and of Florence specifically. However, like republican history, imperial history was also largely abridged. What Villani chooses to include are the persecutions by Decius, the reign of Constantine, and the eventual barbarian invasions of the fifth century. The persecutions by Decius as well as Constantine's and his heirs' reigns are indicative of the prominence of Christianity in Villani's account of imperial Roman history. The former served to place Florence in the history of (Roman) Christianity, as it introduces several (local) martyrs. The latter more obviously expresses the changed nature of the Roman Empire regarding Christianity.²²

In *Nuovo Cronica*, like in *Historia Langobardorum*, the identification with the ancient Roman past revolved around Christianity. Villani, like Paul, created a historical account that attached the history of his people to that of the ancient Romans. This great effort by both authors resulted from the use of Roman authors, such as Virgil or Livy. Villani's heavily abridged history of the Roman Republic had no relevance for Florence, which is surprising given the political contexts in which Villani lived. Instead, the republican history shared a similar character of factional strife and urban chaos that marked Villani's contemporary circumstances with the ongoing Guelf and Ghibelline

21 Carol Quillen, "Humanism and the Lure of Antiquity," in *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance, 1300-1550*, edited by John M. Najemy, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 39. The Italian humanist Brunetto Latini had translated Cicero into the Tuscan vernacular. Oratory and persuasion were seen as essential to the civic character of the republican form of government in Florence, and Latini saw the learning of Cicero as supplementary for the civic character, given the political situation.

22 Villani begins using *anno Domini* dates after the transition from republic to empire, having previously used *ab urbe condita* dates.

conflict. Villani's account of the Roman Empire was also largely abbreviated, save for aspects concerning the development of Christianity in the empire. Again, there was a distance between what Villani considered as Roman-ness, that is the relationship ancient Rome had with Christianity, and the civic identity of Roman republicanism.

Modern Historiographic Landscape

Some of the modern historiography surrounding the communal movement is viewed as linking perceptions of *respublica* to the communal movement of medieval Italy. An allusion to the ancient Roman became a point of legitimation for the people involved in creating the first communes.²³ Once the Kingdom of Italy had failed around AD 1000, a new institution of republicanism aided by the ideals and traditions left by the Republic of Antiquity was to be established. The civic republicanism of the ancient Romans, specifically found in the sources of antiquity, was to be the framework for the new civic life and identity of the emerging communes.²⁴

However, the analysis of *Nuova Cronica* revealed that the ancient Roman past, while used for legitimation, was not seen as transmitting the civic republicanism of antiquity to the medieval Florentinians. Moreover, *Nuova Cronica* also contradicted the idea that the use of ancient Roman sources describing the republican past contributed to the identification with the civic character of the Roman Republic. The republicanism that emerged in the medieval communes appears to be one of pragmatism rather than the idea that the republican past expressed any virtue to be adopted in the development of civic character. Rome's relevance as a point of identification - as is the case in both *Historia Langobardorum* and *Nuova Cronica* - came from its relationship to Christianity.

23 Edward Coleman, "Cities and Communes," in *Italy in the Central Middle Ages: 1000-1300*, edited by David Abulafia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 28.

24 Alison Brown, "City and Citizen: Changing Perceptions in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries," in *City States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy*, ed. Anthony Molho, Kurt A. Raflaub, and Julia Emlen (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1991), 97.

Historiography of Roman-ness in Early Medieval Italy

The ideas surrounding identification with the ancient Roman past, or Roman-ness, are often discussed in the historiography of the Carolingian Renaissance. The emerging Carolingian political ideology can be described as a synthesis between antiquity and Christianity, culminating in Frankish success.²⁵ This desire to affix the Carolingians to the ancient Roman past is also evident in the literary culture. Carolingian rulers, such as Louis the Pious or Charlemagne, were compared to the Roman emperors as their achievements were likened to that Roman heritage.²⁶ The phenomenon of equating the history of Rome with that of Christianity, however, was not a development that was exclusive to the Carolingian Renaissance in the early Middle Ages. This treatment of Roman and Christian history was characteristic of universal histories of the early Middle Ages, such as the *Chronicle* of Eusebius and Jerome, and biographical works, such as the *Liber pontificalis*.²⁷

Paul the Deacon conveyed this idea of Roman-ness through both his *Historia Langobardorum* and his *Historia Romana*. The former is comparatively subtle in its approach of expressing Roman-ness since it can only allude to the Lombard past. In his *Historia Romana*, however, Paul identified Roman-ness not only with Christian history, but also with the ability to spread Christianity. This quality is expressed in the emperors and their Christian conduct being indicative of how their rule would pan out.²⁸ Heresy, specif-

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- 25 Rosamond McKitterick, "Political Ideology in Carolingian Historiography," in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 174. McKitterick dealt with Paul's other work, the *Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium*, which offers another example of the Trojan diaspora used to legitimize a people's history.
 - 26 Contreni, "Carolingian Renaissance," 748. Charlemagne is treated by Einhard in the manner of one of Seutonius' emperors (Contreni, "Carolingian Renaissance," 737).
 - 27 Rosamond McKitterick, "Transformations of the Roman Past and Roman Identity in the Early Middle Ages," in *The Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2015), 226-44. McKitterick's examination of the *Liber pontificalis* of the sixth century is worth noting here.
 - 28 Maya Maskarinec, "Who Were the Romans? Shifting Scripts of Romanness in Medieval Italy," in *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Walter Pohl, Gerda Heydemann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 316-18. Paul's treatment of the Arian emperor Valens is not different from his treatment of such Arian kings of the Lombards as Authari.

ically Arianism or Pelagianism, in both the Lombard and Roman histories, determined the health and the course of the kingdom.

What is also common in the historiography of Roman-ness in early medieval Italy is that the imperial past, instead of the republican past, informed the identification. The advent of Christianity with Augustus and the pax Romana served as reminders of an imperial past. It then proceeded with the development of the Church and included important episodes in its development, such as the persecutions under Nero and Decius.²⁹ This is the case even though familiarity with the historiography of the Republic (such as Livy or Eutropius) in early Medieval Italy is beyond doubt.³⁰

Ultimately, the contemporary as well as modern historiography of early medieval Italy reveals a literary culture that was deeply invested in attaching itself to the ancient past. However, it only identified with that past when also presented in the context of the development and spread of Christianity. From this, various treatments of presenting the past in reference to both ancient Rome and Christianity emerged, including Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* and *Historia Romana*. The historiographic landscape of early medieval Italy, therefore, reflects this concept of Roman-ness maintained both by a local, ethnic history (Paul the Deacon) as well as the literary culture of the Carolingian age.

Historiography of Roman-ness in High Medieval Florence

The historiography of high medieval Florence revolves around the expression of civic identity that traces its own origins to the result of the communal movement. Authors and statesmen created ways in which they could rationalize the unique political circumstances that characterize the history of the northern and central parts of the peninsula during the eleventh century. These attempts of identification not only fall within the unique historical context of the peninsula in the central and high medieval period but also are the result of an ongoing conflict between the factions in support of the Church and of the German emperors - the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, respectively. How did these contexts shape the construction of identification in high medieval

29 Maskarinec, "Who were the Romans?" 317.

30 Maskarinec, 304.

Florence, specifically in historiography? What exactly was this identification, and how does it inform modern historians of the contemporary conceptions of Roman-ness in fourteenth-century Florence?

Modern historiography largely considers the affiliation with the ancient Roman past by late medieval Italian authors to be a result of the socio-political realities presented by the communal movement and its after-effects. The emergence of a collective political authority as well as the appropriation of Roman republican offices, such as the consul or even the *podestà* in its stark similarities to the ancient republican *dictator*, was indicative of a discovery in the ancient republican history. This is shown in the thirteenth century explicitly by the prevalence of Cicero and his works being considered as important to the development of civic life in Florence. More specifically, the translation of Cicero to the vernacular Tuscan by Brunetto Latini expressed the popularity of the republican statesman.³¹ In his *Nuova Cronica*, Villani also presented Cicero as an orator, as well as an historical actor in the Catiline Conspiracy, but the rest of the republican past was instead marked by violence.³² The identification of Florentinians in the late medieval era with the republican past reflected the resurgence of ancient authors that coincided with a burgeoning humanism in Italy.³³ The attempts at recreating the classical works and expounding upon them thus translates in recreating a classical, republican ideology. However, there is nothing implying an ideological identification in the existing sources - especially *Nuovo Cronica*. Through the analysis of both the modern and contemporary historiography of late medieval Italy, the appropriation of the republican past can be seen instead as pragmatic rather than ideological.

The influence of Cicero in the historiography of late medieval Florence may appear to reveal the orator's importance in formulating a civic identity that is predicated on republican ideals. The translation of Cicero into vernacular appears to affirm that. However, what must be considered is that the prevalence of Cicero depended upon the uniqueness of the political situation.³⁴ It was not due to a legitimate identification with republican ideals that brought Cicero to the fore of Florentine consciousness. The realities of

31 Quillen, "Humanism and the Lure of Antiquity," 39.

32 Villani, *Villani's Chronicle*, 29.

33 Quillen, "Humanism and the Lure of Antiquity," 37-47.

34 Quillen, 38.

collective public rule and the potential for factional strife made the works as well as the figure of Cicero in history, such as the *Cronica*, a practical tool for the conduct of civic life as opposed to the ideology of civic life. This is explained fully by the lack of elaboration on republican history in the *Cronica*.

