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Historical Perspectives

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"A Nightclub Map of Harlem" (1932), E. Simms Campbell
Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University
The *Historical Perspectives* Peer Review Process

*Historical Perspectives* is a peer-reviewed publication of the History Department at Santa Clara University. It showcases student work that is selected for innovative research, theoretical sophistication, and elegant writing. Consequently, the caliber of submissions must be high to qualify for publication. Each year, two student editors and two faculty advisors evaluate the submissions.

Assessment is conducted in several stages. An initial reading of submissions by the four editors and advisors establishes a short-list of top papers. The assessment criteria in this process, as stated above, focus on the papers’ level of research innovation, theoretical sophistication, and elegance of presentation. No one category is privileged over the others and strengths in one can be considered corrective for deficiencies in another. The complete panel of four editors and advisors then votes on the final selections. Occasionally, as needed, authors may be asked to shorten or edit their original submissions for re-submission.
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Historical Perspectives, Series II, Volume XXI, 2016
Introduction

Every year, the Phi Alpha Theta chapter at Santa Clara University publishes a selection of outstanding essays in the History Department’s journal, *Historical Perspectives*. Written by students in advanced seminars and who have completed research projects, these essays represent the highest levels of achievement in the department. This year, a number of excellent research papers were submitted for review. We would like to express our gratitude to all the students who submitted their work for consideration as well as to the faculty members who helped them with their projects. We are pleased to present to you the 2016 edition of *Historical Perspectives*.

This edition includes several essays that explore themes of ethnic and racial discrimination, post-World War II international relations, and sexual identity. These works demonstrate that our student writers utilize critical interpretation, insight, and creativity not only to analyze the past, but also to help us understand the world today. In their research, the authors challenge traditional narratives that have been oversimplified or sanitized in popular historiography.

The presentations begin with the work by Andrew Clem, who makes a compelling case that the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) constituted the first ethnic genocide of the twentieth century. In his essay, Clem debunks President Teddy Roosevelt’s famous but misleading foreign policy mantra, “speak softly, and carry a big stick.” Examining a more local history of ethnic discrimination, Roshan Rama analyzes San Francisco’s anti-immigrant past, looking at how Asian American and LGBT communities endured intolerance and shaped what is now considered a tolerant city. Emma Chen examines the Harlem Renaissance through a gender lens, illustrating how lesbian, African American singers were able to subtly express themselves through performance and social interaction offered by the blues and jazz entertainment world. Her paper provides a new perspective on a cultural movement that is often depicted as male dominated. Another writer who discusses gender and sexual identity is Julia Shaffer in an essay that covers Japan’s nineteenth and early twentieth century New Woman movement, which rattled long-standing, patriarchal traditions.

Sharissa Staples focuses on how the U.S. Reconstruction era, specifically after the passing of the Fifteenth Amendment and the creation of the Freedmen’s Bureau, did not promote racial equality as is commonly believed. Instead, as she points out, Reconstruction legislation justified separation between the white and black population, laying the legal
foundations for racial segregation in education and community life. Like African Americans, Native Americans have also struggled to achieve equality as well as political recognition, and Amanda Dahl highlights the overlooked role that Navajo “code talkers” played in World War II. Dahl writes about how the American press and public did not receive returning Navajo soldiers positively as they did whites, underscoring the racial and political dynamics of World War II that silenced minority communities in the U.S.

Kyra McComas evaluates the activity of the Swiss National Bank during and after World War II, noting how it laundered money for the Third Reich and covertly furthered its anti-Semitic project. Taking into consideration Switzerland’s interaction with world powers, McComas calls into question the conventional wisdom that holds this small country as a neutral actor in global politics. In today’s political atmosphere, Ryan Polito’s work is relevant, as it relates to this year’s presidential election. His essay traces how a socially conservative, populist movement that rose out of the Dust Bowl has evolved into today’s Republican Party. Drawing parallels to the Barry Goldwater campaign of 1964, Polito provides some valuable insights that can help explain how Donald Trump, a controversial right wing candidate, won the White House.
Acknowledgments

We congratulate the student authors who submitted their essays as well as Professors Amy Randall and Naomi Andrews, the faculty advisors, and Carole Wentz, the History Department Office manager. Without them, this publication would have been impossible. On behalf of the History Department we would like to thank the faculty, staff, and students who contributed to the department this year. We are honored to have represented the History Department, and we hope you enjoy this year’s edition of Historical Perspectives.

Hector Navarro and Laura Perez
Student Editors
The Filipino Genocide
Andrew Clem

My grandfather, born in 1931, was raised in the Philippines during the 1930s and 1940s. Before his immigration to the United States in 1946 he lived through the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. He remembers how the Japanese soldiers burned schools and marched through his town of Culasi Antique, on the island of Panay, causing the entire village to flee into the mountains. Fear of the Japanese army drove my grandfather to withdraw from school at a young age; he remembers very little about his education there, except learning about the great heroes of the Philippines: José Rizal and Emilio Aguinaldo. While these heroes, nationalists, and revolutionaries exemplify aspects of Filipino history, other parts have been omitted entirely from the identity of Filipinos. The generation that educated my grandfather experienced and lived through Spanish colonialism, a brief age of independence, and eventually American occupation and imperialism. What my grandfather never learned was that Emilio Aguinaldo campaigned against the United States army as the Philippine National Government. He did not know that the United States army burned villages just as the Japanese burned schools during World War II. In reality, the atrocities committed on the Philippine archipelago during the Philippine-American war (1899-1902) suggest that the United States was interested in furthering American imperialism and attempting to “civilize” savages, ultimately necessitating the cleansing of a lesser race. The reasons behind the war and the conduct in which it was carried out makes one question if the war was actually a war, or rather a modern twentieth century genocide.

The Philippine Islands, with their lush agricultural potential, have historically been used as a stepping stone to the vast resources of East Asia. The Spanish Empire, before the Americans, used the Philippines to fulfill their dream to create an empire that expanded across the world. They had ruled over a Catholic Empire and one that fulfilled their “grandiose commercial ambitions of exploiting the riches of the Orient” since 1565.1 This belief fueled by religious fervor of the post Reconquista age motivated the Spanish to explore the world and to bring Catholicism to those they encountered. The Philippine Islands, with their rich soil, deposits of various metals, and access to fisheries proved to be an excellent location for the

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Spanish to begin their colonization in the Far East. 2 Manila Bay also had tremendous potential for a port and a naval base. Finally, the proximity of the archipelago to China and Japan allowed for quick interactions with those East Asian powers. The Spanish and other western powers desired the Philippines Islands as a part of their colonial empire.

As Spanish power on the archipelago faded, and Americans sought to grow their new imperial power, the belief in Manifest Destiny expanded to locations around the Pacific Rim, and the Philippine Islands proved to be the ideal candidate for annexation. A cartoon from Judge, exemplifies how the United States laid claim to Hawaii, Alaska, and the Philippines after the Spanish-American War. 3 Uncle Sam with his feet on the United States (with Alaska and Hawaii) reaches for the Philippines to stake his possession and colonize the island nation. The United States’ desire to expand and bring American industriousness, ingenuity, and intelligence to the world directly resulted in the claiming of the Philippines and other Pacific Islands. The Americans after their victory over a proud European Empire in 1898 had the ability to become a major player on the international stage, and nothing highlights this better than the American occupation in the Philippines. Victory and expansion in turn fueled Americans’ sense of pride, and their racial superiority over other groups, and furthered nativist sentiments and bigotry at home.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century racism and nativism plagued the United States. As the reconstruction period ended and African-Americans supposedly became politically, socially, and economically “equal,” many nativists sought another group to demonstrate their superiority. For those residing on the Philippine archipelago, the small, yellow, Catholic (in some cases Muslim or other belief system) population became the new scapegoat. The veterans of the various battles against Native-Americans in the nineteenth century treated the Filipinos as savages, similarly to the “Indians” they had previously fought, and as members of a distinct outgroup. Labelling showcased the simplest form of racism against the Filipinos. “Niggers” and other racial slurs were used to equate them to the slaves of the American past. It became common to refer to Filipinos as


“niggers” or “monkey men”. At the outset of the conflict between the United States and the Philippines, an American soldier, Willy Grayson of the Nebraska Volunteers, refers to Filipinos as “niggers” as he shot at a Filipino man. Furthering the notion of their inferiority, Filipinos were constantly referred to as “monkeys” or “gugus,” the first derogatory term dehumanizes Filipinos by comparing them to animals and implies they possess less than human qualities while “gugus” is a reference to the Tagalog word “gago,” meaning fool, hijacking one of the major Filipino languages and turning it against its own people. On the mainland, feelings of superiority towards Filipinos remained similar, depicted in political cartoons, such as “The Little Filipino and The Chick,” where a bird outsmarts a small, negro-skinned Filipino child. The political cartoon highlights how whites in mainstream American society, not just those residing on the archipelago, truly believed in the lesser mental capacity of the Filipino people. Furthermore, images of Filipinos as animals, or displaying animalistic qualities were common in popular magazines in the United States like: Harper’s Weekly or Judge. Images of Filipinos as dogs, mosquitos, or trained monkeys underscore the qualities associated with Filipinos: trophies, an annoyance, or as pets. These qualities only begin to express how Filipinos were seen by Americans, that is distinctly different from and inferior to anyone in the United States.

The effects of American opinions of Filipinos were not limited to caricatures in cartoons, but also had serious implications for the real world. Being depicted as animals, children, or even devils, was unfortunately reflected in American action against Filipinos. In the poem “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippines” written in 1899, Filipinos are referred to as “captives” and described with statements including things like “new-caught...half devil and half child”. The reference

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8 Ignacio, et. al., *The Forbidden Book*, 89, 92, 93.
to being “half devil” led many, especially the white men, to feel threatened or endangered when facing Filipinos. This belief was used to justify the use of force and hostile actions towards the island population.

This hostility existed simultaneously and paradoxically with the concept of the “half child” and the jejune blank slate which could be molded into something new. As a result, education was considered a way to civilize Filipinos and make them more like Americans. After the war, this idea became reality. Scads of white teachers, particularly women, would come to the Philippines to educate the next generation of Filipinos.10 Either by eliminating the Filipino “half devil” or educating the “half child,” the United States had discovered a method of cleansing the savagery of the Filipino peoples: through violence or an American education. The magazine, Puck, clearly illustrates this concept in a cartoon named “It’s ‘up to’ Them,” in which Uncle Sam holds out his hands, giving the native Filipinos a choice. 11 In one hand is a white, female schoolteacher and in the other an American soldier brandishing a rifle. This image exhibits the options for civilizing the Filipino tribes, through educating the child inside in an American education system or by killing off the inner devil of the Filipinos.

The ideas about racial differences were ideally suited for the goal of annexing the Philippines: the United States needed to either bring the Filipinos into the fold or remove them from the islands. Needless to say, Filipinos had no desire to be annexed and resistance to these aggressions soon manifested. Emilio Aguinaldo, the President of the makeshift revolutionary Filipino government, led the battle against the United States Army. The outgunned and undermanned Filipino army unsurprisingly lost battles of conventional warfare to the experienced American military. As a result, in November of 1899, Aguinaldo dissolved the army into various guerilla bands.12 The purpose of this strategy was to wear down the will of the enemy, use the superior knowledge of the environment, and the goodwill of the common folk to instigate an early exit by the Americans. This strategy, while probably the only means of fighting the superior American forces, also resulted in various atrocities. Because in the eyes of the

10 “Cordilleran school children with U.S. teachers known as Thomasites, General Leonard Wood (center rear), and William Howard Taft (left rear)” (1903), American Historical Collection, Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University, in Francia, A History of the Philippines.
12 Welch, Response to Imperialism, 25.
American military, combatting the Filipinos was not fighting a war but merely quelling an “insurrection,” the American military was not constrained by the typical rules of warfare. The strategies used to counter the guerrilla tactics of the disbanded Filipino military included the use of torture, killing prisoners, targeting of civilians, and other genocidal tendencies.

As fighting continued across the Philippines, the American soldiers continued to slaughter the poorly equipped Filipino revolutionaries. Filipino casualties were sometimes ten times greater than that of the American forces. This ratio, while absurd, is easily attributed to superior warfare tactics and strength. Unfortunately, because of the Americans’ racial prejudices, the minor damage inflicted by the resistance, from a supposedly lesser race, demanded an extreme response. From the beginning of the war some American military leaders estimated that “It may be necessary to kill half of the Filipinos” so that the rest could live in a more civilized society.

This is demonstrated by General Smith, who after an attack on American troops, responded with a terror campaign of killing and burning, without the option of taking prisoners. He noted that anyone over the age of ten was “fair game”. The normal rules of warfare were abandoned, and the job of suppressing an insurrection quickly evolved into a strategy of total war and the targeting of the youth and the future generation of Filipinos. The New York Evening Journal comments on General Smith’s words with a cartoon “Kill Everyone Over Ten” displaying a firing squad about to execute a group of young Filipino boys. The caption to this cartoon sardonically comments that the boys were “criminals because they were born ten years before we took the Philippines.” The comments imply that because children over ten years old did not grow up in a society with American influence, they would be unable to adapt to American culture. If the Filipinos were unable to become a part of an American based society, they would be exterminated.