Conclusion

Historia Langobardorum and *Nuova Cronica* both provide an insight as to how early and late medieval Italians perceived the ancient Roman past. Both sources are alike in their appropriation of Roman prehistory and legend, specifically that of Virgil, to their own historical accounts of their people. Both sources are alike in their treatment of imperial Roman history, which viewed Christianity's development as a nodal point. There is to be found, however, no attachment to the republican history of ancient Rome. While the legendary past edified a people's prehistory and the imperial past was perceived as an inseparable part of the promulgation of their faith, there is surprisingly no identification with the republican past. Instead, especially in *Nuova Cronica*, that past is treated more pragmatically - a tool to help serve the conduct of public life in the unique circumstances of the late medieval city-states. What is seen in the historiography of identification with the Roman past was a general lack thereof regarding the Republic. Instead, what is revealed is the prominence of Christianity in the perceptions of Roman-ness in both the eighth and fourteenth centuries.

Soviet Psychiatry: A Mirror into American Psychiatric Methods

ADDIE C. WATSON

ABSTRACT

The Soviet Union and United States of America changed the course of history during the Cold War. These superpowers sought to gain political and cultural superiority over one another, no matter the cost. One disagreement occurred about the allegation that the Soviets were using psychiatric institutionalization as a means to socially control political dissidents. The American delegates to the World Psychiatric Association advocated for the removal of the Soviets from their organization, sparking a debate between the two nations over the legitimacy of the claims of psychiatric abuse. I argue that the US' condemnation of Soviet psychiatric practices, deeply hypocritical, was a strategic political move. The United States' governmental sponsorship of eugenic policies, forced sterilization, and lobotomies all serve as examples of psychiatric abuse. While this does not invalidate the ethical violations committed by the Soviets, it sheds light on the true motivations behind the American Psychiatric Association's attempts to delegitimize Soviet psychiatry on the international stage.

Many people view the Cold War as a cultural and political standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union, the two budding superpowers that rose from the ashes of World War II. In reality, it was a deeply complex power struggle that fundamentally altered international histories. This competition left lasting impacts on the world that we are still experiencing today. In many ways, it can be argued that the Cold War defined every factor of American and Soviet life during the second half of the 20th century, including the development of the psychiatric field. During the 1970s, American psychiatrists began to criticize the trend of abuse in Soviet psychiatric practices, spearheading a movement among the other members of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) calling for the delegation's removal from the organization. However, at the same time, American psychiatrists were practicing eugenic policies in their own treatment which can also be considered an abuse of psychiatry.

Beginning at the end of the 19th century, the eugenics movement in America advocated for the human gene pool to be “cleansed” of genetically “defective” individuals—the mentally ill, the disabled, and the debilitated. These eugenic psychiatric practices extended into the 1980s, making the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) accusations toward the Soviets during the late 1970s ironic. In 1983, only a few months prior to the 7th meeting of the WPA Congress, the Soviets learned that the WPA was planning to vote on their removal at the upcoming meeting. To combat this, the Soviets strategically chose to withdraw their membership from the WPA. By comparing the eugenic practices established in American psychiatry with the state-sanctioned violence perpetrated by Soviet psychiatry, I argue that the condemnation of the Soviet All-Union Society of Psychiatry and Neurology (AUSPN) by the APA and the WPA was rooted in Cold War sociopolitical factors rather than a moral obligation to defend human rights.

Soviet Political Abuse of Psychiatry and WPA Reactions

The Federation Global Initiative on Psychiatry, or GIP, defines political abuse of psychiatry as the “misuse of psychiatric diagnosis, treatment and detention for the purposes of obstructing the fundamental human rights of certain individuals and groups in a given society.”¹ Western nations accused the USSR of this abuse based on evidence that Soviet psychiatrists were diagnosing citizens with mental illness as a means to incarcerate and disappear political dissidents. Soviet psychiatrists blurred the line between ethical treatment and abuse by believing that there was no logical reason for an individual to reject the utopia of Soviet society. While some doctors actively disagreed and did not condone this practice, those who chose to make their opinions known were often incarcerated alongside their previous patients. Western researchers from across Europe confirmed this through their own personal research into Russian psychiatric practices, mainly through travel to the USSR itself and personal inside contacts.² AUSPN also publicly accepted responsibility for

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- 1 Robert Van Voren, “Political Abuse of Psychiatry—An Historical Overview,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 36, no. 1 (2009): 34.
 - 2 Mat Savelli, “Beyond Ideological Platitudes: Socialism and Psychiatry in Eastern Europe,” *Palgrave Communications*, April 17, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-018-0100-1>.

psychiatric abuse at the 1989 WPA Congress, offering a final confirmation on the legitimacy of these claims.

Most of this abuse took place in the Moscow School of Psychiatry (MSP) under its director, Dr. Andrei Snezhnevsky. The MSP was well known for the development of the novel diagnosis “sluggish schizophrenia,” which was considered to have a much slower onset than traditional schizophrenia. According to Dr. Greg Wilkinson, a member of the Institute of Psychiatry in London, “the most prominent symptoms among patients with sluggish schizophrenia were affected laden thoughts, incongruity of affect, flatness, and neurasthenic complaints, with depressed or elated mood.”³ As one can tell from these symptoms, this illness provided psychiatrists with a general framework that allowed for easy misdiagnosis. In 1973 the World Health Organization completed a pilot study on schizophrenia, finding that “sluggish schizophrenia” was exponentially more likely to be diagnosed in the USSR and the Soviet satellite states than any other nation in the world.⁴ Another factor that points toward psychiatric abuse within the MSP was its recorded ties to the Russian Committee for State Security, or the *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti*, commonly referred to as the KGB. The MSP housed the “most dangerous and violent” patients, yet case after case of the mild “sluggish schizophrenia” became a common diagnosis. Several members of the MSP board were active KGB officers, and incarceration at a psychiatric hospital became a tool of political repression.

The story of Maj. Gen. Pyotr Grigorenko exemplifies the power wielded by MSP psychiatrists. A World War II veteran and hero who was well respected by his military comrades, Grigorenko widely proclaimed his displeasure with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. His status and position of influence within the Soviet military made his opinion not only subversive, but dangerous. A few short days following his declaration, Grigorenko was taken to the MSP and diagnosed with “sluggish schizophrenia” to discredit his military status and delegitimize his opinion.⁵ Despite the evidence that the MSP actively abused its powers, many psychiatrists who

3 G. Wilkinson, “Political Dissent and ‘luggish’ Schizophrenia in the Soviet Union,” *British Medical Journal*, 293, no. 6548 (September 13, 1986): 641-42.

4 Robert Van Voren, “Political Abuse of Psychiatry,” 33-35.

5 Rick Scarnati, “The Prostitution of Forensic Psychiatry in the Soviet Union,” *Bulletin of the AAPL, Vol. VIII, No. 1*: American Academy of Psychiatry and Law: 112-13.

served in the asylum claimed to have no knowledge of these practices. This raises the question of who should assume responsibility for these violations of human rights. Were these psychiatrists responsible for their role in repression? Should the blame be placed solely on the director and upper management, or the Soviet government itself? These are questions that historians are still grappling with, many of which are deeply intertwined with understanding of psychiatric ethics and the power dynamics between psychiatrists and their patients. Organizations such as the WPA and the International Association on the Political Use of Psychiatry (now known as the GIP) sought to establish a universal code of ethics to answer these questions, which resulted in the drafting of the Declaration of Hawaii by the WPA in 1977.

A direct response to Soviet abuses of psychiatry, the Declaration of Hawaii sought to define the role of psychiatrists and their field within an ethical framework. The failure of the Soviets to adhere to this declaration gave the WPA valid grounds for expulsion. American, British, and Dutch contingencies strongly supported this movement, and the motion was expected to be voted on at the subsequent WPA Congress in July of 1983. However, on January 31, 1983, the AUSPN officially withdrew from the WPA—a rejection of the allegations about Soviet psychiatric practices. They claimed that the calls for their removal were “slanderous... blatantly political in nature ... [and] directed against Soviet psychiatry in the spirit of the ‘Cold War’ against the Soviet Union.”⁶ This fragment from the resignation letter of the AUSPN also blamed American delegates for the Soviets’ expulsion. Obviously, this method of withdrawal was in and of itself “blatantly political in nature” and quite in “the spirit of the cold war.” This was exacerbated by the fact that it was not the delegates of AUSPN who made this decision—the decree came directly from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This move by the USSR was glaringly politically motivated, and I argue that when one delves deeper into the forms of treatment being practiced by American psychiatrists, proof can be found attesting to the fact that the APA was *also* politically rather than morally motivated.