14 Francia, A History of the Philippines, 146.
16 Francia, A History of the Philippines, 152.
17 Ibid., 154.
18 Ignacio, et. al., The Forbidden Book, 102.
Other elements of the Filipino population were targeted as well, regardless of age or gender. This was done through the burning of villages and the forced relocation of the native Filipino population. In his testimony to the US Senate Committee on the Philippines, Leroy E. Hallock, a former soldier stationed in the Philippines, stated for the record that he had knowledge of the burning of half a dozen villages and that he had even taken part in one of the burnings. This act resulted in the displacement of three to four thousand Filipinos who were forced to abandon their homes and possessions and flee without any idea of where to go next. In addition to the forced relocation via the destruction of villages, American soldiers were some of the first to develop and use concentration camps in their “war” against the Filipinos.\(^{19}\) The resources necessary to construct concentration camps demonstrates the extreme measures that the Americans were willing to take against the Filipinos. Additionally, the “dead line” surrounding the camp kept all the natives in check and prevented them from leaving the camp on the threat of death.\(^{20}\) Ostensibly used to counter the tactics of the Filipino guerilla forces, the practices of relocation and restricting mobility forced Filipinos to move, either forfeit their homes or watch them burn. They were the victims of a total war, which, when coupled with the extreme racism against Filipinos, bordered on genocide.

The most significant example of the mass murder of the Filipino people by the Americans was the use of torture. It became essential for the American forces to obtain knowledge of the guerillas’ movements and Filipinos often became the victims of these interrogations. In this way the conflict in the Philippines at the turn of the century proved to be among the most violent and frightening conflicts that the United States has been engaged in. One of the most notorious torture methods that was developed by the American soldiers was the water cure technique. This torture method involved the forced pouring of water down an individual’s throat and into one’s stomach until their belly ballooned. Once full of water the handlers of the torture would forcibly expel the water from the prisoner’s body either through punching or using the butt of a rifle. The water cure on many occasions was administered out in the open, without fear of consequences.\(^{21}\) This process could be repeated for hours on end without respite, until


\(^{20}\) Arthur Wagner, “Testimony to the United States Senate, Committee on the Philippines,” in *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, 2849.

\(^{21}\) Mike Evans, “Testimony to the United States Senate, Committee on the Philippines,” in *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, 2882.
information was given up. What is interesting to note about the torture is the name. To “cure” someone with water suggests that they are sick or impure; when coupled with the discrimination that many Filipinos faced, this technique symbolizes a way of combining both atrocious war crimes and efforts to completely alter the Filipino way of thought, in hopes to purify victims of their dirtiness. The use of the water cure on Filipinos was openly and casually discussed throughout the South-Pacific and even made its way back to the United States. This is exemplified during a Senate hearing where the water cure was a recurring subject; many soldiers confessed to witnessing the water cure inflicted upon Filipino prisoners. Additionally, the torture was by no means a secret from the American public; the magazine *Life* contained information about the new way of extracting information. In a cartoon United States soldiers are visibly administering the water cure; in the background the other European nations are chuckling, observing that the young country that had been shy on the international stage in the past had finally grown up. The water cure is only one example of the tortures used in the Philippines, but it is infamous because it highlighted both the cruelty of the Americans as well as the hope of “curing” the Filipinos.

American empire building coupled with widespread racism and the excuse of total war which permitted the use of extreme measures such as relocation, concentration camps, and torture set the conditions for and inevitably resulted in the genocide of the people residing on the Philippine Islands, regardless of tribe. *Life* magazine highlights early on the destruction wreaked by 1900 saying that the Americans “burnt villages, destroyed considerable property and incidentally slaughtered a few thousand of their sons and brothers, husbands, and fathers.” Not only were these atrocities committed by soldiers, but the American people were aware of this and permitted it to continue for another two years. The severity of the situation is best displayed in the cartoon “The Harvest in the Philippines,” which depicts a belligerent Uncle Sam standing in front of a cannon, equipped with a bolo, pistol, and rifle. In the background lie rows and rows of dead Filipinos, stretching for as far as the eye can see.

The Philippine-American War, from 1899 to 1902, was the first war to occur in the twentieth century, with twentieth century weapons, in a

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22 Ignacio, et. al., *The Forbidden Book*, 100.
context in which the two regions had not had a great level of interaction. The United States sought to colonize the Philippine Islands and indoctrinated the American populace into believing that the Filipino people needed to change or to be eliminated. When taking the degree of racism and violence as well as the attempts to re-educate and re-locate the population into consideration, there is no question that the Philippine-American War was a genocide, a genocide which predates the first official genocide of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide, which occurred in 1915. The population of the islands, upon the conclusion of the Spanish-American War and the purchase of the Philippines by the Americans was estimated to be seven million people.25 While the number of casualties vary, it is estimated that over 4,000 United States soldiers, 20,000 Filipino combatants, and at least 250,000 to a million Filipino non-combatants died during this three year conflict.26 This range is quite large, but given the 7,107 islands that make up the Philippine Archipelago, variance is understandable. It would be easy to hide a camp, prison, or base across an island nation covered in densely-wooded forests and these numbers could possibly be an underestimate of the truth.

Even when considering the lower estimates, this war is barely mentioned in American schools. My grandfather never learned about these atrocities, and I am unsure that if he did, he would look at the United States government, which gave him so much, the same way. The shame brought about by the American soldiers during the war is reason enough to attempt to hide the truth of this war from the future and the world. Even without the crimes committed on the island nation between the years 1899 and 1902, techniques and practices that were developed during the Philippine-American War were imitated by other societies that committed genocide. Author Eric Weitz mentions that strategies used by American forces in the Philippine Islands—concentration camps in particular—were used again in other twentieth century genocides.27 The use of modern techniques, the high proportion of Filipino deaths, and the intent of the United States to erase the pre-Americanized population can only be described with one word: genocide.

25 Francia, A History of the Philippines, 141.
26 Ibid., 160.
Examining San Francisco and Its Suburbs
Roshan Rama

San Francisco is proud of its image as a tolerant and progressive city, with its citizens and outside observers remarking at the accepting nature of the city. For many years, the city has welcomed domestic and international college graduates to work in a city corps program. They marvel at the tradition of the city, as “It is a city built on activism and community engagement. It is a place that is continuously reinventing itself, striving for progress and inspiring creativity.”¹ Others claim, “I came to San Francisco to engage with a mindset, culture, and thirst for social change that I have always strongly associated with.”² External analysis concurs with these sentiments. CityLab, a subsidiary of The Atlantic, claims that when analyzing quantitative statistics San Francisco comes in at 17th in the ‘Top 20 Tolerant Cities.’³ This inquiry asks the question, has San Francisco always welcomed others? It serves to examine the exclusion of Chinese immigrants as a demonstration of the discriminatory underpinnings of the city and to explore the exclusionary federal policies of suburb creation. I argue that the latter planted the seeds for the eventual ‘tolerance’ celebrated today within the urban sprawl recognized as the city of San Francisco.

The notion that San Francisco has always represented a safe-haven for the oppressed or the marginalized is far from the reality. Researchers discuss the seriously abusive and hostile environment faced by the Chinese, among other minorities, in San Francisco’s history. Chinese inhabitants of San Francisco were barred from attending public schools and discriminated against in the labor market in the middle of the nineteenth century.⁴ When Chinese immigrants were finally able to gain traction in important industries,

³ Richard Florida, “The Geography of Tolerance,” CityLab, accessed May 29, 2016, http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2012/07/geography-tolerance/2241/. CityLab ranks cities on the basis of: the share of immigrants or foreign-born residents, the Gay Index (the concentration of gays and lesbians), and the Integration Index, which tracks the level of segregation between ethnic and racial groups.
⁴ Robert W. Cherny, “Patterns of Toleration and Discrimination in San Francisco: The Civil War to World War I,” California History 73, no. 2 (June 1994), 139.
labor unions restricted membership and leadership representation to ‘white Americans’ in order to slow the movement of Chinese labor.\(^5\)

The vitriolic nature of San Franciscan rhetoric aimed at Chinese labor is revealing. The ethnic group faced widespread scapegoating as many believed the Chinese pushed down wages and opportunity for the preexisting population. A San Francisco newspaper writing on behalf of labor interests stated:

Six years ago, six thousand white Americans with wives, with sisters, with little babes – four thousand men and two thousand women were working in this city manufacturing cigars. Today there are but one hundred and seventy-nine! Where have they gone? What had become of those free Americans? WHERE HAVE THEY GONE? Replaced by Chinese, those men who lived became thieves, tramps, vagrants, paupers, or at best, common laborers.\(^6\)

Analysis reveals the preference of businesses to hire Chinese men over white men and women, “Mary soon lost her job (at a shoe factory) when the company decided to hire less expensive Chinese laborers. She turned to summer work in a ‘hot and streaming fruit cannery for thirty and forth cents a day,’ but here too she was soon replaced by Chinese men willing to work for less.”\(^7\) The racial divisions boiled over in the form of a race riot and the rise of the Workingmen’s Party of California. The anti-Chinese demonstration occurred at the old San Francisco City Hall building in 1887. Following an orderly demonstration, protesters are said to have asked the speakers to denounce the Chinese. When the speakers denied the request, mass destruction and violence ensued. Members of the party continued to decry the influence of the Chinese until and after the federally imposed Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.\(^8\)

A short month after the race riot, the State’s legislature produced a Special Inquiry into Chinese immigration that encouraged the exclusion of immigrants providing ‘cheap labor.’ The report calls on lawmakers to act: “What are the benefits conferred upon us by this isolated and degraded class? The only one ever suggested was ‘cheap labor.’ But if cheap labor

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\(^5\) Ibid.
\(^6\) “Help!” The Truth, May 3, 1882, 73.
means famine it is a fearful benefit.” 9 Witnesses in the case included police officers, politicians, merchants, clergymen, journalists, and doctors.10 While not all thought that the Chinese were harmful, the inquiry concluded that the settlement of Chinese people represented a net harm.

Despite the discrimination that the Chinese faced, many traditionally persecuted groups found success and even prosperity in the city. Catholics and Jews in San Francisco gained prominence in banking, commerce, and politics. Many Irish Catholic bankers founded financial institutions that took pride in Irish heritage through names including the Hibernia Savings and Loan.11 The acceptance of others continued when San Francisco elected a Jewish mayor in 1894, decades before other major cities.12 Finally, the exclusive social clubs, typical of the 19th century, welcomed Catholics and Jews in pockets. While the case for San Francisco’s tolerance is not completely grim, it is certainly tarnished given the extent of discrimination the Chinese faced. The idea that San Francisco has always represented a safe-haven or a refuge for all peoples is fundamentally false.

In fact, San Francisco likely would not have realized its title of progressive or tolerant if not for discriminatory housing policies in the mid-twentieth century that overhauled the demographic makeup of the city. The policies made way for suburbanization allowing the urban center, San Francisco, to become a newfound home for persecuted groups, including homosexuals. When veterans returned following World War II, the federal government most notably subsidized education through the G.I. Bill. Many veterans went on to secure higher education and enter the skilled labor force, including thousands who went on to lecture at Universities across the country.13 In addition to educational grants, the Veterans’ Administration (VA) along with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) made a commitment to significant housing aid. Given that many veterans often left for the war as unmarried singles living with parents and returned as eligible bachelors ready to settle down, the housing market represented a huge

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10 Ibid.
11 Cherny, “Patterns of Toleration and Discrimination in San Francisco,” 142.
12 The Mayor Adolph Sutro did deny his Jewish heritage, a reality that perhaps tarnishes the feat.
opportunity. This market particularly challenged California where in the ten years following World War II, one in ten Americans that married lived in California. The influx of newly married couples put a strain on the housing market across the country. In fact, in 1948 Time Magazine declared that “In no large U.S. city had the postwar dream of one home to one family been achieved.”

In response, housing aid included significant expansion of the FHA and the VA which insured the mortgages of newly built homes, nearly universally built in suburban areas. Those that worked in the economic hub, San Francisco, could drive into the city from newly built homes. For much of the second-half of the twentieth century, the suburb represented the pinnacle of success for many American families. In fact, policy for many decades centered on enabling those that lived in the suburbs to access the urban core. The Interstate Highway System created unity through connection within the country by linking suburbs to the urban core. The notion that any, let alone most, individuals of economic power desired the suburbs represented a view which was uncommon until the twentieth century. Suburbs were undesirable, unwanted, and underinvested in for much of American history. Simply from a practical perspective, suburbs were out of the way and had been historically deemed unreasonable. In 1815, only one person in every fifty traveled more than a mile in order to get to work. Early suburbs would be far too inconvenient when Americans preferred, due to a lack of other options, walking to work in the city center.

Americans had a tendency to congregate in the center of the city, not on the edges. Ralph Waldo Emerson referred pejoratively to the “suburbs

15 Ibid.
and outskirts of things,” in his writings. In 1849, a New York journalist referred to the ‘rascalities’ that “have made Philadelphia so unjustly notorious, [and that] live in the dens and shanties of the suburbs.” Community elites expected the highest property value to be in concentrated urban areas. The automobile and interstate system allowed for increasing numbers of Americans to realize the newfound American dream of a picket fence and green lawn.

It was this suburbanization process that allowed for San Francisco to become a safe haven relative to the rest of the country, specifically for homosexuals. Scholars have long documented demographics, but the study of sexual orientation is critical in understanding San Francisco. The use of personal memoirs, planning notes, and federal notices inform us of the rise of the suburbs and the corresponding impact on the city of San Francisco. The rise of suburbs was not solely linked to the automobile and interstate system. Government agencies helped enable settlement through the aforementioned VA benefits. The new government benefits allowed local municipalities to begin regulating sexuality and continue ethnic fragmentation by selecting those that could access housing incentives.