6 Robert Van Voren, “The Soviets Leave the WPA,” in *Cold War in Psychiatry*, 203-19. Brill, 2010.

American vs. Soviet Psychiatry

The Cold War punctuated the differences between American and Soviet psychiatry. From the 1940s up until the early 1970s American psychiatrists studied and drew from Soviet methods of practice. This was not out of malice created from political and cultural tensions or to pick apart the methodology of the Soviet doctors, but instead was based on a commitment to learning and self-improvement. Soviet and American psychiatry was founded on fundamentally conflicting principles: while the Soviets grounded their practices in Pavlovian ideology, Americans relied on Freudian concepts. The Soviets considered all pathologic behaviors as a reaction to the current environment based on a history of association with certain stimuli.⁷ Mental illness, according to this view, reflected social conditioning, and this approach implied that treatment for mental illnesses could be healed through positive conditioning. In contrast, the Freudian school of thought understood mental “abnormality” to originate from repressed emotions, emphasizing the mind’s role in creating physical illness within a person. This method of inquiry is subjective and aims to treat mental illness by analyzing the interplay between the conscious and unconscious mind through methods such as dream interpretation and free association. It was thought that bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind by discussing them would lead to a healing and resolution of mental issues.⁸ These contrasting cultures of psychiatry laid a foundation for ideological disagreement while representing a difference in priorities between the two nations. Dr. Belkin of the Harvard Department of Psychology summarized this concept well by stating that “the Soviets emphasized social needs and goals, while American psychiatric culture focused on individual happiness and lifestyle.”⁹ In the US there was a general expectation that the individual could reform oneself and was therefore responsible for seeking out and finding treatment. In the USSR, the government saw citizens as individuals that should be actively working toward furthering the goals of the community. If mental illness came from a reaction to one’s environment,

7 George F. Will, “Totalitarian ‘Medicine,’” *Washington Post*, May 21, 1987.

8 Leon Eisenberg, “Mindlessness and Brainlessness in Psychiatry,” *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 148, no. 5 (1986): 497-508. doi:10.1192/bjp.148.5.497.

9 Gary S. Belkin, “Writing about Their Science: American Interest in Soviet Psychiatry during the Post-Stalin Cold War,” *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 43, no. 1 (1999): 31-46. doi:10.1353/pbm.1999.0041.

then a person placed in an ideal environment should have no mental illness. Therefore, psychiatric “disorders” were considered a threat because their existence inherently rejected the USSR’s claim of being the “ideal society.”¹⁰

While this warped the social understanding of mentally disabled individuals and stigmatized mental illness, it did translate to a very effective system of treatment. Soviet psychiatric care focused on providing the easiest access to services for as many civilians as possible to facilitate adjustment to society. This system fascinated American psychiatrists, as USSR psychiatric organizations provided equally “accessible dispensaries, comprehensive inpatient and outpatient care... to encourage community-based living and treatment.”¹¹ This was revolutionary for Americans as it was not only financially accessible to those seeking treatment, unlike the American healthcare system, but also community based and oriented. This contrasted sharply with psychiatric treatment in the US, which had a disjointed mix of private and public institutions. Public hospitals were severely underfunded and understaffed, leading to a rise in private establishments. These institutes limited access to certain kinds of patients, as the fees prevented lower socioeconomic clients from longer stays or primary admittance. In an attempt to emulate Soviet treatment programs, American doctors called for similar methods to be implemented in the States. They were also inspired to criticize the more decentralized American system that failed to regulate private facilities, preventing equal care, accessibility, and consistency. However, in the late 1970s and early 1980s a significant shift occurred in American discussions, journals, and published works regarding Soviet psychiatry. In the 1970s knowledge of the Soviets’ abuse of psychiatry became well known, sparking a drastic flip in American opinions on Soviet methodology. In 1972, the APA publicly condemned the USSR’s practices to the WPA based on the recent revelations of abuse. While the APA had plenty to say, they failed to lodge a formal complaint with the WPA, even though the association would not act unless a member of the society made an official claim of malpractice. However, the American delegation was not the only nation to complain about Soviet abuse. At the 1977 WPA Congress, the association passed an official resolution that explicitly condemned the USSR based on accusations from multiple nations including the US, Denmark, Germany, and Japan.

10 Robert Van Voren, “Political Abuse of Psychiatry,” 33-35.

11 Van Voren, 34.

American Eugenics and Its Role in Psychiatric Treatment

To understand the abuses within American psychiatric methods of treatment, one must understand the history of American eugenics. Many believe that these beliefs began with the Nazis, but Hitler himself drew from the writings of American eugenicists. After Charles Darwin published his theory of evolution and the principles of natural selection, eugenicists used these ideas to justify the artificial selection of humans to remove “defective” DNA from the gene pool. Eugenicists argued that modern life had allowed the weaker members of our species to live. The term “defective” referred to the mentally ill and disabled, but also to those who acted outside of the established social norms. This included people who were considered criminal, sexually deviant, or “feeble minded.” Women and people of color were disproportionately targeted for institutionalization by state courts, often labeled “defective” for offhanded reasons such as pregnancy out of wedlock or biracial relationships. Eugenicists’ primary forms of population control consisted of forced institutionalization (mainly in asylums), sterilization, and marriage laws. As historian of disability Douglas Baynton puts it, eugenicists sought to “prevent their [the ‘defectives’] propagation and perpetuation of misery in their offspring.”¹²

In many cases, these ideologies were state-sanctioned, not simply practiced and believed behind closed doors. For example, between 1971 and 1977, the Iowa Board of Eugenics authorized 179 out of 215 sterilization petitions from state asylums and hospitals.¹³ Over thirty states adopted forced sterilization laws during the early 1900s, which led to an estimated 60,000 forced sterilizations. However, the true number could be much larger. Sterilization was often recorded as another medical procedure in cases where the doctor did not receive legal permission for the surgery.¹⁴ Psychiatrists largely exploited this loophole after 1979, when new restrictive requirements were established for state-sanctioned sterilization. If a state institution did not adhere to these guidelines, the national government stipulated the right to withdraw all forms of federal support. However, this did not by any means make sterilization illegal, and in 1981 the US Department of

12 Baynton, 8-9.

13 Reilly, 167.

14 Kaelber, “Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States.”

Health and Human Services discovered multiple human-rights violations of forced sterilization in several states. Well into the twentieth century, the eugenics movement was still thriving.¹⁵ While American psychiatric patients experienced forced sterilization and other forms of painful and debilitating treatment, they were also segregated from their families and communities.

To “protect” the nation from these “defectives,” eugenicists believed they should be separated from the rest of society. The casualties of World War II included a generation of victims of war trauma, which led to a marked increase in asylum admissions during the second half of the 20th century. These state institutions were generally understaffed and undersupplied because of this rapid increase in patients. In a study of American psychiatric institutions conducted during the late 1960s and early 1970s, sociologist Erving Goffman compared mental hospitals to prisons or concentration camps and argued that “patients were subjected to an unfair restriction of freedom.”¹⁶ To compensate for the drastic increase of patients, new forms of medical treatment were developed, including lobotomization. Most of this medical care was done without patient consent, could be disabling, and at times, fatal.

American psychiatrists championed lobotomization as a means to induce personality change in asylum patients. This treatment was commonly forced upon patients suffering from schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and epilepsy. The process involved drilling holes into the patient’s skull and injecting alcohol into the nerve pathways that connected their frontal lobe to the rest of their brain. Individuals who survived experienced permanent alterations to their personalities, and others were left with severe brain damage. In many cases, this led to bleeding in the brain, dementia, epilepsy, infection, and cognitive difficulties. Even at the height of the procedure’s popularity, people accused practicing psychiatrists of human-rights violations. This criticism increased after a 1942 case study by Dr. Walter Jackson Freeman II, a psychiatrist who advocated for lobotomizing his patients, reported that three out of every ten patients that underwent treatment died or experienced severe complications. Several years later, in 1950, the Soviet Union outlawed

15 Hyatt, 494-95.

16 Appleman, 448-51.

lobotomies, stating that it was “contrary to the principles of humanity.”¹⁷ By 1977 the US decided to establish a committee to research whether lobotomies were being used to limit individual rights. Congress ruled that, when performed correctly, this surgery could be beneficial, but only in very specific situations.¹⁸ As with compulsory sterilization, the US government failed to ban either practice, despite evidence of lasting negative effects on patients and the clear ethical, moral, and medical violations taking place within American psychiatric institutions.

Political over Moral Motivations

As evidenced above, the American Psychiatric Association was well aware of these forms of abuse, and the issue became prominent during the 1977 WPA Congress, which called for AUSPN’s removal. Political abuse of psychiatry is defined as “the misuse of psychiatric diagnosis, treatment and detention for the purposes of obstructing the fundamental human rights of certain individuals and groups in a given society.”¹⁹ By treating disabled, mentally ill, and so-called “defective” patients with sterilizations and lobotomies, these citizens were targeted and labeled in American society as “threats to the natural order.” They were deprived of their right to consent, freedom, reproduction, their own personalities, their futures, and, in some cases, their lives. The United States was as much an abuser of psychiatric treatment as the Soviet Union. The hypocrisy of the US points to another motive for its actions in 1977 and the years leading up to the 1983 WPA Congress—to delegitimize the Soviet Union politically.

The Cold War was an era of constant competition between the two superpowers, and there were very few lines either nation was unwilling to cross. Both the US and the USSR sought to accentuate the other’s flaws on the international stage to increase their own political standing. Examples of this include the USSR’s criticism of America’s claim to be the “champions

17 Peter Pressman, “Frontal Lobotomy and Medical Ethics,” *VeryWell Health*, Dotdash Publishing, November 3, 2021, <https://www.verywellhealth.com/frontal-lobotomy-2488774>.

18 Pressman, “Frontal Lobotomy.”

19 Van Voren, “Political Abuse of Psychiatry,” 33.

of democracy,” when state-sanctioned violence and discrimination against Black American citizens ran rampant. In turn, the US condemned the Soviets’ hypocritical repression of Eastern European countries while claiming to support all forms of communist government. Both nations engaged in horrific acts of violence to discredit the other and gain political advantage in the name of the Cold War. The superpower competition effectively created complex histories with hidden realities. These political motivations seeped into domestic as well as international policy for both countries, making the Cold War era a microcosm of American and Soviet social anxieties.

The situation with AUSPN and the APA was no different. By publicly accusing the Soviets of psychiatric abuse, the APA effectively legitimized not only their moral “superiority” over the USSR, but also Freudian ideology and their own forms of treatment. Lobotomies, while banned by the USSR, Germany, Japan, and multiple other nations after 1950, remained popular in the US, Sweden, Great Britain, and France for decades thereafter. Hiding behind their moral “high ground,” the APA gathered a multiplicity of international delegates to act against the USSR, creating diplomatic ties between the US and these other nations within the context of working against the Soviets. This directly conflated Soviet medical institutions with malpractice and defined American medical institutions as ethical pioneers, allowing them to define what was and was not morally “just.” This aligned with the self-appointed American role as protectors of freedom, democracy, and human rights—further reinforcing this perception in the international sphere. By claiming that the APA perpetuated “slander” against AUSPN, the Soviets deflected blame from themselves and defined the US as the instigators of unnecessary conflict. The choice to frame the proposed removal as an exclusively political effort raised questions about the legitimacy of the US claims of abuse. This shifted the focus from halting these practices, to proving their existence, effectively buying AUSPN time to create a defense against these claims.

This strategic move on behalf of the Soviets was ultimately effective, as AUSPN was able to advocate for their conditional readmittance to the WPA in 1989. Professor Nikolai Zharikov, the chairman of the All-Union Society of Psychiatry and Neurology, and head of the delegation, along with Professor Marat Vartanyan, Director of the All-Union Research Center for Mental Health, presented the Soviets’ case. They proposed the Lukacher Memorandum, which conceded abuse had taken place and illustrated the recent reforms implemented in Soviet psychiatry. These included the “provi-

sion of the right of appeal to deal with unwarranted hospitalization; [and] the establishment of an independent commission comprising psychiatrists, lawyers, and social workers to monitor cases of psychiatric misuse.”²⁰ The WPA Review Committee promised to conduct a physical site review annually, and, if abuse was found, to convene for a special meeting to discuss suspension. With these changes added to the memorandum, AUSPN was readmitted by a vote of 291 to 45, with nineteen nations abstaining. Ultimately, although the US was unable to remove the Soviets from the WPA, the Americans succeeded in delegitimizing Soviet psychiatry. In turn, the Soviets succeeded politically in regaining their role in the international psychiatric community at the cost of being exposed for their repressive methods of psychiatric treatment.

The accusation by the US of Soviet political abuses of psychiatry became a hypocritical and political tactic to gain a moral high ground and to delegitimize Soviet medical progress. Without detracting from the atrocities committed by Soviet psychiatrists, I argue that the APA did not instigate the movement to remove AUSPN from the WPA out of moral indignation, but rather for political gain. The USSR and the US made distinctly political moves inspired by Cold War tensions to create and resolve this conflict, as both had committed and were committing political abuses of psychiatry during this period.

20 Bloch, 130.

The Primeval Police State

DAVID B. VEHBUI

ABSTRACT

This research paper explains the Spanish Inquisition's abstruse legacy by considering underlying social conditions. Early modern Spain, under the Inquisition, had many characteristics of a police state. I have coined the term "primeval police state" to define the unique socio-political conditions of Spain during the Inquisition. I label Spain in this period a "primeval police state" rather than simply a "police state" because there are significant differences (a result of the considerable temporal dissimilitude) between early modern Spain and most 19th- and 20th-century authoritarian regimes that are generally classified as police states.

This paper seeks to define a police state and to identify its elements in early modern Spain. First, I will analyze how authoritarianism functioned. Early modern Spain, I argue, was authoritarian, and its willingness to resort to coercive measures to reshape Spanish society proves that. The state's most significant tool in reshaping Spanish society was the Inquisition, and, because of the Inquisition's presence, early modern Spain was not simply an authoritarian regime but also a police state. I will then look at the Inquisition's organizational structure and argue that many facets of the Inquisition's repressive apparatus contributed to an ecosystem of mass surveillance, mistrust, and fear that transformed early modern Spain into a primeval police state.

What is a Police State?

The Oxford Languages website defines a police state as "a totalitarian state controlled by a political police force that secretly supervises the citizens'

activities.”¹ The term “police state” is an English transliteration of the German term *Polizeistaat*.² This term was first used to describe the political and socio-economic attributes of the Prussian state in the 18th century, which political scientist Brian Chapman describes as a state “based upon internal discipline, rigorously controlled, and economically self-sufficient.”³

Yet the question remains, what are the conditions necessary for a regime to be identified as a police state? Are the characteristics that make an authoritarian regime a police state limited to specific temporal and social conditions? A police state is a very peculiar brand of authoritarianism that involves heavy surveillance of its citizenry. It has to be effective in its job. It has to inspire fear and terror. It has to resort to violence if necessary. Nonetheless, this paper recognizes that the capacity of an early modern state like Spain to establish an authoritarian police state capable of totally subjugating and imposing its will on its people was limited by the temporal conditions of its place in history, such as lack of technology and manpower.

Therefore, to discern whether early modern Spain under the Inquisition was a police state, one has to first identify whether the Spanish state even had the characteristics of an authoritarian regime (which is what a police state essentially is). Once that is done, one has to study the Inquisition itself to see if its aims and procedures were authoritarian in nature. Lastly, one has to analyze the overall impact of the Inquisition in early modern Spain and if its presence contributed to an ecosystem of repression, paranoia, and fear.

The Elements of Authoritarianism in the Processes of the Early Modern Spanish State

In *Seeing Like a State*, political scientist and anthropologist James C. Scott identifies the four elements that are necessary for authoritarian state planning. The first is the administrative reordering of society in which authoritarian regimes seek to reinforce the tenets of citizenship, which often leads to the

1 “Police state,” Oxford Languages, accessed December 10, 2021.

2 Brian Chapman, “The Police-State,” *Government and Opposition* 3, no. 4 (1968): 428.

3 Chapman, “The Police-State,” 428.

suppression of “undesirable minorities.”⁴ The Spanish Crown identified Catholicism and Spanishness as one and the same, and anyone who threatened this orthodoxy was seen as a heretic and an enemy of the state.⁵ The Inquisition was tasked with rooting out these heretics (the majority of whom were converts from minority ethnic/religious groups like Jews and Muslims). About a decade or so after the establishment of the Inquisition, the Spanish Crown issued the Alhambra Decree (1492) that expelled all Jews from Spain who refused to convert to Catholicism. Over a century after the expulsion of the Jews, Spain would once again expel another minority group, the Moriscos. The Spanish state sought to root out religious heresy and expel all ethnic and religious groups that did not fit the Catholic fold. Thus, by maintaining that to be Spaniard was to be a true Catholic, and by rooting out and purging all those that did not fit this Catholic fold (whether through expulsions or Inquisitorial repression), the early modern Spanish state exemplified the first necessary element of authoritarian state planning.

Scott identifies a “high-modernist ideology” as the second element necessary for authoritarian state planning. “Like any ideology,” he suggests, “high modernism had a particular temporal and social context” and “it could be found across the political spectrum from left to right but particularly among those who wanted to use state power to bring about huge utopian changes in people’s work habits, living patterns, moral conduct, and worldview.”⁶ Yet to label the early modern Spanish state as “high modernist” would be inaccurate. Scott categorizes high modernism as a resolute faith in science and technology as a mechanism to reordering the social and natural world specific to modern times.⁷ Clearly, early modern Spain did not possess the means or the desire to implement a “high modernist” vision, but just because its program for Spain was not “high modernist” does not mean that the early modern Spanish state did not have an ideology (with similar end goals) to drive its authoritarian state planning.

This paper disagrees with Scott’s notion that a “high-modernist

4 James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 4.

5 Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 96.

6 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 5.

7 Scott, 4.

ideology” is necessary for authoritarian state planning. This paper instead argues that as long as a state is willing to use state power to bring about huge utopian changes in people’s living patterns, moral conduct, and worldview, then it fulfills the requirements necessary to identify it as authoritarian. However, high modernism is only one of many ideologies that can fuel authoritarian state planning. An ideology does not have to be high modernist to inspire authoritarian endeavors to reorder society. So long as the state aspires to an ideology that demands the fundamental reorganization of society, then one could argue that the state is authoritarian. Authoritarian state planning requires neither a modern ideology nor modern temporal conditions.

If there was a phrase or two to describe the Spanish *Ancien Regime*’s ideology, it would be “conformist” and “fundamentalist.” The Spanish state (primarily through the Inquisition) ensured adherence to Catholic orthodoxy, and they investigated, prosecuted, and punished any deviants. The Inquisition essentially served as a moral arbiter for the people of Spain, dictating what was proper behavior. Thus, the early modern Spanish state’s particular brand of ideology was Catholic orthodoxy. So, the protection of Catholic hegemony in Spain served as justification for the massive social changes that the Spanish Crown sponsored (whether that be expulsions, population reordering, or the endeavors of the Inquisition). Scott argues that high-modernist ideology is not necessarily dangerous by itself, but when combined with the first element and the third element, it can become calamitous. In similar fashion, the Spanish Crown’s Catholic conformist ideology was not by itself dangerous until the Spanish state became willing to reorder Spanish society through violent and coercive measures.⁸

Scott’s third element of authoritarian planning entails “an authoritarian state that is willing and able to use the full weight of its coercive power to bring these high-modernist designs into being.”⁹ The next sentence is an example of this third element at work in early modern Spain. The Spanish Crown expelled hundreds of thousands of Jews (and eventually Moriscos) to cleanse Spain of people that it perceived as deviants to Catholic hegemony. The Inquisition also employed violence to root out heretics within Spain through torture and executions. With terror and the threat of violence, the Inquisition created an ecosystem of constant fear that ensured most Spaniards

8 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 5.