Gays and lesbians faced enormous hurdles and restrictions in accessing the federal dollars that backed the mortgages of newly developed housing. For example, the United States Congress barred benefits for any members of the armed forces that were expelled for homosexual conduct. It is estimated that this amounted to nine-thousand Americans who were unable to reap the benefits of their patriotic sacrifice. Furthermore, the FHA disguised its discrimination in using the word ‘character’ in evaluating homeowners. It became clear that white, heterosexual married couples or families were preferred to any other group, making the suburbs restrictive on the basis of ethnicity and sexuality, in addition to economic status. The official FHA recommendation stated, “The mortgagor who is married and has a family generally evidences more stability than a mortgagor who is single because, among other things, he has responsibilities holding him to his obligations.”

The FHA, among all U.S. government agencies, has had the most ‘pervasive and powerful’ impact on its citizens in the fifty years following

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22 Ibid.
the Great Depression. The FHA instituted standards for homes, incentivized mortgage acquisition, and governed the morality of home buyers. In its guide to underwriters, the FHA regulated the appraisal of potential new neighbors. In the *Underwriting Manual*, the agency recommended restrictive covenants and commented that, “If a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and racial classes.”

The *Underwriting Manual* demonstrates the evidence of the state regulating sexuality in a post-war atmosphere propagated by Cold War concerns.

The power of the federal government to underwrite housing created a boom that contributed to San Francisco’s very progressivism. The government insured about 65 percent of homes built in the Bay Area housing market in the late 1940s. Corresponding to the rise of the suburbs, supposed social deviants began populating city dwellings at higher rates, enabling “[The] remarkable growth of San Francisco’s gay, lesbian, transgender, and heterosexual bohemian communities after World War II.” The San Francisco waterfront and Telegraph Hill attracted unmarried adults and a rise in gay bars, while other neighborhoods including the South of Market area had a marriage rate of just 20 percent. In the suburban areas of Santa Clara County, the percentage of married couples alone increased by 20 percent between 1950 and 1960. In Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale, heterosexual married couples dominated the sexual geography and household market. According to Howard, “More than 98 percent of the married couples in suburban Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale in 1960 … had their own households.”

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24 Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 207-208.
26 Ibid.
Table 1 shows the concentration of the population living in areas where less than 5% of the population lives with those that are not related to them.\textsuperscript{28}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
City & Number of Census Tracts with More than 500 Residents & Population of Census Tracts with More than 500 Residents & Population of Census Tracts with More than 500 Residents & Percentage of Population in Tracts with Less than 5% Unrelated \\
\hline
Palo Alto & 10 & 4 & 51,350 & 24,891 & 48.5 \\
Mountain View & 9 & 4 & 30,800 & 16,678 & 54.1 \\
Santa Clara & 12 & 9 & 58,800 & 44,113 & 75.0 \\
Sunnyvale & 11 & 7 & 52,118 & 30,556 & 58.6 \\
San Jose & 57 & 23 & 203,182 & 98,568 & 48.5 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Santa Clara County Cities with tracts with fewer than 5 percent of residents living with people unrelated to them by blood, marriage, or adoption.}
\label{tab:table1}
\end{table}

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, \textit{Census of Population and Housing, San Jose Statistical Metropolitan Area, 1960.}\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Table 2.} Census tracts in Santa Clara County with the lowest percentage of residents living with people unrelated to them by blood, marriage, or adoption.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|c|c|}
\hline
City & Census Tract & Total Population & Number of Unrelated Residents \\
\hline
San Jose & G-49 & 746 & 0 \\
San Jose & C-38 & 587 & 3 \\
San Jose & L-79 & 7,598 & 36 \\
San Jose & R-119 & 767 & 4 \\
Santa Clara & L-81 & 1,947 & 12 \\
San Jose & J-58 & 7,584 & 56 \\
San Jose & H-59 & 592 & 4 \\
Sunnyvale & L-82 & 4,311 & 40 \\
Sunnyvale & M-85 & 2,043 & 19 \\
San Jose & L-80 & 648 & 7 \\
Santa Clara & H-61 & 6,182 & 87 \\
San Jose & L-78 & 1,145 & 17 \\
Sunnyvale & L-83 & 5,348 & 82 \\
Sunnyvale & G-48 & 8,066 & 117 \\
San Jose & C-40 & 1,546 & 24 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Census tracts in Santa Clara County with the lowest percentage of residents living with people unrelated to them by blood, marriage, or adoption.}
\label{tab:table2}
\end{table}

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, \textit{Census of Population and Housing: San Jose Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, 1960.} Sample only includes tracts with more than 500 residents.\textsuperscript{29}

Table 2 is a follow up that shows the area surrounding Santa Clara University consisted largely of couples and families living together.\textsuperscript{30}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
San Francisco city planners, officials, and elite residents never rushed to welcome the new singles. In fact, the *San Francisco Examiner* denounced the “increase in homosexuals” and called for action. The *San Francisco Progress* believed San Francisco faced a moral crisis of sorts and called on Mayor George Christopher to embrace persecution of homosexuals. A private consultant linked the continued vitality of San Francisco with urban redevelopment that embraced married, middle-class families, “The family, felt by most to be the cornerstone of society is leaving San Francisco to be replaced by unrelated individuals—the widow or widower, the bachelor (temporary as well as perennial), the working girl.”

Figure 2 in context with Table 1 and Table 2 show the vast differences in settlement from the demographics of sexual orientation perspective. To be clear, the map uses San Francisco residents not living with people related to them by blood, marriage, or adoption as a proxy to suggest not only differences in sexual orientation, but also socioeconomic differences.

In the 1959 Mayoral election, tensions within the city engulfed the platform and rhetoric of the political challenger, Russell Wolden, in his bid against the incumbent candidate, George Christopher. Christopher had all

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32 Ibid.
the advantages of an incumbent including a strong economy and a commitment to clean-government policies. In what historians and political commentators alike labeled a ‘desperate issue,’ Wolden and his campaign staff shifted the conversation to cultural fears. The challenger claimed that Christopher’s inept leadership had created a city that had become, “the national headquarters for sex deviates in the United States.” Mayor George Christopher went on to win that election, although not due to any defense of same-sex relationship rights. It took the trendsetting work of city representatives including Harvey Milk, Howard Moscone, and Gavin Newsom to elect San Francisco leaders that stood for the city’s gay and lesbian residents. In fact, Mayor Christopher’s tenure embraced policies that directly impacted homosexuals and in doing so forced out many unmarried San Franciscans.

In the name of development, many singles in the Central Business District were forced to relocate. One study estimated that in an area earmarked for development, 90% of the residents living in the area were unmarried. The Mayoral administration and development agency pushed for housing in the Central Business District designed to convince suburban families to come back to the city. The history of San Francisco’s anti-homosexual policies extended past development projects, and included police raids that targeted gay bars. For many years the police collected extortion from San Francisco’s gay bars, which the local press referred to as gayola. In 1960, the owners of gay bars leaked this story to the press allowing gay rights to become part of the growing conversation around civil rights. Nonetheless, police raids ensued and on August 13, 1961, in a notorious bar close to the financial district was brought down. Community leaders involved in taking down the gay bar failed to realize that the culture of the city had changed, so much so that even after many gay and lesbian bars were shut down, the businesses reemerged. For the owners of homosexual bars in San Francisco, the business was about more than just

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34 Howard, “Building a ‘Family-Friendly’ Metropolis.”
35 Ibid., It is unclear if this study includes children.
37 Howard, “Building a ‘Family-Friendly’ Metropolis.”
making money. In fact, many bar owners simply reopened using aliases as fronts to reacquire alcohol licenses.38

The progression of San Francisco is a story that demonstrates the impact the state holds in determining settlement. The support of the VA and FHA created a market for home ownership in the suburbs. It contributed to a San Francisco with greater diversity as singles, including homosexuals, arrived to live in an urban area. As the suburban pockets of the Bay Area grew, San Francisco declined in the minds of local elites and politicians. Redevelopment projects unsuccessfully attempted to recreate the urban area by inviting families back from the picket fences and green lawns of the suburbs. The city had fundamentally changed and pockets of the community continued to defy corrupt police. San Francisco, like the rest of the country, took its time in tolerating change. While the city holds a reputation for tolerance and progressive politics, it is clear that for certain newcomers the city failed in being accepting. In fact, it is likely that if not for discriminatory mortgage standards in the wake of World War II, San Francisco would look different today.

Black Face, Queer Space:  
The Influence of Black Lesbian & Transgender Blues Women of the Harlem Renaissance on Emerging Queer Communities  

Emma Chen

The Harlem Renaissance was “surely as gay as it was black.”¹ This assertion by African American historian Henry Louis Gates Jr. encompasses a largely overlooked aspect of the 1920s, and the Harlem Renaissance in particular. When exploring the history of gay liberation and LGBTQ+ history in general, the Stonewall Inn Riots of 1969 commonly demarcate the starting point. In early May 2016, President Obama planned to declare the Stonewall Inn a national monument, symbolically securing the bar’s place as the epicenter of gay and lesbian history.²

However, to begin LGBTQ+ history in 1969 is a disservice to the often-disregarded development of gay and lesbian enclaves during the Harlem Renaissance. Even more marginalized are the contributions of black women – specifically lesbian and transgender women – to this explosion of black culture. Not only did their work aid the development of the movement itself, but it also began to carve out a space for LGBTQ+ individuals in the United States. During the Harlem Renaissance, not only did black culture and arts flourish, but lesbian/transgender black women were also able to create opportunities for freedom of expression and visibility which established the framework for an emerging black LGBTQ+ community and constituted an opening for recognition by some members within the straight community. In the ongoing effort to create a more inclusive and representative national history, it is critical that the roles of lesbian and transgender women in history receive more close and critical inquiry. Recognition of the intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality, and its effects on larger societal perceptions of identity, establishes the greater and fuller historical context of this period.

In *Bulldaggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies: Performance, Race, and Sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance* historian James F. Wilson explores the topic of queer communities in Jazz Age Harlem, particularly the contributions of female performers and their important role in the development of the Harlem Renaissance and lesbian community. Alternatively, Chad Heap’s *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* summarizes the various ways in which white, upper/middle class slumming presented itself in American urban spaces during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and reveals its impact on social dynamics. By looking beyond isolated black urban communities and analyzing the impact of emerging black lesbian and blues communities on a larger straight society, a more nuanced understanding of the appearance of distinct LGBTQ+ communities following the end of World War II is possible.

The Harlem Renaissance is often described primarily as a literary movement largely involving black men, such as Langston Hughes, Marcus Garvey, and Claude McKay. But limiting black culture of the 1920s solely to men would be a disservice to the movement and to the many talented black women who contributed meaningfully to this cultural outpouring of literature, music, dancing, and black identity. Specifically, the rise of blues music is a noteworthy development, as early blues music has historically served as a queer space. Scholar Terry Rowden argues that this is because the sexually freewheeling blues lyrics were one of the few spaces in which same-sex desires and queer identities could be freely expressed, though only to a certain extent given the conservative culture of the time.

Blues singers saw success because their music stemmed from the musical heritage of their own black community. The genre’s great success among the African American population and its eventual appropriation by whites is not an uncommon pattern in US history. However, whites could not appropriate this music without blues singers attaining some level of visibility. From this platform and thanks to the flamboyance of the entertainment industry and the newness of the genre, black blues women were able to create showy stage personae that reflected

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their sexual desires. Additionally, New York, like many major cities, fostered a clandestine gay and lesbian culture that created the opportunity for some women to express their same-sex desires.

Many leading literary, musical, and theatrical figures of the Harlem Renaissance are believed to have, at some point, engaged in lesbian, gay, or bisexual relations; but that did not mean there was a widespread tolerance. Instead, these female performers juggled maintaining intimate relationships with other women in their private lives, while also establishing a professional stage image. The theater served as a rare professional sanctuary in which individuals could be slightly freer about expressing their homosexuality. Director Robert Philipson’s documentary, *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s*, notes that unlike their white counterparts, black blues women were able to portray themselves as “explicitly sexual beings.” The caveat was that the object of their desire must be, according to social norms, of the opposite sex. Therefore, despite the connection between female blues singers and lesbianism, many of the songs and performers who reflected “queerness” were relegated to the “musical underground,” fostering a clandestine gay culture that was active but private and nocturnal.

Few songs held explicit homosexual themes, most likely due to fear of an intense backlash from white mainstream society. Nevertheless, a number of homosexual-themed songs and their lyrics shed light on the experiences of the lesbian blues women of the 1920s. For instance, Ma Rainey’s “Prove it on me Blues” contains explicit references of Rainey’s sexual preference: “I went out last night with a crowd of my friends, It must’ve been women, ‘cause I don’t like no men…Talk to the gals just like any old man.” Flirting with women like “any old man,” Rainey reveals her sexuality without hedging. The lyrics, “It’s true I wear a collar and tie” even divulges how she unapologetically takes on the “butch” role in

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5 Ibid., 24.
her relationships with women. However, Rainey sings that, “Don’t you say I do it, ain’t nobody caught me. You sure got to prove it on me.” The song’s lyrics suggest a state of defiant paranoia rather than a rebellious self-affirmation of her sexuality. This reveals that even those singers who adopted “queer personae” in their work were still cognizant of the leniency that being in entertainment granted them and the limited degree to which society would accept their identity. In fact, while both Ma Rainey and her protégé Bessie Smith occasionally referenced masculine women and “sissy” men, these lyrics rarely strayed from the prevailing stereotypes and were used mainly for the purpose of humor. Even so, scholar Angela Davis argues in *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* that, “[t]he blues woman openly challenged the gender politics implicit in traditional cultural representations of marriage and heterosexual love.” Though the blues women’s references to queerness were limited, their mere presence in a music genre that was soon appropriated and popularized in white communities meant that language surrounding queerness, however coded, was spreading. Non-heterosexuals were beginning to see the presence of others with similar thoughts and feelings, a realization critical to the development of queer enclaves.