9 Scott, 5.

adhered to Catholicism and spied and reported on those that did not do so.

Scott's final necessary element of authoritarianism is the existence of a weak and illiterate population that is incapable of resisting an authoritarian regime from instating its grand high-modernist designs.¹⁰ This paper argues that this fourth element, like the previous three, can also be applied to Spain's *Ancien Regime*, even though its "designs" for Spain were not high modernist. The vast majority of early modern Spain's population (some 80 percent) was illiterate.¹¹ In addition, the Spanish Crown's and Inquisition's main targets were usually minorities (Jews, Muslims, conversos, Moriscos, Protestants, and alumbres) that could do very little to oppose the Inquisition and the dictates of the Crown. The Inquisition essentially operated outside the confines of the land's law.¹² In 1553, Prince Philip, as regent, wrote a letter to the secular courts in Castille commanding them not to intervene in Inquisitorial affairs.¹³ Joseph Perez argues that this document "in effect guaranteed immunity to all agents of the Holy Office, whatever their crimes."¹⁴ So how could the mostly illiterate Spanish citizenry effectively resist and get justice against the Inquisition whose actions were covered up by the Spanish state itself? After all, it seems quite obvious that the Spanish state justified even the most audacious Inquisitorial activity as acceptable in the face of the heretical threats that endangered the Spanish state's "Catholic" dream for Spain. Thus, the masses had very little political clout and were incapable of effectively resisting the Spanish state and its Inquisition from imposing their utopian conformist and fundamentalist design: the creation of a uniform Catholic nation.

Therefore, one can conclude that the actions of the early modern Spanish state and its Inquisition were fundamentally authoritarian. The Spanish Crown had a conformist utopian vision of Spain as a uniform Catholic nation, and they established the Inquisition to ensure that this vision came about. The Spanish state also forcibly relocated hundreds of thousands

10 Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 5.

11 Tyrel C. Eskelson, "States, Institutions, and Literacy Rates in Early-Modern Western Europe," *Journal of Education and Learning* 10, no. 2 (2021): 114.

12 Joseph Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 124-25.

13 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 125.

14 Perez, 125.

of “undesirable minorities” like Jews and Moriscos from Spain to fulfill its conformist aims. Both the Spanish government and the Inquisition that served it utilized repressive measures and violence to root out those among the Spanish populace that deviated from Catholic orthodoxy. These deviants and the Spanish population, in general, could do little to oppose the Spanish Crown’s dictates. Uneducated, outnumbered (if they were minorities), and afraid of burning in hell (if they were Old Christians), the Spanish populace often could do very little to resist their rulers and the Inquisitors who were more educated and had far more resources at their disposal, and, most importantly, unlike all other Spaniards, were essentially immune from the law. Most importantly, the Inquisition deemed itself an authority in matters of spirituality, and this meant that the Inquisition’s powers were “godlike.”¹⁵

The Spanish Crown had the determination, the means, the will, and the perfect playground to do everything at its disposal to institute its plan—an orthodox Catholic nation liberated from all heretical threats. The Inquisition’s repressive apparatus became the Spanish Crown’s most powerful tool in fulfilling this vision. As a consequence, Spain was transformed into an authoritarian police state where mass surveillance, terror, and propaganda became the order of the day.

The Repressive Apparatus of the Spanish Inquisition

The Spanish Inquisition employed a wide range of authoritarian, what some might even label totalitarian, measures to root out heresy in Spain, especially during the 15th and 16th centuries.¹⁶ Its power over early modern Spanish society was considerable, especially in the southern half of the peninsula.¹⁷ Though still subject to the Spanish Crown, the Inquisition “was the only *Ancien Regime* institution that exercised power over every social order.”¹⁸ Almost every Spaniard was subject to the Inquisition, up to and including some of the highest cadres of the aristocracy and clergy, whose usual priv-

15 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 81.

16 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 175.

17 Perez, 110.

18 Perez, 169.

ileges the Inquisition was authorized to ignore.¹⁹ The great judicial power that the Inquisition possessed allowed this institution to deploy its agents to all corners of Spain (in some provinces more successfully than others).²⁰ It was precisely the Inquisition's extensive jurisdiction over almost every Spaniard and province that made it such an all-encompassing institution in early modern Spain, and thus, in turn, allowed it to bend to its will an entire nation for centuries to come.²¹

While the Inquisition's objectives often oscillated, its apparatus remained the same—repressive. Whether through espionage, terror, violence, censorship, or propaganda, the Inquisition rooted out heresy in a brutally efficient fashion. In doing this, the Spanish Inquisition stimulated an ecosystem of fear, paranoia, mistrust, and repression, an ecosystem not so different from that of a police state.

Even though the Spanish Inquisition was far less homicidal than initially believed, especially compared to other European manifestations of religious violence, it had no equal.²² In other parts of Europe, flare-ups of religious intolerance, while more vicious, were fitful and usually “preceded and followed by more or less long periods of peace.”²³ Joseph Perez puts it best when he writes, “In Spain, one finds an intolerance admittedly less deadly, but institutionalized, organized, and bureaucratized, which lasted far longer, from 1480 to 1820.”²⁴ He continues, “With its mixed jurisdiction, designed for religious purposes but placed under the authority of the State, it in some ways constituted an anticipation of modern totalitarianism.”²⁵

What separates the Spanish Inquisition from any other early modern state institution is the way that it operated as a machine of constant terror. The Inquisition was in many regards the “centurion of national security” in the early modern Spanish state, tasked to root out all of its enemies, especially

19 Perez, 169.

20 William Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

21 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 96.

22 Silverblatt, 174.

23 Silverblatt, 175.

24 Silverblatt, 175.

25 Silverblatt, 175.

heretics.²⁶ Fernando de los Rios, a Spanish professor of Political Science and a Socialist politician in the Second Spanish Republic, compared the Spanish Inquisition to the Soviet secret police.²⁷ Furthermore, he claimed that just as the Soviet Union was a “Party-State,” in a similar fashion, early modern Spain was a sort of “Church-State.”²⁸ This claim demands an additional look, but one cannot deny that the workings of the Inquisition in conjunction with the Spanish state were repressive and eerily police-state-like, at least in the way that they bureaucratized violence and terror to root out heresy. Irene Silverblatt agrees when she writes, “Inquisitors were nowhere more godlike, however, than when they used violence in the name of state reason, and the most disturbing use of ‘state-talk’ was in the documentation of torture.”²⁹ Silverblatt argues that the Inquisition’s bureaucratization of torture made it particularly terrifying and allowed it to effectively institute the Spanish state’s designs.³⁰

The Spanish Inquisition was no ordinary manifestation of religious violence but instead a bureaucratic state institution whose specter was unceasing.³¹ Marcel Batallion elucidates it in his thesis on Erasmus, where he writes, “The Spanish repression was distinct not so much through its cruelty as through the power of the bureaucratic, policing, and judicial apparatus at its disposal. Its centralized organization covered the whole peninsula in a relatively tight network; it even had antennae abroad.”³² He then continues, “Through the edict of faith, the entire Spanish people found itself, willy-nilly, associated in the actions of the Inquisition.”³³ The Spanish Inquisition created a landscape of fear that enabled it to hunt down heretics more effectively. Edicts of faith, in particular, fomented paranoia among the Spanish population, which in turn, out of fear, spied and reported on each other if they suspected heresy and thereby, intentionally or not, became the most important apparatus of the Spanish Inquisition’s surveillance network—its

26 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 90.

27 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 222-23.

28 Perez, 223.

29 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 84.

30 Silverblatt, 84.

31 Silverblatt, 83.

32 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 174.

33 Perez, 174-75.

eyes and ears.

When Inquisitors arrived at an area, they issued edicts of faith after a mass on a Sunday of their choosing, where all locals would be present.³⁴ In these edicts, Inquisitors typically listed a series of offenses and heresies to Catholic orthodoxy (which included the worship of religions such as Judaism and Islam).³⁵ After reading out the list of heresies, the Inquisitor invited all those in attendance to confess their own sins and denounce any friend or neighbor whom they suspected of committing such heresies.

One could say that the results of edicts of faith were not so different from what occurred in the Soviet Union during Joseph Stalin's reign. In the Soviet Union, there were several major purges in the 1920s and 1930s in which every Communist Party member supplied an autobiography and answered for any misdeeds.³⁶ During the Great Purge (1937-38), Party leaders encouraged workers to scrutinize and eliminate suspicious colleagues and officials.³⁷ Just as people spying and reporting on each other played a crucial role in the Stalinist police state, it did so in early modern Spain under the Inquisition. Fear of ostracism from the Communist Party (or worse) drove many citizens in Soviet Russia to spy and report on each other.³⁸ In a similar fashion, fear of excommunication from the Church (or worse) drove many Spaniards to denounce anyone they suspected of being heretics.³⁹

These fears contributed greatly to the climate of paranoia in Inquisition Spain. People felt that they could trust no one and feared that they were frequently being surveilled. Juan de Mariana, a contemporary historian in Spain, affirmed the notion that life under the Inquisition was indeed a surveillance society. Near the end of the 16th century, he expressed that the Inquisition "has deprived us of the freedom to talk among ourselves; in every

34 Helen Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition* (Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 30.

35 Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 31.

36 John Archibald Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

37 Wendy Z. Goldman, *Terror and Democracy in the Age of Stalin: The Social Dynamics of Repression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

38 Goldman, *Terror and Democracy in the Age of Stalin*.

39 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 136.

town, village, and hamlet, it has individuals ready to inform it of everything that goes.”⁴⁰ It would not be an exaggeration to say that, in many regards, the Inquisition was Big Brother before Big Brother even existed. Irene Silverblatt also paints the Inquisition as this sort of terrifying Big Brother entity when she writes: “Menacing, threatening, prompting dread and hopelessness, the tribunal compelled submission.”⁴¹ She adds, “The Inquisition seemed to be everywhere and see everything.”⁴²

This phenomenon described by Silverblatt is very apparent in the primary documents compiled in *This Happened in My Presence: Moriscos, Old Christians, and the Spanish Inquisition in the Town of Deza, 1569-1611*. These documents underscore the role that the Spanish population, driven in part by fear, played in the Inquisition’s surveillance network. Furthermore, these sources also document the sheer level of societal surveillance that occurred in early modern Spain and how this surveillance, along with the presence of the Inquisition, precipitated constant fear and anxiety among the populace.

Even the most harmless phrases were subject to scrutiny. On October 4, 1569, a witness appeared before Lord Inquisitor Licentiate Reynoso and denounced Licentiate Paez, a physician. The witness said that some fifteen or sixteen years ago, he delivered his daughter’s urine to Paez for examination on a cold and windy day. When the witness arrived, Paez said to him, “They say that God doesn’t make an ugly thing. I say that if this weather is bad, God made it.” The witness found this phrase suspicious and deemed it necessary to inform the Inquisition that Paez uttered it. In another document, Miguel de la Plaza, a boy, appeared before Reynoso. Miguel told the Inquisitor about a night when he was half asleep and overheard his Morisco master’s son, Pasqual de la Pituerta, and Lope Guerro the younger whisper about how they “wanted to go to the Sierra Nevada and die with their friends.”⁴³ This information was particularly incriminatory as it reveals that these two men had sympathies for the Moriscos rebelling against the Crown in the War of the Alpujarras. Most importantly, this testimony places great doubt in

40 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 121.

41 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 88-89.

42 Silverblatt, 88-89.

43 Patrick J. O’Banion, ed., *This Happened in My Presence: Moriscos, Old Christians, and the Spanish Inquisition in the Town of Deza, 1569-1611* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2017), 43.

their faith, for why would these two “Catholics” support Moriscos revolting against the Spanish state for suppressing Islam?

Both these documents highlight that there was no safe place from prying ears; everything said, even from previous decades, could be reported. Silverblatt describes the Inquisition as “like a force transcending individual limits of time and space, able to reach into the past to judge the present and through present judgments able to prescribe the future.”⁴⁴ This environment of constant surveillance fostered an ecosystem of fear and paranoia that contributed to waves of denunciations. It was best to keep low and be careful whom you spoke to and what you said, but always keep watch of others, and especially beware of the Inquisition!

The Inquisition’s presence was both commonplace and frightening enough to leak into everyday conversations and interactions. Ana Montera went to her friend Maria to tell her about the cured beef she had found in her employer’s pot during Lent.⁴⁵ “Don’t even let the ground know,” Maria told Ana. “But keep watch for anything else they do because the Inquisitors are coming.”⁴⁶ In another case, Gonzalo Martinez told another citizen of Deza with whom he was discussing matters of the Inquisition to “Keep quiet and don’t say a word to anyone” about their conversation.⁴⁷ In still another document, Juan de Santestevan recalled a conversation he was having with a Morisco named Alonso as they were traveling from Soria. After Alonso suggested that the King leave the Moriscos to their own laws, Juan de Santestevan reproved him. “Why are you talking about things of God?” he said. “That’s what the Inquisition is for so that no one talks about that sort of thing.”⁴⁸

In all these instances, Spaniards understood the dangers of their time. Everything was subject to scrutiny. One needed to be vigilant not only to protect oneself but also to denounce people when the Inquisitors inevitably came.⁴⁹ One needed to be especially careful when it came to matters

44 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 83.

45 O’Banion, *This Happened in My Presence*, 18.

46 O’Banion, 18.

47 O’Banion, 5.

48 O’Banion, 21.

49 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 136.

involving religion and the Inquisition, for one wrong word in the wrong ears could get one denounced, as was the case for all the subjects in these documents caught saying suspicious things.

Fear served as the lifeblood of the Inquisition's surveillance apparatus. Silverblatt writes that "the Inquisition cultivated fear and aroused raw horror."⁵⁰ This fear drove Spaniards to keep an eye on each other almost as a sort of defense mechanism. When the Inquisition's edicts became known, confessing your sins was not enough, you also were expected to expose others. The consequences of withholding information could be very severe, including arrest and excommunication.⁵¹ So, most of the Spanish populace had no choice but to partake in this toxic environment of espionage and coercion maintained and enforced by the Spanish Inquisition. Thus, the Inquisition's edicts of faith were instrumental in establishing a police state that utilized mass surveillance to root out heresy and strike fear into the populace of early modern Spain.

An examination of Inquisitorial trial procedures also affirms the coercive nature of the Inquisition's *modus operandi*. All it took was a bit of hearsay and public rumor and some twisting of words for a person to be placed under investigation.⁵² While the Inquisitors generally stuck to script and clamped down on perjury, their primary objective was to root out heresy at any cost. The Inquisitor acted as both police and judge, and every suspect they brought forth was presumed guilty.⁵³ Perez writes that "the single objective of the whole procedure and instruction of the trial was to persuade the accused to recognize his guilt."⁵⁴ Perez argues that the Inquisition wanted to avoid the acquittal of the accused at any cost.⁵⁵ Nicholas Eymerich, who was the Inquisitor General of the Aragonese Inquisition in the late 14th century (which was a precursor to the Spanish Inquisition), asserted that the verdict should always leave the accused's "innocence" open to further inquiry in case new evidence materialized.⁵⁶ Why was the Inquisition so keen to prevent

50 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 88.

51 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 136.

52 Perez, 133.

53 Perez, 133 and 148.

54 Perez, 148.

55 Perez, 148.

56 Perez, 149.

acquittal? According to Perez, the Inquisition did not ever want to be seen in the wrong.⁵⁷ The Inquisition was more than willing to turn to unethical measures to maintain its legitimacy and thereby ensure that its enterprise to rid Spain of heresy continued, even if that meant turning to measures such as torture and coercion to convict innocents.

The case of Bartolome Carranza, the Archbishop of Toledo from 1557-59, provides an example of how iniquitous the Inquisitorial judicial process could be. The Inquisition suspected that Carranza might have possibly spoken as a heretic.⁵⁸ To substantiate this, the Inquisition “insisted that his writings be investigated impartially, with phrases taken out of context and examined *per se, in rigore ut jacent*.”⁵⁹ This procedure was particularly terrifying because it could result in the perversion and misinterpretation of what the author had actually meant.⁶⁰ Naturally, Carranza protested this twisting of words and argued that his book should be examined in context.⁶¹ Unfortunately for Carranza, his fulminations were unsuccessful, and after theologian Dingo de Soto affirmed that some of Carranza’s (out-of-context) passages were possibly recreant, the Inquisitors promptly found Carranza guilty and imprisoned him.⁶² What makes Carranza’s case notably disturbing is that it emphasizes the authority that Inquisitors had in twisting the suspect’s words to justify their accusations toward the suspect. Once again, the Inquisition had no qualms resorting to unethical methods to prove guilt, even if that meant manipulating evidence.

As all of the examples above demonstrate, the Inquisition resorted to any means necessary to root out heresy and maintain its legitimacy. Its terror appeared in torture, perversion of evidence, or refusal to acquit innocent suspects. It took overwhelming evidence to acquit the accused, and even then, nothing guaranteed the acquitted that they had seen the last of the Inquisitors. Ultimately, all it took was a couple of rumors here and there, and acquitted persons would find themselves right back where they were before. Unsurprisingly, the Inquisition also often took drastic measures to root out

57 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 149.

58 Perez, 142.

59 Perez, 142.

60 Perez, 142.

61 Perez, 142.

62 Perez, 142.

heresy. It locked down an entire city, Seville, in order to prevent conversos from fleeing. It burned hundreds of people in the 15th century (when the institution was especially murderous). The entire system was one self-fulfilling prophecy of fear, corruption, and espionage that benefited one group and one group only, the Spanish Inquisition and the Spanish monarchy whose vision for an orthodox Christian society it imposed.