A multitude of popular blues women were lesbian or bisexual: from Bessie Smith to Ma Rainey, Gladys Bentley, Ethel Waters, and many others. These women struggled as oppression of their race, gender, and sexuality intersected. Bessie Smith was one such lesbian blues woman, an identity termed bulldagger in the 1920s, who found great success. After being recruited by fellow singer and lesbian Ma Rainey in 1915, Smith signed on to Columbia records in 1923 and eventually became the highest paid black performer of her day. Smith’s influence went well beyond the black community. Her music saw popularity among white audiences, particularly after her appearances at the whites-only Cotton Club. According to cultural historian Brain Keizer, “Her sides [records] didn’t just sell in the African American community, they were classics of race

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11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
14 *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness*, 21:35.
16 *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness*, 9:40.
music. If you were having a party in the ‘20s, you had some Bessie Smith 78s.”17 Smith was married to Jack Gee from 1923-1937. Her marriage was riddled by his abuse and infidelity, though she did find solace in her affair with Lillian Simpson. She was open about her sexuality in her private life, even saying to Simpson during a lover’s quarrel, “I got 12 women on this [blues] show. And I can have one every night if I want it.”18 Smith, like her many lesbian/transgender female colleagues, is overlooked in accounts of influential Harlem Renaissance artists. Yet they had a great impact on the cultural development and contributions of the Harlem Renaissance.

In *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*, George Chauncey describes Harlem’s role in black lives during the 1920s as akin to “what Greenwich Village became to bohemian white America: a symbolic – and in many respects, practical – center of a vast cultural experiment.”19 This experiment included the tentative establishment of new queer communities and spaces in Harlem. One way in which LGBTQ+ individuals met and mingled was through private rent and house parties. In the safety of someone’s home, the interactions between queer partygoers bred the culture of this newfound community.

A’lelia Walker’s parties were particularly famous for their sexual experimentation. Walker was the only child of self-made millionaire and entrepreneur Madam C.J. Walker. Catering to those high of socioeconomic status, she would invite dozens of people over to her residence, the Dark Tower. Mabel Hampton, a famous lesbian dancer who moved to Harlem in the early 1920s, was often a guest at these parties. She recalls that upon entering the Dark Tower, “There were some fourteen or fifteen men and women, black and white, none of whom were wearing any clothes, lounging about on oversized pillows…”20 She noted that the men had paired with men and the women with women. Not all of Walker’s parties were so explicitly sexual, but they nevertheless served as a safe space in which those experiencing same-sex desire could experiment with their sexuality and meet other like-minded people.

17 Ibid., 8:15.
18 Ibid., 11:01.
Even in more modest dwellings like Harlem rooming houses and apartment buildings, same-sex coupling was not uncommon.\textsuperscript{21} House parties played an important role in establishing a working-class black community, as well as the beginnings of a lesbian and gay subculture.\textsuperscript{22} Private parties in Harlem became the safest way for lesbians and gay men to meet and relax, particularly as the lesbian community established a social network from these private spaces.\textsuperscript{23} Looking back on her socialization in queer communities during the Harlem Renaissance, Mabel Hampton said, “New York is a good place to be a lesbian. You learn so much and you see so much.”\textsuperscript{24} Whether it was through friendships or intimate relationships, women were able to establish close supportive networks of lesbians through house parties. While secrecy made these parties possible, their clandestine nature meant that little was written about them, making it difficult to determine how common they were.

Another way that gays and lesbians were able to meet was through Harlem’s many cabarets and clubs such as Harry Hansberry’s Clam House. Part of “Jungle Alley,” Harlem’s 133\textsuperscript{rd} street, peppered with jazz clubs and cabarets, the Clam House was best known for Gladys Bentley’s performances. Even on a map of the many Harlem clubs, the Clam House is labeled “Gladys’ Clam House” (see Appendix A).\textsuperscript{25} Jungle Alley, and Harlem in general, was one of the few places in the US that drew in slumming whites or “tourists” who were curious about “race music” like the blues. The Clam House, getting its notoriety from Bentley’s performances and her image as a “bulldiker” (another term used for lesbians at the time), drew in lesbian, gay, and white audiences from downtown.\textsuperscript{26} By featuring an openly lesbian singer in drag and serving as a gathering place for more uninhibited gays and lesbians, the club paved the way for the openly gay Ubangi Club in the 1930s. Places like the Clam House and the Ubangi Club established safe places for gay and lesbian community development. As both queer audiences,

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 28.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{24} Joan Nestle, “Excerpts from the Oral History of Mabel Hampton,” \textit{Theorizing Lesbian Experience} 18, no. 4 (Summer 1993): 935.
\textsuperscript{26} Chad Heap, \textit{Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940} (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 92.
and those intrigued by “deviant” sexualities, were drawn to see the lesbian/transgender performers, these clubs acted as a central location for queer blacks and some whites to meet and discover the existence of others like themselves.

Beyond their influence on queer audiences, Harlem clubs served as a prolific place for the development of blues music, as well as a space of relative freedom for singers to express their more “queer” personae. The blues afforded its entertainers some level of flexibility to push against sexual norms without as much opposition as would be encountered in everyday life. Because they were associated with the bohemian lifestyle, entertainers were often granted greater leniency to challenge sexual norms.27 Nevertheless, there were still limitations as to how much even these women could express themselves. Homosexuality was still criminalized and police raids on the various emerging gay enclaves occurred regularly. Any meeting was done covertly, and very few would live as openly gay or lesbian.

Like the Harlem Renaissance movement itself, by no means was the “queer renaissance” limited to the confines of Harlem. The intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality meant that the movement was far from ghettoized. In fact, as Harlem grew more sexualized and racialized during the 1920s, it began attracting the attention of mainstream society and others who questioned their sexuality.28 Soon more non-heterosexual people were coming to Harlem clubs, cabarets, and dance halls. Academician Kevin J. Mumford describes how slumming gays and lesbians connected with the African Americans of Harlem; he argues that similar oppressions (racism and sexual repression) helped to establish cultural bonds between the two subordinated groups.29

While a distinct LGBTQ+ culture and community developed surreptitiously, this growth still significantly impacted white, straight, mainstream culture in several ways. The visibility and popularity of blues music served as a powerful tool to expose heteronormative society to the black, lesbian, and transgender experience. For example, whites-only clubs like the Cotton Club hired black entertainers to sing jazz and blues. Ethel Waters, Gladys Bentley, Ma Rainey, and other lesbian or bisexual singers performed there, spreading the blues culture

28 Ibid.
29 Wilson, Bulldaggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies, 29.
beyond the African American community. Director Robert Philipson emphasizes the unique influence of Harlem cabarets and clubs on white communities, identifying the power of Harlem clubs to draw in white “tourists,” curious about “race music,” that is, the blues. Those who slummed in the Harlem clubs were exposed to the emotion and storytelling present in blues music, giving white audiences a peek at the LGBTQ+ enclave that accompanied it.

White sightseers who attended Harlem drag balls got more than just a peek at the black LGBTQ+ enclave. This “Pansy and Lesbian Craze” helped shape mainstream culture. To white pleasure seekers, the homosexual culture of some of Harlem’s gay cabarets allowed them to indulge their fascinations with sexual and racial difference. Experiencing sexuality within the context of the racialized urban pastime of drag led to the reexamination of notions of hetero- and homosexuality. White audiences identified individuals who fell outside of gender and sexual norms: effeminate men were labeled as “pansies” and masculine women as lesbians. Participation in the pansy and lesbian craze was becoming the ultimate mark of cosmopolitan sophistication for white, mainstream culture, by the early 1930s. For some upper-class whites that participated in the craze, drag shows became a way to engage in same-sex experiences. Slummers’ fascination with “perversity” and their desire to utilize these new social and sexual opportunities resulted in the growth of a new, underground, white LGBTQ+ enclave.

There is also evidence of the influence of blues women on the flappers of the 1920s. Scholar Lisa Hix argues that blues women likely contributed to the fad’s overt sexuality and flouting of proper, feminine conventions. It was a manifestation of the same infatuation with sexuality and sexual deviancy that brought whites to the Harlem cabarets. Perhaps initially drawn by the presence of alcohol, white slummers became intrigued by the sexual thrills they could find in Harlem. Ethel Waters’ hit “Shake That Thing,” rife with sexual connotations,
brought some criticism by black conservatives to the overt sexuality of the black blues women and closeted lesbians. *The Chicago Bee* asserted in 1926 that, “The American people crave filth and dirt…they relish artistic carrion. They are prurient for songs suggestive of the vulgar. They itch for sex.” While critical of Waters for pandering to the white and black public’s desire for sexual content, it also demonstrates white society’s preoccupation with sexuality and the act of pandering to an audience reflects the appropriation of blues and jazz music by white culture. By adopting blues music, white/mainstream society exposed itself to the messages and culture behind the music in an indirect way. Witnessing the performances within a black community context, absorbing the themes behind the music, and adapting the music to fit white performers and audiences requires a kind of immersion and internalization that necessitated some involvement or exposure to the lesbian communities vital to much of blues music. Some classic blues women’s songs were popular with white buyers. Although they usually sold as “race records,” in 1922 Paramount Records released black blues singer Lucille Hegamin’s recordings as part of the label’s “popular” series instead. Marketing the songs in the popular series as opposed to the race series meant that the songs were marketed to white audiences. Paramount likely decided to label Hegamin’s record as such due to the growing popularity of blues music, particularly as it was becoming more mainstream, primarily due to singers like Marion Harris, who was the first white singer to credibly record the blues. This influence of black lesbian blues women over the 1920s music scene set the stage for the formation of similar enclaves in white communities.

Given this wealth of lesbian/gay subtext and subculture in the Harlem Renaissance, it’s tempting to dismiss the larger sociocultural reality of that period. Tolerance, though more flexible in the entertainment industry, was still widely absent. People largely hid their sexuality if it deviated from the heterosexual norm, and thus few were brave enough to visit known gay clubs or bars which suffered frequent police raids and criticism from the mainstream public. In short, the

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38 Wilson, *Bulldaggers*, 137.
nascent progress and developments made towards establishing a LGBTQ+ community were negatively received, and actively opposed, by the heteronormative society. Furthermore, beyond the select information about the small, known lesbian/transgender female community, much of the information regarding the growth and development of a queer community must be gleaned from subtext. Any racial mixing was done surreptitiously due to the harsh social stigma surrounding the practice. As such, it is difficult to find much evidence of white slumming and its full impact on emerging communities.

It is critical to go beyond the surface level of the culture boom that was the Harlem Renaissance. Behind the popularized works of straight black men lies the deeply influential creative works of queer black women. From their blues songs, laden with personal struggles, to literary works and more, their contributions to the Harlem Renaissance helped drive it forward and establish spaces of exploration for themselves which ultimately helped to expose mainstream society to their lifestyles and experiences. Queer black women impacted and shaped the larger movement of the Harlem Renaissance, the emergence of LGBTQ+ enclaves, and those who slummed in Harlem.

The Harlem Renaissance was about more than jazz and poetry concerning racial oppression. It was an underappreciated catalyst for a new community and movement that would be the starting point for a much greater development in the decades to come. San Francisco’s Mona’s Club 440 advertised Gladys Bentley’s performance there in December 1942 (see Appendix B) as “the same type of gay entertainment that has made the 440 Club famous,” demonstrating how the appeal, popularity, and reach of lesbian and transgender performers only grew as more audiences were exposed to gay life.42 The blues women of the Harlem Renaissance had a far-reaching impact on the emergence of queer communities. Queer history does not begin with the Stonewall Riots, nor is it limited to the scope of white or gay male accomplishments. In fact, marginalized women of color are important players in the development of queer enclaves and the culture that defines them.

Appendix

A CONTINUOUS SHOW
From 7:00 P.M.
COME EARLY!
America's Greatest Sepia Piano Artist
GLADYS BENTLEY
Brown Bomber of Sophisticated Songs
and
MISS JIMMY REYNARD
Direct from Hollywood's Famous
"Cafe International!"
★ ROSE O'NEILL
Female Fred Astaire
★ "BUTCH" MINTON
Singing Gay Songs

with the same type of gay entertainment that has made the 440 Club famous

MONA'S
CLUB 440
440 BROADWAY

Advertisement in San Francisco Life – December 1942
Liberation Through a Different Kind of Love:  
Same-Sex Relationships in the New Woman’s Movement

Julia Shaffer

The late nineteenth century saw many noteworthy disruptions in Japan’s social structure as the nation began to modernize and westernize. In particular, the patriarchal rule that was traditional in Japan was challenged by the emergence of a new feminist movement known as the New Woman movement. It envisioned a more expansive role for women in society and questioned the hierarchical structures and traditional gender roles that had dominated Japan for centuries. As the movement gathered steam, New Women fought for and won many newfound freedoms and practices that had once been taboo in Japan. One of these practices was female, same-sex romantic relations, especially among Japanese school girls. These relationships were about more than breaking old taboos; they became an important way to develop one’s identity as a New Woman. In fact, the New Woman’s movement was at its core a redefining of female sexuality. Moreover, it was sexual freedom more than anything else that created space for the economic and social gains that women made in prewar Japan.

Japan has a long tradition of women's subordination to men. Throughout the Tokugawa period, Confucian ideals shaped the country’s ethical and political philosophies. Confucian and Neo-Confucian ethics appealed especially to the warrior class and the governing elite because of its emphasis on male power and secular society. Indeed, “Confucianism and the ‘traditional’ submissiveness of women make the political suppression [of women] in the early years of Japan’s industrialization seem an obvious continuation of the practices of previous era.”

Confucian thought laid out The Three Obediences, or moral rules, that woman were to abide by, and they provide key insights into the status of women which was generally subordinate to men. The fact that female morality was defined by the word “obedience” suggests that good women were, above all, submissive to male authority. In fact, The Three Obediences state that young women must obey their

fathers, married women, their husbands, and widowed women, their sons; therefore, there is no stage during a woman’s life where she is free of subordination to men. The Three Obediences, then, are a striking articulation of Japanese women’s status as second-class citizens.

Even as Japan modernized, the influence of Confucian values was demonstrated through the roles Japanese officials defined for men and women in their effort to reshape Japan’s national identity. The Civil Code of 1898 established a family system which “emphasized the authority of the household over the individual and firmly entrenched women in a subordinate position within the family.” The familial system, coupled with the ideology of “good wife, wise mother,” both defined women’s place in society and became the primary focus of women’s education. Behind the good wife, wise mother philosophy was the idea that a woman would “publicly serve her nation through her private, and now respected, roles within the family.”

Some women saw “good wife, wise mother” as modern progress because women now had a part to play within the community. However, this role was narrowly defined and ultimately remained subordinate to the man’s role. Furthermore, while the notion of “good wife, wise mother” was publicly supported by the government, “wife” and “mother” were private role, to be played out in the confines of the household, where the husband was still king. Many feminists, both male and female, rejected the idea of “good wife, wise mother” and began to seek a new role for women. It was from this effort that the idea of New Women arose. In a scholarly setting, New Women are defined primarily by their belief that “women should be given the same opportunities as men in order to reach their full potential.” This idea, of course, represented a significant break from Japanese tradition.

While New Women certainly represented change, the movement did not emerge out of thin air. The early Meiji period proved to be a time of great change and upheaval. The centuries old, semi feudal, Tokugawa military government

46 Ibid., 4.
47 Ibid., 21.
collapsed and Japanese trade was reopened to the West. Japanese women’s activism rose during the Meiji period as Japan evolved into a modern nation. The Meiji period, therefore, provided a legacy of feminist activity. An emphasis on equality, rights, and political participation drew women to the Freedom and People’s Rights movement in the 1880s. The class system that previously divided the citizens was abolished and a new emphasis on education was established and supported by the government. Newly educated and empowered women began to demand rights and equality within society. The changing social environment set the stage for the New Woman movement to sweep through Japan and disrupt the old patriarchal system.

Indeed, the movement carved out a space where Japanese feminists could unite and discuss their ideas and beliefs about women’s role within Japanese society. Prominent female literary scholars advocated for women’s rights under the New Woman’s movement. For instance, Yasano Akiko advocated for a feminism grounded in equal legal, education, and social rights/responsibilities for women. Hiratsuka Raicho propounded a doctrine of motherhood that called for state protection of mothers and special privileges for them. Scholar Yamakawa Kikue embraced a socialist view of history that traced women’s subordination to the system of private property and so set the destruction of the system as her goal. Other feminists, such as Yamada Waka, even embraced a revamped version of the traditional view of women as “good wives, and wise mothers.”

As the movement grew, however, a split emerged between feminists that wanted to maintain a version of good wife, wise mother, and those who rejected it. One branch asserted that motherhood was a woman's heavenly ordained occupation. For them, a woman's world was the family, and for a woman to leave the family and compete with men not only degraded the woman but also damaged the family. Thinkers in this camp progressed beyond the government’s notion of good wife, wise mother, but did not progress far enough to appease other New Women. For them, the notion of the “good wife, wise mother” was created to give women a role within Japanese society. However, the reality behind the idealized

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concept of “home” was that domesticity still existed under an absolute patriarchal sphere in which there was no freedom for women.

This conception of New Womanhood clashed with the rival branch, promoted by Yasano Akiko, Hiratsuka Raicho, and others, which held that a true New Woman knew who she was as a person and had developed her identity both inside and outside the home. For these thinkers, the traditional Japanese family had failed to produce a true “home” because it venerated family hierarchy and history over the individual.51

The two perspectives of New Womanhood seem less divergent when we realize that both sought to give women the freedom to find self-fulfillment through love. While the New Woman ideology encompassed more than merely the freedom to love, this lens demonstrates how both branches of the movement stemmed from a common core.

Both branches for example were concerned with the issues of marriage and divorce. Traditionally, marriages were arranged. They were business deals which allowed families to gain higher social status and a woman’s feelings were rarely part of the equation. Furthermore, the ability to divorce was a right solely restricted to men. While men could divorce their wives for any reason, women were unable to divorce their husbands, even in cases of infidelity. These were central issues for the New Women. Perhaps due to women’s lack of political or legal recourse, internal transformation was highly valued in the New Women’s movement and love was considered an important “technology of self” which enabled women to grow and attain their true selves.52

Indeed, while New Women certainly aimed to change economic and social traditions and laws, they also emphasized the discovery of one’s self. This is because they felt that in order to have the power to spark change surrounding women’s inequality and subordination in the public sphere, a woman needed to know who she was. Selfhood, as both a place of departure and a coveted goal, was “increasingly emphasized as integral to the modern experience along with the rise

of democracy, liberal humanism, and key concepts such as culturalism, personalism, and self-cultivation." Love was the vehicle of self-discovery which enabled women to visualize a new way to become female—to become New Women. In fact, during the prewar period, “the extent to which discourses about different forms of love pervaded society was truly remarkable; they shaped ideas about the modern self, about sex and gender difference, and even about national identity.” For feminists, love became something of an ideologue, or an important building block in their greater ideology, and “a range of ideologies about modernity, gender, and progress were produced and reproduced around the concept of love.”

Same-sex, female love was seen by the New Women as a key experience in the development and discovery of a woman’s identity. In fact, it was part of a progression of love that was considered not only normal but also essential for the development of female selfhood. First a girl would experience “innocent” same-sex love romance. Then, as she matured, she would move on to “real” [heterosexual] love, to be consummated in a love based marriage. Finally, she would become a mother and attain maternal love, the highest love of all.” Though the idea of love based (rather than arranged) marriages represented a deviation from traditional values, the real deviation of the New Woman’s movement was the idea of same sex romance. Although same sex love seems to be at the bottom of the love hierarchy here, it was seen as one of the most important steps for women in their path to self-fulfillment. This is because heterosexual and motherly love, though they were sometimes seen as “higher” or more “real” forms, were tangled up with a system of Japanese traditions and norms that made women subordinate to men.

With the emphasis on self-development in the New Women’s ideology, the importance of same-sex love becomes apparent because it undermined the traditional concept of love, as traditional relationships were not considered conducive to female fulfillment. We see this idea illustrated in the feminist novel, Nobuko (1924-1926), by Myamoto Yuriko, which tells the story of a

53 Ibid., 7.
54 Ibid., 8.
55 Ibid., 7.
56 Ibid., 8.
57 Ibid., 3.
female-female friendship between Sassa Nobuko and Motoko. Nobuko, a twenty year old woman living in New York City, meets and falls in love with Tsukuda Ichiro, a thirty five year old man studying ancient languages. Despite Ichiro’s lower class and poverty, Nobuko marries him and they return to Japan. Their marriage is based on love. Nobuko has defied societal norms by disregarding the lack of social gain or economic stability when she enters the marriage. She soon realizes, however, that she has made a mistake in marrying Ichiro, as their “relationship is lacking as a true love marriage because it fails to provide satisfactory female development and self-completion.”58 Later, Nobuko meets Motoko, a single woman, and they soon develop a close friendship. It is through her friendship with Motoko that Nobuko realizes that she is more fulfilled by the friendship than she is by her marriage.59 Even though Nobuko had a love-based marriage with the best intentions, because she did not have a sufficient grasp on her selfhood, her judgement regarding marriage was impaired. Nobuko was unable to find fulfillment despite having the freedom to choose who she married. Female-female relationships are truly the key to the discovery of selfhood and therefore, the discovery of fulfillment.

New Woman author Yoshiya Nobuko also praised same-sex love in her collection of short stories called Flower Tales. Nobuko was one of the most successful Japanese authors during the twentieth century.60 While she never explicitly identified as lesbian, she openly lived with her lifelong partner, Monma Chiyo, for 47 years giving her personal insight into same-sex relationships. Yoshiya’s work often features same-sex love and explores the meaning of these relationships.61 While never explicitly writing about intercourse in her works, Yoshiya instead uses flowery descriptions and distance to convey the notion of physical connection, presenting the relationships in terms of distance rather than intimacy. This allows the love to be associated with the sense of purity and idealism in contrast to the physical pleasure of the actual act of sex, which was more closely associated with heterosexual relationship.62 The depiction of

58 Suzuki, Becoming Modern Women, 82.
59 Ibid., 81.
62 Suzuki, Becoming Modern Women, 36.
same-sex love as pure and ideal creates the connotation of superiority to a heterosexual relationship. By expressing same sex-love without presenting it in terms of intimacy, Yoshiya creates an atmosphere where same sex-love transcends physical intercourse and fosters the development of selfhood and thus into a New Woman. Yoshiya Nobuko “inserted same-sex love into the ideal course of female maturity, reworking sexual and early feminist notions about this love.”

Often Yoshiya’s work took place in schools for girls and young women. Girls’ schools fostered a conducive environment for the development of one’s identity and selfhood. Girls were able to focus on themselves and their identity because school allowed girls to temporarily ignore social expectations and enjoy their girlhood. During this time, girls were able to experience life without male presence, dominance, and judgement. School created a world free of pressures of the patriarchal society, which gave girls the necessary freedom to develop their true selves.

Same-sex love among adolescents could be accepted as normal, largely because it was seen as a rehearsal for entry into heterosexuality and motherhood. Yoshiya expresses this idea in her works by portraying same-sex love as normal and purer than traditional heterosexual relationships. Additionally, female-female romance in youth should not be viewed as a cause of worry for it was part of a greater trajectory of love which ultimately culminated in motherhood. In fact, “in order to discern true love in the future, to avoid being led astray by false men and their shallow promises of romantic love, all girls should experience same-sex romance.” H. T. Dollase, a historian of Japanese women’s literature and popular culture, states that “once girls leave the school, they can no longer maintain the identity of Shojo (a term that Dollase uses for girlhood). They are destined to enter society, transforming into real women.” The purpose of the New Women’s movement was to redefine the constricting factors of the traditional ‘real’ woman. The real woman that Dollase is referring to is still a woman defined by the traditional notions of the patriarchal Japanese society. Becoming an adult is “simply a physical metamorphosis for girls. They have selfhood which they have

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63 Ibid., 146.
65 Suzuki, Becoming Modern Women, 27.
66 Ibid., 37.
nurtured a long time, yet when they enter womanhood, society expects them to discard it and to replace it with that of a woman." The notion that womanhood and selfhood are two different entities is false. Even in the context of a heterosexual relationship, the New Woman’s movement advocated self-discovery before all else. The implication of this is that one cannot be a good mother or partner if they did not know themselves. Thus it was wrong for society to expect women to fulfill personal or governmental roles—‘good wife, wise mother’— and give up their selfhood that is cultivated through female, same-sex relationships.

Same-sex relationships in Yoshiya’s work critiques Japanese society through the rejection of traditional societal norms. While Yoshiya depicts romantic relationships between girls in her writing, she also makes feminist observations and critiques of male dominance in society. The New Woman movement was about gaining equality and freedom for women, especially through love-based marriages that defied traditional arranged marriages. Because arranged marriages served as social and economic interactions between two families, love-based marriages challenged the oppression of women in Japanese culture, which framed marriage in economic terms where women were treated as bargaining tools. These practices are critiqued in Yoshiya’s writings. In an essay criticizing patriarchal society, Yoshiya depicts the reality of domination by patriarchal society and how the rigid ideal of Good Wife, Wise Mother restricts women. By setting girls free from the traditional path of becoming a Good Wife, Wise Mother, female-female relationships are a liberating way to become a New Woman. Female-female relationships redefined sexuality by rejecting the societal and economic oppression of women. Rather than for tools of social mobility or economic transactions, these relationships stemmed from feelings of love. In her short story found in The Flower Tales, “Tsuyukusa,” Yoshiya expresses this idea that the pure relationship was untouched by material needs or desires.

“Tsuyukusa” is a story about the love between two female students, Akitsu-san and Ryoko. As the story unfolds, Ryoko is forced to quit school due to her uncle’s financial problems. Although Akitsu-san offers to support Ryoko

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68 Ibid., 737.
financially so that she can finish school, Ryoko disappears without a word. Later, Akitsu-san receives a letter from Ryoko explaining her sudden disappearance. Ryoko states that “she did not want to be a burden to Akitsu-san and did not want money involved in her pure love towards Akitsu-san.” Yoshiya demonstrates that ideal female-female relationships are truly love based and free of any financial dependence.