The Auto Da Fe

The Inquisition's propensity for violence and coercion instilled fear into the Spanish populace and supplied evidence that the inner workings of the Inquisition were repressive and authoritarian. Of all the tools that the Inquisition had at its disposal to strike fear into the populace, demonstrate its power, and teach a lesson, few matched the Auto Da Fe. Autos Da Fe were rituals of public penance conducted by the Spanish Inquisition; they were carefully planned theatrical spectacles, although the way they transpired was not always the same. During the early period of the Inquisition, Autos Da Fe were more often than not private affairs that did not take nearly as long as they would decades in the future. They were initially more secluded events because the Inquisition cared less about spectacle and teaching the public "moral lessons" and more about conducting and concluding converso trials as efficiently as possible.⁶³

Nonetheless, the Inquisition held some public Autos Da Fe during its early years; they just did not conduct these ceremonies of penance as often as they would in later periods. For example, on Sunday, 12 February 1486, the Inquisition held a public Auto Da Fe in Toledo where some 750 reconciled persons were paraded through the streets in front of a "great number of spectators."⁶⁴ The notaries announced the heresies committed by each reconciled person, while they also declared all the occupations and activities in which the reconciled could never again partake (such as holding public office or wearing jewelry).⁶⁵

Autos Da Fe were, in some ways, propaganda tools used by the In-

63 Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 255.

64 Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 38.

65 Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 39.

quisition to display publicly the consequences of committing heresy. Historian Helen Rawlings contends that Autos Da Fe were semi-religious political events that served as frightening lessons for believers and non-believers by showing what happened to those who strayed from Catholic orthodoxy: “inquisitorial investigation, social excursion, and ultimate damnation.”⁶⁶ Perez compares Autos Da Fe to public trials orchestrated by the USSR. He argues that during Autos Da Fe, the accused would try to redeem themselves in the eyes of the Inquisition. In a similar fashion, “a Communist arrested for dissidence would try to perform a last service for the Party.”⁶⁷ The accused in the Communist judicial systems of the Eastern bloc would similarly answer all questions, ask for forgiveness, and reaffirm that “the Party was never wrong, the USSR was always right.”⁶⁸

Both the Inquisition and USSR employed public spectacles to broadcast an image of solidarity between the accused and the state, and to reaffirm the state’s ideology. As Silverblatt puts it, “The autos-da fe performed the tribunal’s illusions of unity on a grand scale” and “the public autos would school the public in civic values, in morality, and in the implacability of Spanish Catholicism.”⁶⁹ She concludes that Autos Da Fe were “momentous events” that inspired fear and awe among Spain’s subjects.⁷⁰

Maureen Flynn further argues that the Auto Da Fe was a sort of cosmic event that inspired the “fear of hell and its torments” in its spectators, citing a contemporary inquisitor’s comment that “the people left more appeased and repentant as a result of the exhibition.” With the Inquisition’s self-styled image of divine power, resisting the Auto Da Fe became unthinkable.⁷¹ The Inquisition cast itself in divine light, and thereby “assumed an awesome control over the moral behavior and beliefs of the Spanish people in the late medieval and early modern periods.”⁷² The Auto Da Fe emphasized that to stray from the Catholic fold meant not only incurring the wrath of the

66 Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 40.

67 Perez, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 224.

68 Perez, 224.

69 Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions*, 80-81.

70 Silverblatt, 80.

71 Maureen Flynn, “Mimesis of the Last Judgment: The Spanish Auto de Fe,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 296.

72 Flynn, “Last Judgment” 297.

Inquisition but of God Himself. In a premodern society where the general populace did not know any better, this made the Auto Da Fe a particularly terrifying and effective weapon of social control.

The Inquisition used the Auto Da Fe partly as a method of social control, partly to flex its authority, and partly to demonstrate the consequences of not submitting to Catholic hegemony. In this way, the Inquisition made its job of establishing Catholic uniformity much easier. After all, as Niccolò Machiavelli said, “It is much safer to be feared than loved” because “fear preserves you by dread of punishment which never fails.”⁷³ Combined with its divine undertones, this made the Auto Da Fe a weapon of terror and propaganda the likes of which even 20th-century totalitarian regimes would froth to possess.

Conclusion

The early modern Spanish monarchy was an authoritarian regime that sought to establish a Catholic orthodoxy in its realm by rooting out heresy through any means necessary. To this end, the Spanish state employed the Inquisition. The Inquisition operated in ways fundamentally similar to other authoritarian police organizations. The Inquisition used mass surveillance, violence, fear, coercion, and propaganda to root out heresy. A climate of fear resulted because of the Inquisition’s presence and turned Spain into one of the earliest police states in human history.

Yet, despite all this evidence, it would ultimately be inaccurate to label early modern Spain as simply a police state. Because of temporal limitations stemming from the early modern period, the Spanish Crown and the Inquisition did not have the capabilities of establishing a totalitarian police state like many authoritarian regimes in the 20th century were able to due to more available manpower and technology. Nonetheless, while limited by the conditions in its era, the Inquisition employed many repressive measures fundamentally akin to those utilized by modern authoritarian police institutions, which thereby contributed to a repressive environment of espionage and fear in Spain that was eerily similar to the police-state-like conditions found in many modern authoritarian regimes. Thus, because the early

73 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Ninian Hill Thomson (SDE Classics, 2019), 61.

modern Spanish state and its Inquisition possessed very limited methods and capabilities of repression, it is fitting to classify early modern Spain as a primeval police state—a precursor to the modern totalitarian police state.

BOOK REVIEWS

LISA JACOBSON and KENNETH LIPARTITO, eds.
Capitalism's Hidden Worlds. Philadelphia: University of
Pennsylvania Press, 2020. 283 pp. \$35 (hardcover).

Reviewed by Tim Blanton

Henry Hazlitt opened his book, *Economics in One Lesson*, with a parable. On a bright morning, a shopkeeper arrived at work to discover broken glass strewn across the entrance of his shop. He wanted to buy new clothes, but now he had to fix the window. Is the shopkeeper's inability to purchase new clothes an economic cost? If you ask economic statistics such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), no. Why? Because the loss of the clothes is not countable. Instead, GDP will count replacing the broken window as a net positive. Building on Frédéric Bastiat's insight in "What is Seen and What is Not Seen" (1848), the moral of Hazlitt's parable is that not everything worth understanding is quantifiable. Even if the loss of the shopkeeper's new clothes goes uncounted, it is still a real cost.¹

Capitalism's Hidden Worlds—an excellent edited volume—demonstrates the historical validity of Hazlitt's parable. Overall, *Capitalism's Hidden Worlds* moves the fields of business and economic history in a fruitful direction by taking unseen economic institutions and actors—like unseen costs—seriously.

Douglass North famously argued that institutions such as courts and banks were vital to economic stability and stability would, over time, facilitate growth.² But what happens when institutions disrupt rather than stabilize? A consistent argument in the volume is that shallow, formal institutionalism—focusing on aggregate economic metrics or state policy—is

1 Henry Hazlitt, *Economics in One Lesson*, 2nd ed. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1979), 23-24; Frédéric Bastiat, "What is Seen and What is Not Seen," in *Selected Essays on Political Economy*, ed. George B. de Huszar and trans. Seymour Cain (New York: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., 1995), 4-16.

2 Douglass C. North, "Institutions," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1991): 97-112.

wrong-headed because it often misses the complexity of human economic activity. The editors advise looking for “liminal spaces, interstices, and mixed market forms,” to see “the economy from the side more so than from the top or bottom.”³

Many of the essays achieve that goal with occasionally mixed results. Eli Cook’s “Lifting the Veil of Money: What Economic Indicators Hide” makes a compelling case that economic metrics such as GDP deceive more than clarify and that metrics become “stealth ideological carriers” for the belief that economic growth is the most important measure of national success. But he goes further, claiming that economic metrics originated primarily from the “class interests” of “elite, white men.”⁴ Such an argument commits the genetic fallacy. If GDP had such a history, it would not necessarily make GDP useless as a tool. Instead, what makes GDP less useful—as Cook rightly suggests—is that it cannot adequately quantify growth in the first place. That’s all.

The strongest essays in *Capitalism’s Hidden Worlds* reveal the dynamism of unseen—if illicit—entrepreneurship. Kenneth Moure’s article argues that in World War II Vichy, France, a black market emerged, especially in food, to substitute for state price controls that made it nearly impossible to recoup production costs. For example, French farmers often sold the highest quality beef into the black market and the lowest quality beef into the state-recognized market because state-mandated prices were too low. In practice, state price controls privileged high-risk, high-reward entrepreneurs willing to bear the additional risk to supply consumers. These necessary, albeit illegal, transactions reduced consumer choice and welfare but also became an alternative pricing mechanism.

The most intriguing implication of *Capitalism’s Hidden Worlds* is that exchange and markets can be suppressed and distorted but never eliminated. As Adam Smith claimed, the impulse “to truck, barter, and exchange” is endogenous.⁵ Philip Scranton’s and Anna Kushkova’s excellent articles examining the niches of market entrepreneurship in the socialist economies of Mao’s

3 Kenneth Lipartito and Lisa Jacobson, eds. *Capitalism’s Hidden Worlds* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 7-8.

4 Lipartito and Jacobson, 37.

5 Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, ed. C.J. Bullock (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 2004), 11.

China and the Soviet Union illustrate Smith's point. Even within formally planned economies, informal exchange and limited markets remained.

Despite occasionally falling flat, *Capitalism's Hidden Worlds* is a compelling series of case studies advising business and economic historians to look beyond the seen for the historical value of the unseen.

GORDON S. WOOD. *Power and Liberty: Constitutionalism in the American Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp x, 228. \$24.95.