Another episode in the Flower Tales contrasts the ideal, love-based relationship by demonstrating a case of traditional financial dependence and subjugation. “Moyuru Hana” “depicts the sadness and tragedy of a married woman who tries to escape from reality and her social roles.” Omasu, the main character, is the wife of a rich husband. She rejects her fame and fortune and attempts to return to her early life at school and the world of Shojo and female-female love. While Mrs. Wagner, a teacher at the school, attempts to protect Omasu from her husband, he ultimately employs a messenger to kidnap Omasu and return her to him. In an act of desperation, Omasu sets fire to the school and kills herself. The husband’s treatment of Omasu as property excoriates the heterosexual relationship and demonstrates the inequality and subordination women faced in traditional society. She would rather die than return to her wifely role in a loveless, heterosexual relationship. School provides a sanctuary from this oppression while her husband's attempts to get her back disrupt this security, resulting in her self-immolation.

Yoshiya victimizes the girls in her stories to reveal the power men hold over women. In Flower Tales, she uses female-female relationships to reject not only traditional social norms, but also economic matters. Same-sex relationships are much more than a path of self-discovery. This type of sexual freedom that female-female relationships created forged space for both economic and social change in prewar Japan. Advocates for these social and economic changes were connected and unified under the New Woman’s Movement, and the movement ultimately helped redefine female sexuality.

71 Ibid., 735.
72 Ibid., 738.
73 Ibid., 738.
74 Ibid., 738.
Morality and Truth:
Problematicizing the Good Intentions Narrative of the
Freedmen’s Bureau
Sharissa Staples

The modern lack of access to education by students of color has become a systemic problem that has stemmed from historical reasoning. Segregation, both in schooling and housing, began during Reconstruction and remains in existence today. In 1933 Carter G. Washington called segregation the “sequel to slavery,” because black people were now seemingly inescapably bound to the lowest class.¹ The ideologies of implementation came during Reconstruction, a time in which the objective was to integrate newly freed blacks into Southern society. Various social programs were set up by the United States government, such as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (now known as the Freedmen’s Bureau), which aimed at transforming newly freed blacks and poor whites into educated and successful land owners. Northern white philanthropists, as well as white missionaries, also established educational programs in the newly freed South. Although well meaning, these programs failed to recognize how deeply entrenched racism was in the South and how they themselves perpetuated racist views. The programs opted for separationist policy by funding and building all black schools and neighborhoods, which only served to further isolate newly freed blacks. Segregation, which has proved to be an insidious social condition, was birthed during a time that sought to rectify the wrongs of slavery by giving Blacks their own spaces. These spaces and social programs were not initially used as a means of repressing black minorities as they aimed at creating equality. Rather, it was the use of racial justification that allowed for spaces to be used as legitimizing factors in the argument for segregation.

In 1863 Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in which he declared all slaves in the Confederate states “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;” however, his proclamation did not actually free a majority of slaves. For example, slavery was practiced in Washington D.C. and continued to thrive after the signing. The Proclamation only applied to slaves who lived in

Confederate lands and was conceived as a method of seizing Confederate resources, not as a judgement against the morality of slavery. Lincoln also technically only “freed” people he had no control over because at the time, the North was unable to enforce the Proclamation. Additionally, the Proclamation had no legal backing; it was not a law or an amendment, and therefore state governments had the ability to ignore it without any repercussions. In fact, many abolitionists declared the Proclamation a farce, because of its hypocrisy and impossibility of its enforcement. As Union soldiers continued their campaign through the South, they were ordered to continue to free Blacks without, however, any plans or programs to address their newly freed status. After the Civil War, states that still practiced slavery were not allowed to join the Union until they freed any person held in bondage. The Proclamation called for slaves to be free but did not call for equality and never equity. The false sense of hope that the Proclamation had instilled in Southern Blacks would mirror the sense of hope that would be sparked by Reconstruction.

In 1865 the 13th Amendment was passed, which declared that “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime…shall exist within the United States.” The amendment formally abolished slavery, but did nothing to address the deep and entrenched racial inequality. It was not until 1868, five years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation and three years after the passing of the 13th Amendment, that newly freed slaves gained citizenship with the passing of the 14th Amendment. The newly passed amendment aimed to protect the civil liberties of the newly freed slaves but failed to recognize that these people never had civil liberties. All of the states in the Confederacy, with the exception of Tennessee, refused to ratify the amendment, prompting the North to block the Southern states from joining the Union until they signed. Again, in theory the passing of 14th Amendment should be celebrated, but its writers and America at large was unable or unwilling to address America’s racial climate. For example, while the 15th Amendment, passed in 1870, gave Black men the right to vote, this right was severely limited in most Southern states. Many former Confederate states implemented poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses to block Black men from voting. The failure of addressing institutional and systemic disenfranchisement of Black people in America played a major role in why both the 14th and 15th Amendments would ultimately prove useless for almost 100 years.
Another attempt to support former slaves was the Freedmen’s Bureau, established by Congress in 1865. Its goal was to help former slaves and poor whites gain the skills and capital to be successful in the United States. Striving towards equality and not equity would prove to be not only the downfall of the Bureau but also the catalyst for segregation and the implementation of “separate but equal” policies. Instead of integrating newly freed blacks into Southern society, the Bureau legitimized, formalized and gave backing to segregationist desires by creating all black schools and neighborhoods. The Bureau created the conditions for separatism to occur and thrive.

The initial historiography about the Freedmen’s Bureau positions it as a good intentioned charity organization which ultimately fell short due to Republican pressure. Many of the early writings came from both white and Black historians, however the historiographies that garnered the most attention were those written by white men. This historiography fails to recognize and address how systemic and institutional racism played a major role in both the creation and failure of the Freedmen’s Bureau. In 1901, twenty-three years after the closure of the Bureau, Paul S. Peirce wrote the first historiographical piece on the Bureau. Peirce’s work does not overtly challenge this “good-intentions” narrative but nonetheless calls it into question by examining official reports and letters published by Congress against actual statistics. This historiography became the primary source for information pertaining to the Freedmen’s Bureau and arguably became one of the first white challenges against the racist narrative that was being constructed around the Freedmen’s Bureau. Peirce argues that Reconstruction, and thus the Freedmen’s Bureau, were attempts to solve “the negro question” because “these creatures [Black people] must be fed, clothed, and usefully employed; they ought to be educated, intellectually and morally.” The focus is heavily shifted onto the military commanders who were in charge of implementing Bureau policies.

A Chapter in the History of Reconstruction offers both critical analysis and chronological narration of the events that occurred during Reconstruction. Peirce draws attention to the back and forth between what was reported and the reality, and often challenges these irregularities and inconsistencies. For example, Pierce

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3 Ibid., 2.
repeatedly references the false reporting by local officials on the rate of crime, which was exaggerated to cover up the use of newly freed Blacks on plantations. Piece also asserts “the original freedmen’s bureau act made no provision for negro education. Consequently, during the first year, the educational operations of the bureau were relatively unimportant.” Pierce’s work doesn’t attempt to whitewash historical fact, which many scholars did, thereby turning their narrative into historical fiction. In their place, Pierce offers an honest and original critique.

Although Pierce offers a significant and comprehensive juxtaposition of fact versus fiction, his work did not discuss the racial implications of the actions of the Freedmen’s Bureau. It really was not until the Civil Rights era that mainstream historians’ rhetoric began to shift, thus influencing the study of the Bureau as a whole. Nonetheless, many Black academics and scholars began their racial critiques of the Bureau as early as 1901, the same year Pierce published his historiography. Black historians, such as W.E.B. Du Bois in 1901 and Carter G. Woodson in 1933, critiqued Reconstruction and its failures and repeatedly pointed out the biased and narrow perspective offered by white men writing about Black history. They argued that the majority of the writings by white historians undermined and deprecated Black intellect, and regarded newly freed Blacks as too ignorant to handle education and positions of power. These assertions of Black inferiority were not based in historical fact, but rather racism, which was common amongst almost all white historians. The critiques by the first Black historians will be expounded upon later in the paper, but it is important to note the time in which they were writing, as Black people were challenging the history of the Bureau earlier than the 1960s.

In 1955 George R. Bentley published what at the time was considered the most comprehensive analysis of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands. Bentley and Peirce held similar views regarding the significance of the Bureau, and Bentley used Peirce’s work largely for his source material. However, both scholars relied heavily on Bureau documents, and did not incorporate local narratives to craft their historiographies. The documents and records were notorious for being edited to fit the needs of high government

4 Ibid., 75.
officials. Moreover, although Bentley’s work offered a significant history of the Freedmen’s Bureau, it did not discuss the racial dynamics and outright racism that existed within the Bureau. A more nuanced perspective would come later.

The historiography and rhetoric used when discussing the Freedmen’s Bureau began to shift in the early 1960s, just as the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum. Historians began to see the Freedmen’s Bureau as an agency of economic and social control rather than racial uplift. The ways in which the Bureau implemented educational and labor policies were labeled racist and paternalistic by scholars of the time, because such policies did more to stagnate rather than enhance Black wealth and intellectual growth. The schools set by the Bureau, similarly to the schools set up by white philanthropists and missionaries, sought to indoctrinate newly freed Blacks into staying in the labor market, instead of encouraging them to pursue an education that would allow for intellectual and social growth.

In 1959 Bernard Weisburger published in the *Journal of Southern History* an influential essay, which became the first published work to challenge the racist tones embedded in Reconstruction literature and historiography. Weisburger states that many early historians of Reconstruction refused to acknowledge the realities and failures of Reconstruction, and constructed narratives which denied any failures. In their own minds these historians were not revisionists but rather persons who were accurately and factually telling the story of Reconstruction. These historians’ sources, however, were often those of other revisionists, and relied on previously published works by other racist historians to confirm their own racial bias. Many of these historians refused to use new information and sources because a majority of the new information that was being uncovered pertaining to the Reconstruction period illustrated many of its faults. Weisburger argues, “If modern historical scholarship teaches anything, it teaches that ‘well-established’ facts are constantly changed in implication as new facts are unearthed.” Weisburger continues, “there are several sensible departures from any set of facts, depending upon whose definition of sensible is employed” and speaks on how facts can be ignored or strategically utilized to prove any point. The

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7 Ibid., 434.
language of these earlier revisionist historians reflects their racial biases, as specific terms are used to garner reactions, such as “Carpetbagger” and “Scalawag,” and the dialogue surrounding “negro suffrage” hints that newly freed blacks were more opportunistic than intelligent. Weisburger also believes that white historians have avoided addressing the issue of race conflict mainly due to “the difficulty in recognizing their own emotional involvement in the problem.”

In 1973, Allen B. Ballard, an African American historian, published a book that argued that the desire for economic control could be seen as legitimizing “the sense of black mental inferiority [that] was deeply ingrained in the thoughts and actions of those whites who shaped the contours of Black education in the South.” Ballard’s work elaborates on how most of the whites who either began philanthropies that aimed to educate the “uncivilized” Blacks of the South or helped run the Freedmen’s Bureau had just as many racial biases as the whites of the Deep South, but acted on them differently. Significantly, Ballard and these other historians were challenging who had long been defined as a racist, urging for that narrow definition to be expanded. The changing historiography aimed to challenge the dominant narrative that has highlighted the good intentions of the Freedmen’s Bureau and replace it with the realities of what the Bureau actually did.

There are two scholars whose work in the 1980s illustrated the changing perspectives to historical views on the Freedmen’s Bureau that were spawned in the 1960s. In 1988, Ronald E. Butchart, a leading authority on the history of African American education, argued that attempts by both the Freedmen’s Bureau and white philanthropists and missionaries were civilizing missions rather than actual attempts to educate newly freed slaves. In his view, “white supremacist historians” of the early 1900s, who interpreted this history differently, “were apologists for the emerging social order in the South. They sought historical evidence to justify racial oppression and exclusion.” These historians used their “findings” to support segregationist claims and believed that Northerners and

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8 Ibid., 436.
Blacks “were to blame for any evidence of southern backwardness.”\(^{10}\) The failures of the philanthropists and Freedmen’s schools, rather than being seen as racialized failures of these organizations, were used to reinforce racist ideas of black inferiority. Because black education was seen as a civilizing mission its failure seemed to offer “proof” for the narrative that Blacks were uncivilized and unable to learn Western ways. Ira C. Colby, a professor of social work and education specialist, in 1985 wrote an article titled “The Freedmen’s Bureau: From Social Welfare to Segregation.” He argued that “the Bureau served as a primary vehicle for the development of segregated social relations,” and the dominant positive narrative of the Bureau’s work and Reconstruction is fictitious.\(^{11}\)

Beginning in the early 2000s there was a shift among white historians in critiquing the critique of the Freedmen’s Bureau, and much of their language began to echo that of the white supremacist historians of the early 1900s. In 2005 Paul Cimbala published *The Freedmen’s Bureau: Reconstructing the American South after the Civil War*, in which he asserts that the Bureau had good intentions that just did not work out. Cimbala’s work fails to recognize the racial tones and motivations that went into the running and organizing of the Bureau. He dismisses Bentley’s argument that the Bureau over extended itself and was too dependent on economically disadvantaged Southern economies; Cimbala argues that the Bureau served as a “guardian” to the newly freed Blacks. The term “guardian” is used instead of the more fitting title of paternalistic overseer. Cimbala’s work, while nuanced, nonetheless mirrors that of the Reconstructionist white supremacist historians and their political agendas, where intent is considered more important than actualities.

More recently, in 2007, Robert Harrison published an article in which he argued “within the parameters set by the unforgiving dynamics of Reconstruction, Bureau agents, most of them at least, struggled to negotiate the terms of freedom for African Americans.”\(^{12}\)  Harrison calls the historians of the 1960s “revisionists,”


and that the revisionist’s claims are based in the historical misconceptions of Reconstruction, particularly in regards to the President and Congress. Harrison’s interpretation of the Freedmen’s Bureau seems to most similarly mirror that of both Pierce and Bentley, however, he includes the theory of intersectionality into his approach. Harrison contends, “Perhaps the greatest failing of the Freedmen’s Bureau was that it never quite comprehended the depth of racial antagonism and class conflict in the post war South.” This critique factors in both the environment in which the Freedmen’s Bureau functioned while simultaneously holding the Bureau responsible for its failings.

Many Black leaders pushed for education for newly freed slaves because they believed that educated blacks would appeal to white America’s morals and therefore be seen as equal. Little did the Black leaders know that white America did not have morals, but rather a deep desire to maintain white supremacy by any means necessary, which is why the White philanthropists, missionaries, government officials allowed for only industrial education. This type of education was in fact no education at all because, in actuality, industrial education sought to erode and destroy the possibility of Black intellectuals, who might lead Black America to equality. While “free, public Southern education [has been] the legacy of Freedmen’s education,” the actual history is much more complex than that. The paper will contribute to the scholarship of Reconstruction by further examining how the failings of the Freedmen’s Bureau allowed for segregationist policies to thrive as well as its continuing influence on the educational aspirations for Black Americans today. I will do this by examining three themes: northern meddling in Southern race issues, black ignorance, and Southern paternalistic concern which informed the Freedmen’s moral training, all of which influenced Black Freedmen’s education.

In 1865, out of the five million Blacks living in the South “95 per cent were illiterate,” and in response to this crisis there was a large push by the Black community towards education, but which type of education remained the question. The debate about the type of education that newly freed Blacks would have was not new, but rather a continuation of the conversation amongst the few

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13 Ibid., 211.
educated Blacks of the South prior to the Civil War. In 1840, Black education advocates such as Martin R. Delany were debating the merits of classical education, which is the study of the Arts and Sciences, versus industrial education. The idea was that the former would allow for the growth of a Black professional class such as doctors or lawyers, whereas industrial would train newly freed people in practical business, in which they would work in service and labor industry rather than have careers. Delany believed that Blacks should be educated for practical business because he did not believe that Southern Black society would be able to utilize these new Black intellectuals in a way that offered a sense of reciprocity, both monetarily and intellectually. Delany was so steadfast in his beliefs because he deplored the current situation of Southern and Northern Blacks, as “they were either totally illiterate, or trained in classical education, and thus unprepared for entrepreneurship and the business world.” In Delany’s view, a successful and vibrant Black economy would have to come first before classical education would be worth the time and effort.

Martin R. Delany was not alone in his convictions, as Frederick Douglass also believed the Blacks were not in a position to utilize a Black educated elite, however, the two men disagreed on how education should be implemented. The biggest chasm between Douglass and Martin surrounded the decision on whether white help should be utilized in educating Black children. Martin initially supported white help but after the repeated failures and his exposure to Southern white racism, he lost his hope. However, “the integrationist and still optimistic Douglass solicited the assistance of the White abolitionist Harriett Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” Delany strongly objected to white assistance, “especially on such a crucial matter as the education of Black children.” Given the racial tensions of the South and the racial laws that punished Black education prior to the Civil War, many Blacks, both freed and enslaved, could not fully trust the intentions of white help.

Given this mistrust many freed and enslaved Blacks put educating themselves and their children into their own hands, and formed what has now been

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16 Ibid., 13.
17 Ibid., 18.
named “Native Schools.” These schools were run by self-educated Blacks, admitted Black children only, and operated in secrecy. The Native Schools were established to prevent the Black “educational movement [from becoming] controlled by the ‘civilized’ Yankees.”18 The schools formed without the help or influence of the Freedmen’s Bureau, missionaries, or philanthropists. By 1866 “there were at least 500 [native] schools” in the South, all of which were run by members of the Black community. The building and operation of Native Schools “predated the Civil War period and simply increased their activities after the war.”19 However, most of their early work remains unknown, as Black education was illegal in the South during this time. The schools were initially thought to be self-sustaining and survived for a few years just on the donations and self-imposed taxes of local Black communities. Multiple factors ultimately hindered the success of the Native Schools. Because the majority of newly freed Blacks who were in charge of teaching in the schools lacked a formal education themselves, learning could only go so far. Despite governmental and philanthropic good intentions, the flooding of white Northerners to the South eventually destabilized the Native School system. However, even the schools which were run by the Bureau and the missionaries remained heavily dependent on the donations of Black community members.20

White missionaries, funded largely by Northern philanthropists, began flooding into the South after the Civil War to begin their mission of educating the helpless uncivilized blacks. The flood was not caused by the white missionaries seeing Reconstruction as a time to rectify the wrong of slavery but rather as an opportunity to perform charity work. The emphasis on charity is important because it highlights the attitudes that many of the missionaries held when entering the South: they perceived themselves as better than the newly freed slaves. A majority of the Northern missionaries “went South with the preconceived idea that the slave regime was so brutal and dehumanizing that Blacks were little more than uncivilized victims who needed to be taught the values and rules of civil society.” However, many of the missionaries “were astonished, and later chagrined, to discover that many ex-slaves had established their own educational collectives and

19 Ibid., 7.
20 Ibid., 9.
associations, staffed schools entirely with black teachers.”

Their findings challenged the dominant narrative of black ineptitude that permeated the subconscious of white Northerners and Southerners alike. The way history is written gives the false impression that the North was racism free, when in actuality many Northern whites believed in the same racial binaries and stereotypes as those in the South, but acted on these prejudices differently. While the majority of the South was outwardly racist, thus the fight to keep slavery, the North promoted racism more discretely through educational and employment disenfranchisement as well as redlining housing areas for people of color.

The Northern white philanthropists who funded the missionaries had a vested interest in controlling the type of education newly freed Blacks would receive, as they believed that Blacks were childlike and lazy and that they were unable to think critically and analyze problems. In response, the schools funded by the Northern white philanthropists created institutions that taught industrial education, which would force Blacks into labor jobs and fields. Many of the institutes that Northern white philanthropists opened did not provide adequate primary education but labeled themselves institutions of higher learning. These “colleges” did not provide anything past a basic high school education, and of the almost 200 institutes that were created in the thirty-year period after the Civil War, few would be considered colleges today. Not only did these institutes not provide an adequate primary education but the source of funding [for the schools] was white, the faculties were white, [and] the administrators were white.”

Control over the type and quality of education Blacks would receive was no longer in the hands of the newly freed slaves, but rather was becoming quickly owned by white led organizations.

In addition to inadequate schooling, the missionaries provided and implemented racially insensitive educational material, which would today be considered blatantly racist. The American Missionary Association (AMA) published most of the material that was circulated in the missionary schools for Black children. In books such as The Freedmen’s Primer, The Freedmen’s Spelling Book, The Lincoln Primer, and the First, Second, and Third Freedmen’s Readers, the content aimed to socialize and indoctrinate Black children into positions of

21 Ibid., 6.
subordination. In the books, Black children and adults were portrayed through the lens of white racist expectations and stereotypes, while simultaneously indoctrinating them to support free labor. White abolitionists also released similar books and pamphlets that outlined rules of etiquette that were also sexist and idealized male and female gender roles, such as the works by Clinton Bowen Fisk and Maria Child.23 Young Black girls were taught not to give into their promiscuous nature and instead learn to be ladies who would do well in white society, and young Black boys were told not to aspire to anything beyond a laborer.

These pamphlets became educational lesson plans on insubordination for young Black children. Although one could argue that they aimed to assimilate Black children and young adults into the realities of the free world, one also cannot ignore the blatant racial undertones of these works. Most of the lessons on inferiority were guised as simple stories, where the Black child or adult was often given simplistic characteristics, and more importantly the Black character was always saved by the graciousness of a white person. The success of any Black character was depicted as being dependent on their willingness to fill an insubordinate position and then take the back seat to the more important, and more intelligent, white character. What these books failed to do was first acknowledge cultural difference, second understand the racial context of the South, and lastly remove white racial opinions about Blacks. As Black parents began realizing the type of education their children were receiving, they started pulling their children out of schools that were being run by missionaries. The missionary public school’s numbers quickly declined and by the 1870s Blacks had all but pulled out of the public school realm.

The Freedmen’s Bureau, formerly known as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, became a functional institution in 1868 but its conception and planning began in 1865 just as the Civil War was ending. The Bureau was initially proposed in the Civil Rights Act in 1866, but many whites, from both the North and the South, believed that the wording of the act was too pro-Black and thus unfair to whites. The Bureau was then reimagined and

restructured to include refugees, which included many poor whites. This reconfiguration would become the first of many as the Bureau struggled to survive, as it relied primarily on wealthy white men for its funding. Although initial intentions to educate the disenfranchised Blacks may have been pure, the ways in which the plans were carried out often revealed their ulterior motives.

One of the Bureau and the AMA’s biggest accomplishments was forcing “whites of all classes to confront the question of universal schooling,” as Blacks were going to be educated no matter what, and there was an opportunity for those with money and power to influence the type of education.24 The legacy of the Freedmen’s Bureau has been crafted to include its creation of the free public school system and various institutions of higher learning, such as Fisk and Howard, which are known today as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). However, the free public schools often came at a cost to Black intellect, as schools run by the Bureau utilized many of the materials printed by the AMA, and Black children were educated separately from white students. If having a separate curriculum for Black children was thought of as necessary, it should have included a comprehensive history of Blacks in America, which could have been used to explain their current situation. Instead the separate schools and different curriculum were used to further segregate the already highly marginalized newly free Blacks.

The Bureau and missionaries funded by Northern white philanthropists capitalized on the desire of newly freed slaves to become educated and literate, thus funneling resources into education programs considered appropriate for Blacks. Despite the efforts of the Native Schools and the Black desire for “practical education,” the Bureau, missionaries, and white philanthropists operated schools that implemented industrial education. While practical education, which was frequently confused with industrial education, taught specific skills that are applicable to one’s everyday life. The practical is learned through the realities of life, as well as giving context to past experiences. Industrial education sought to indoctrinate Blacks into seeing themselves as inferior and only units of labor. As mentioned before, industrial education had both its positives and its negatives; however, white communities who would fund education saw many of the negatives as positive aspects. Industrial education, rather than allowing for the blossoming of

Black intellect, aimed to dismantle Black intellectual education as well as prevent their social mobility. Blacks who received an industrial education were trapped as manual laborers, serving as a cheap labor force for whites, and unable to climb the social latter.

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Education became a method “through which freed slaves could become employable, typically providing them with the skills necessary to access the values of contracts, to negotiate with potential employers, and to form a southern counterpart to the expanding northern capitalist economy.”

25 Many Christian missionaries, not unlike many slave owners, used Christianity as a tool to inculcate messages of Black inferiority and used labor as the only sense of purpose for Black communities. Many of the newly freed slaves were Christian, because many of their former masters had forced the religion upon them, as the Old Testament was repeatedly used to justify slavery. The missionaries were not alone in exploiting the religiosity of the South, as the Bureau also capitalized on the relationship between religion and education. J. H. Caldwell, a Bureau official and educator in Georgia, stated, “It is one of the most hopeful signs of the time… that throughout my entire district, when the benign influences of education and religion have prevailed, the Colored population have been marked for their morality and industry.”

26 One could argue that the influences of education and religion are almost never benign and, when in used in conjunction with one another, especially in the case of mission education, there was always an ulterior motive. Although the Bureau and the AMA are seen as separate entities, their views and practices were often dependent on one another as were their biases against Black people. Both the Bureau and the AMA would condemn Black communities for not entrusting their children to Bureau and missionary run schools because, for them, it illustrated Black failure to assimilate into Northern (white) society.

In addition to sharing similar views, the Bureau was highly dependent on missionaries and missionary teachers to not only help run Bureau funded schools but also by employing evangelical leaders as “special agents and as Bureau


26 Ibid.
officers.” While industrial education, or free labor education, may not have been the Bureau’s initial intent, it became the reality as those who supported and championed industrial education were now in positions of power to implement it. As a result, the Freedmen’s Bureau and the AMA became interdependent on one another, as “the Bureau provided funds for the purchase and construction of schools, and, in return, the benevolent associations were expected to pay teachers’ salaries.” In this exchange the Bureau forfeited to the AMA both the responsibility of overseeing the schools as well as planning the curriculum. The Bureau and the AMA utilized white missionary teachers as the “primary instrument” for reform and “understood [them] to be catalysts for an educational process that would reconstruct southern society.”

However, the policies and views held by the missionaries that the Bureau thought would “reconstruct southern society” held more closely in line with the views already held by a majority of Southerners. While a large number of whites in the South were holding onto a potential Confederacy revival, those who had a more nuanced outlook pushed for the next best thing, which was keeping the newly freed Blacks in positions of inferiority.