Reviewed by Joseph C. Angelillo

Abraham Lincoln believed that “The moral principles embodied in the Revolutionary documents” made Americans of all backgrounds “one with the founders” (4). This encapsulates Pulitzer Prize winner Gordon S. Wood’s latest book *Power and Liberty*. Published amidst recent controversy over the place of chattel slavery in the founding of the United States, this book largely overlaps with Wood’s prior research stressing the transformative nature of the American Revolution. A short constitutional history of the Revolutionary era, it argues that the era stands as “the most creative period of constitutionalism in American history and one of the most creative in modern Western history” (2). In making this argument, Wood stresses Americans’ common heritage grounded in their founding documents.

Wood opens his book with the debate over independence, where colonists engaged in arguments crucial for American constitutional development. This dialogue centered on the relationship between suffrage and representation, as well as the nature of sovereignty. Such debates spilled over into the writing of state constitutions, which Wood argues proved vital for the federal constitution. These constitutions contributed to the separation of powers and the practice of using written constitutions to make fundamental law. Wood next turns to the “crisis of the 1780s,” probing into the causes of the Constitutional Convention and a stronger federal government. He dismisses popular explanations for this nationalization, including economic collapse and the inability to regulate trade and foreign policy under the Articles of Confederation.¹ Further, he denies that the Constitution was “foisted

1 For these arguments, see Carol Berkin, *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* (New York: Harcourt, 2002), Max M. Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

on the country by a minority of men with particular property interests that needed protection from rampaging democratic state legislatures” (60).² The real reason, Wood argues, lay in the “excesses of democracy.” The Revolution had inspired “uneducated middling” men to promote special interests, such as debtor relief and paper money. These excesses convinced the Framers that elected majorities in state legislatures “had become the greatest source of tyranny in America” (70). Interestingly, then, Wood overlaps with Charles Beard by arguing that the actions of state legislatures indeed weighed heavily on the Framers. Where Beard sees the Framers as concerned with their wallets, however, Wood sees a genuine concern for the fate of the republican experiment. From here, Wood turns to the Philadelphia Convention, narrating its proceedings from the Virginia Plan to the Connecticut Compromise. He provides a mostly standard account of the framing here.

Wood closes with three thematic chapters, covering the emergence of the judiciary, the development of the public/private distinction, and slavery’s place in American constitutionalism. Regarding the latter, Wood dismisses the possibility that British policies towards the enslaved (namely, the Dunmore Proclamation) pushed Virginia—or any other colony—toward independence.³ Rather, he frames the Revolution as vital in the global history of abolition. He notes that revolutionary rhetoric pushed some northern states to end slavery either immediately or gradually, leading to optimism that slavery would die a natural death. This optimism carried into the Convention, fully explaining why antislavery framers willingly allowed the Three-Fifths, Slave Trade, and Fugitive Slave Clauses into the Constitution. Yet Wood claims that these proved small concessions. In short, he argues that slavery did not impact constitutionalism. Constitutionalism impacted slavery.

Wood relies heavily on his prior research, including his own texts like *The Creation of the American Republic*, *The Radicalism of the American*

2 See Charles A. Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913) and Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2008).

3 This is the argument made by the *New York Times* 1619 Project. Historian Woody Holton has echoed these claims in his recent book, *Liberty Is Sweet: The Hidden History of the American Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2021).

Revolution, and *Empire of Liberty*.⁴ Indeed, Wood readily admits that *Power and Liberty* “is largely a distillation of my fifty years of work on the subject” (9). However, he does rely on some primary sources, such as Madison’s notes of the Philadelphia Convention, *The Federalist Papers*, and popular treatises of the time. Of course, these are also mostly conventional for such a study.

In sum, Wood does not provide much innovative analysis in *Power and Liberty*. Yet this is not a major issue. The most major issue rests with Wood’s emphasis that this book “is not meant to be partial to any political view, and is not seeking to retrieve a usable past.” He criticizes this approach, saying that a “usable past” lacks commitment to “objective truth” and is little more than “out-and-out partisan propaganda” (9). Despite this claim, Wood does not dodge polemics. After all, his stressing of American common heritage through the Declaration of Independence and Constitution can be read as providing a usable past.

Despite this issue, however, *Power and Liberty* is a useful tool for academics. Wood’s fluid writing style would make this book especially useful as an introductory text in undergraduate constitutional history seminars, providing a conventional narrative of the framing in a compact package. Though he does not offer much that is innovative, Wood has written an easily accessible and concise treatment of early constitutional history.

4 Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998 [1969]), Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), and Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Notes on Contributors

JESSICA ALVAREZ STARR earned her Bachelor of Arts in history, Spanish, and Latin American studies in the spring of 2022. Her interest in the history of the Atlantic World is influenced in part by Dr. Fernanda Bretones Lane, who served as her advisor for her history honors thesis, entitled “Liberación en la otra Antilla: Abolition and Independence in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico.” This fall, Jessica joined the MALAS Program at UF to continue studying Latin American and Caribbean history, as well as Jewish and Sephardic studies.

JOSEPH ANGELILLO is a Ph.D. student in the Department of History. He studies U.S. constitutional history under Elizabeth Dale. Joseph is also published in the *Journal of Supreme Court History*.

TIM BLANTON is a Master’s student in the Department of History at the University of Florida, specializing in early medieval history. His research interests include early Christianity, the early Church historians, and historical GIS. Before coming to UF, Tim earned his Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and history from the University of Central Florida in 2013.

EASTON BRUNDAGE graduated in May 2022 with a double major in anthropology and women’s studies, and a minor in history. This fall, Easton began graduate school at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to pursue their Masters of Science in library and information science. Easton’s research interests are in political organizing, archival silences, and how academics can and should be agents of social change.

RONAN HART is a fourth-year history major pursuing a combined BA/MA history degree. Ronan is a staff member and researcher with the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program. His interests include the Irish diaspora in the nineteenth century, the British Empire, slavery, and abolition. He is currently writing his honors thesis on Irish nationalist revolutionary and Southern secessionist John Mitchell. Ronan is also a campus activist and a member of Phi Alpha Theta, the history honors society.

SKYE JACKSON graduated in the spring of 2022 with a Bachelor of Arts in history and economics. Skye is grateful for her experiences with both Alpatá and the history department at UF. Skye is currently in her first year of law school at Duke University where she hopes to bring multi-dimensional, historical perspectives to the forefront of her future legal career. Her interests include 20th century American history, sunrises, and all things Taylor Swift.

SAM JOHNSON is a fourth-year history and art history double major. Sam is currently expanding her research into a senior thesis that will explore Klanswomen of the Atlanta area in greater depth.

BRIAN MARRA is a history and english double major with a minor in classical studies. Brian is interested in LGBTQ+ American History primarily in the 20th century and hopes to pursue graduate scholarly work in this area. In addition, he is the president of UF College Democrats and Florida College Democrats and is very active in Gainesville's community of political activists. Following his graduation in the spring of 2023, Brian aspires to attend graduate school.

LANCE MAULSBY is a first-year Masters student in the Department of History. Lance also completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Florida in History and Classical Studies. Currently, his primary research interest is the Central Middle Ages—literary culture in the Carolingian Empire.

DANIEL ANTONIO MIGUEL is a fourth-year undergraduate student majoring in history with a minor in international development and humanitarian assistance. His research interests include the colonial Caribbean and the Atlantic World. In 2021, Daniel was awarded the Undergraduate Research Tutorial award to assist Dr. Philip Janzen with research on the legacies of the Haitian Revolution in West Africa. Under the advisement of Dr. Fernanda Bretones Lane, Daniel is currently writing an honors thesis that explores second slavery in Cuba through the life of Juan Francisco Manzano.

KEVIN LY is a senior in the Department of History. He is a first-generation college student born to Vietnamese immigrants who arrived in the United States in the aftermath of the Fall of Saigon. Kevin aspires to be a pilot for the U.S. Army and serve the country that has given him and his family the chance to live freely. In addition to uncovering mysteries of the past, Kevin

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RACHEL SALVATORI is a third-year student studying English and history. Her research interests include African American literature, gender studies, and the history of disability. After graduating in 2024, Rachel intends to pursue a career in the field of library science.

SHANNON SCOTT is a senior majoring in history, minoring in German and religion, and pursuing a study in holocaust studies. She will graduate in the spring of 2023 and intends to pursue a graduate degree with the specialization of queer history and disability history in relation to the history of fascism. In her free time, she writes, plays D&D, and spends time with family.

DAVID VEHBUI graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in history. He has always been passionate about history, but during his time at the University of Florida, he discovered that the periods and places that piqued his research interests the most were early modern Europe and East Asia. Following his studies with Dr. Deardorff in his history practicum and research seminar courses, David also became fascinated and intrigued by the Spanish Inquisition—his article in this issue is the end result of his studies on the subject. In the future, David aspires to attend law school.

ADDIE WATSON graduated *cum laude* in the spring of 2022 with Bachelor of Arts in history and a minor in the sociology of social justice and policy. Her research interests include disability history, specifically the history of psychiatric institutions and mental health treatments during the late 1800s and the 20th century. Addie's research also seeks to find the most effective ways to promote economic equality within the United States.

Submission Guidelines

Become a published author in *Alpata*, the award-winning, student-run journal of Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society's Gamma Eta chapter at the University of Florida. All University of Florida students are invited to submit. All submissions must follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* humanities documentation system.

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