To combat the industrialization of education, the Native schools, formerly free public all-Black schools, began transitioning into privatized schools. With the influx of white northern missionaries and philanthropists and the heavy influence of the Freedmen’s Bureau, the formerly independent Native schools began to lose their autonomy and uniqueness. The Bureau set standards, educated white teachers were held to a higher esteem than Black teachers, and funding became dependent on a school’s ability to follow the rules set by the Bureau. In the 1867 *Freedmen’s Record*, officials at the Bureau “complained about the tendency of ex-slaves to prefer sending their children to Black controlled private schools rather than supporting the less expensive northern dominated ‘free’ school.”

Schools run by the Bureau and the AMA did not focus on the Black child as a potential intellectual but rather saw each Black pupil as future laborers. To resist this, Native schools not only became privatized but also reverted their funding back to donations from the Black community. Bureau run schools that operated near the newly privatized “Native Schools” eventually closed due to low enrollment numbers and a lack of

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27 Ibid., 126.
28 Ibid., 127.
29 Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 12.
funding, as Black parents donated largely to the “Native” private schools. The opening and operating of private schools for Black youth, which were outside of Bureau control and influence, served as a mechanism for guaranteeing the continuity of Black education that served to uplift the Black community rather than to suppress it. Even “when the Bureau reopened its schools” after the continued petitioning by some Black parents, “private schools for Black pupils continued to spring up [outside of the Bureau’s] control.”

In the midst of the Native Schools, schools run by the Bureau, and missionaries were Black teachers, many of whom were former slaves or were freed just prior to the beginning of the Civil War. In 1885, thirteen years after the formal closure of the Freedmen’s Bureau, Reverend Elijah P. Marrs wrote an autobiography about his time as Union soldier, becoming a teacher, and his transition into the Church. During his time as a teacher, Marrs worked at a school in his hometown of Simpsonville. The whites of Simpsonville were perplexed on how to treat someone who was once a slave and returned home a free man after the war. Marrs “was the first colored school-teacher they have ever seen,” but it was the familiarity of who he was that shocked the white residents of Simpsonville the most. The white townspeople often sent Marrs math problems to solve because in their opinion he needed to prove himself and when Marrs succeeded they would tell Marrs and his friends “That Elijah is a smart nigger!”

This confusion took more violent forms as well. Although under the “protection” of the Freedmen’s Bureau, Black schools were under frequent attacks by the KKK. In his autobiography Marrs includes a story of how a Klan member shot at students while they were playing at recess. When Marrs confronted the man he narrowly escaped with his life, convincing him that “no man was safe from [the Klan’s] depredations.” Not only were the students receiving an education that indoctrinated inferiority, the students also had to live under the constant threat of murder and death just because they were in schools.

Furthermore, Marrs notes the competition between the two Black schools of his town, as one was ran by the Methodists and the other ran by Baptists, “which culminated in a division of the school and the formation of two distinct

30 Ibid., 10.
organizations.” Due to this division, only one school would receive funding from the Bureau and thus each school had to vie for the support of the Bureau. After the split, only the school run by the Baptists was “under the protection of the Freedmen’s Bureau,” and in response the Methodists filed reimbursement and financial need claims to the Bureau. Both the Methodist and Baptist schools felt entitled to support from the Bureau, but the Bureau only would support the schools that adhered to their course curriculum and report requirements. Marrs, who worked in the school run by the Baptists, was being paid by the Bureau and not the Church and thus had to maintain his good standing with the Bureau to continue making a living. Marrs eventually took control of the school during the period of strife between the Baptists and the Methodists, although he remained neutral throughout the conflict. With the support of the Bureau, Marrs was elected to lead and later to supervise his school. Marrs, through the Bureau’s prompting, was put in a position to teach other educators how to file their mandated reports to the Bureau. If the reports from other teachers did not match those of Marrs, they would “not get any money” from the Bureau, although much of the monetary support of these schools came from Black donations and fundraising efforts.

The legacy of the Freedmen’s Bureau has been closely tied to the mandated free public education for which it implemented. Both Black and white children did not have access to a primary education, nor was it financially feasible for many poor families to send their children to school. Often children were sent off to work from a very early age to help support the family. However, with the implementation of free public schools many children were able to access an education. Again, the type of education these children received is important to note, as poor white children received a more traditional or classical based education, while Black students were taught how to position themselves within the labor field. Interestingly, the Freedmen’s Bureau documented that “many free Blacks [were] reluctant to send their children to school with former slaves.” There was a push to separate the newly freed Blacks from the rest of the (white) country, which allowed for white supremacists to begin the campaign for mandated education.

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32 Ibid., 79.
33 Ibid., 80.
34 Ibid., 82.
segregation. Robert Mills Lusher, a school superintendent of Louisiana pushed for the separation of both Black and white curriculum and schoolhouses. Lusher championed for free public schooling because he believed that without primary education white children would not be “properly prepared to maintain the supremacy of the white race.”

White support of free public education came more from their own self-interest in maintaining a racial hierarchy than it did from educating the youth. Poor whites were often times just as uneducated as newly freed Blacks, however, education was now seen as a looming threat to white supremacy because it could challenge the narrative of the ignorant savage. If the newly freed Blacks became more literate and educated than whites, the racial pseudoscience that white supremacy in founded upon would begin to show its faults.

Subsequently in reaction to the push for free public education for both white and Black children, a counter-revolution was spawned by the planter class who did not want Blacks to become educated, no matter the type of education they were receiving. The counter-revolution’s main goal was to limit the upward mobility of newly freed blacks by disrupting or limiting their access to receiving an education. To do this many planters began hiring young Black children to work the plantations, creating an early dependency on the children’s wages, who were then unable to be sent to school. Many plantation owners and overseers believed that “learning will spoil the nigger for work,” meaning that Blacks would begin to demand basic human rights. If Blacks became educated they would no longer work for miniscule wages or tolerate being treated inhumanely, threatening the planters’ cheap labor source. The South’s entire economy was sustained by agriculture and the transition towards an industrial based society was not in the foreseeable future. Besides, agriculture was part of the “Southern way of life,” and many Southerners believed that too much had already been disrupted or criminalized for them to also have to give up the ways in which they sustained themselves. A more educated Black population meant a reduced labor supply, which ultimately meant less cotton production, the product that had come to define the South’s economy. Slavery was now “illegal,” meaning that the South now lacked a steady supply of free labor; moreover, Southern whites now were being

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36 Anderson, The Education of Blacks in the South, 27.
37 Ibid., 21.
forced to see Blacks as equal. Ideas of equality were borderline blasphemous during this time (arguably still), thus maintaining the “Southern way of life” meant maintaining the racial hierarchy in which the foundations of the South were laid.

In response to the planter class’ counter-revolution, newly freed Blacks who sought employment on plantations, which were the primary source of employment for the former slaves, began to demand education clauses to be a part of their labor contracts. These contracts, which were prompted by the Bureau, sought to outline the type of work, wages and conditions a person was to work under. However, because the Bureau did not have the resources to enforce and make sure that these contracts were being upheld, many of the former slaves returned to abusive working conditions. In their education clauses, newly freed Blacks sought to legalize and formalize their right to receiving an education and these clauses often permitted them to miss work to attend school. Initially met with large pushback, the plantation owners eventually agreed but with the understanding that they would have control over the type of education their workers would receive. Many of the plantation owners sent their workers to all Black schools with Black teachers, because they believed any education a person would receive from a Black teacher would be inadequate and thus useless. Yet, as Frank R. Chase, the Freedmen’s Bureau’s superintendent of education for Louisiana contended, “the most prosperous schools in the state [were] taught by competent colored teachers.”38

This view of colored teachers being incompetent was a reoccurring theme throughout Reconstruction, as many of the missionaries also believed that the Native schools, which were ran by Black teachers, afforded Black students a lesser education.

In 1869, Congress discontinued the Freedmen’s Bureau and closed and ended its operations in all aspects except those affecting education, which struggled to survive for three more years. The education sector of the Bureau was officially dismantled in 1872, due to allegations of corruption and the mishandling and misappropriation of funds. Maintained by the War Department and headed by Major General Oliver Otis Howard, from the beginning the Bureau lacked the foundational necessary support from the president; indeed President Johnson repeatedly attempted to veto the formation of the Bureau. It was only Congress’s ability to overrule the president that allowed for the Bureau to exist at all. Although

38 Ibid., 22.
Howard’s only experience had been as the former commander of the Army of Tennessee, he served as the Bureau’s commissioner during the entirety of its existence. Howard was given this position because he was an avid supporter of humanitarian educational efforts and his intent is what is memorialized in the Freedmen’s legacy. Although the Bureau opened over 1,000 schools for newly freed Blacks, the type of education they provided has been largely ignored, as well as the realities the students of the schools faced.39

At the time of the Bureau’s closure in 1872, Blacks had contributed from their own pockets over $1,000,000 (in today’s currency almost $19 million) towards educating themselves and their children. However, “poverty undercut black educational efforts” and forced many Black ran schools “to turn to the Freedmen’s Bureau and Northern societies for aid.”40 With the closure of the Bureau and the flight of missionaries back to the North, many poor Blacks were now not only educationally stagnant due to the implementation of industrial education but lacked the independent funds to keep their schools open. The schools that remained open ran on the Hampton Model, which was a form of industrial education that “did not challenge traditional inequalities of wealth and power” in the North or the South.

The Hampton Model was conceptualized in 1868 Hampton, Virginia, a Confederate stronghold during the Civil War. Founded by a white Northerner named Samuel Chapman Armstrong and championed by Black activist Booker T. Washington, the Hampton Model partnered with Washington’s Tuskegee Institute, founded in 1881, and became known as the “Hampton-Tuskegee Institute.” However, this “newly” formed idea “represented the ideological antithesis of the educational and social movement begun by ex-slaves.”41 The Hampton-Tuskegee Idea maintained its contradictory Black curriculum and educational implementation until the late 1920s, where the shift was made towards mainstream Black education. The Hampton Institute did not aim to provide higher education nor trade schools but rather served as a program for “less educated, older, and more
economically disadvantaged” Black folks who wanted to become trained as common school teachers.

On paper the institute seemed beneficial to the Black community and served to provide a mechanism for education and eventual employment, however there was a darker truth behind the institute. Manual labor was at the core of the institute, a practice that would appear out of place at an institute whose objective was to train teachers. Armstrong championed for manual labor to be at the core of the institute because he believed that it would “teach students steady work habits, practical knowledge, and Christian morals.” In reality Armstrong did not want Blacks to be educated but rather used his institute to trap Blacks into powerless and subservient positions. Similarly to the white missionaries and the organizers of the Freedmen’s Bureau, “Armstrong viewed industrial education primarily as an ideological force that would provide instruction suitable for adjusting blacks into a subordinate social role in the emergent New South.” The institute purposely did not offer access to higher education because its mission was to control the type of education Black youth would be receiving by creating a class of teachers who were unprepared and undereducated.

Similarly to the Bureau and the AMA, the Hampton model used industrial education as a tool to further disenfranchise and marginalize newly freed slaves, their children, and the generations which would follow. What all of these organizations sought was generational disenfranchisement, in which a “classical” education was unattainable and the cycle of poverty would be impossible to break. In essence what the “Hampton Ideal” called for was “the effective removal of Black voters and politicians from southern political life, the relegation of Black workers to the lowest forms of labor in the southern economy, and the establishment of a general southern racial hierarchy.” Armstrong wanted to challenge the policies of Reconstruction with what he called “Black Reconstruction,” which sought to undue, remove, and further suppress Black people. The South believed, rightfully so, that Black education was dangerous to the Southern way of life because it disrupted, challenged, and broke down racial expectations and power structures.

42 Ibid., 35.
43 Ibid., 36.
44 Ibid.
Interestingly, while disavowing Black education and empowerment, Armstrong claimed to be “a friend of the Negro race.” He made this claim while simultaneously pushing for the removal of Black people from any positions of power because he believed that their removal was the “first step towards ‘proper’ Reconstruction.” Armstrong was an opportunist, as he attempted to offer support to some Black politicians, as he knew their positions would soon become obsolete as the Union soldiers began pulling out of the South in 1877. Much to his dismay and challenging his institute’s premise, Black politicians were voted into office due to highly influential Black votes in the years following the Union’s withdrawal. In response, Armstrong, as his forefathers did before him, began spewing racial hatred, often pulling from pseudoscience to back the arguments of Black inferiority. Armstrong alleged that Blacks should not be allowed to vote because they were culturally and morally deficient; he often resorted to using terms like “savages” and “darkies” when speaking about Black people.

Armstrong shared many common views with the Southern planter class who also believed that the newly freed slaves were morally deficient, incapable of critical thinking, and deserving of their subhuman condition and treatment. Where Armstrong’s views differed from the planter class was on the topic of education; the planter class believed that education would spoil the minds of ex-slaves and make them believe that they should be treated equally. Armstrong believed that industrial education should be used as a tool “to socialize blacks to understand and accept their disenfranchisement and to make them more productive laborers,” instead of a burden; the ex-slaves would become an economic asset to the South. To make his vision become a reality, Armstrong began to propagandize the North and the South with information and pamphlets that led Blacks to believe they had more economic and educational opportunities in the South than they did in the North. Armstrong proclaimed himself “a friend of the Negro people” while simultaneously deconstructing Black agency and recruiting in the North and the South using false promises of a better life. To this end, he published the highly racist *Southern Workman* pamphlet. The illustrated monthly-published reports on (white) public opinions and views on the position of Blacks in the New South,

46 Ibid., 42.
often referring to educational plight of Blacks in the South as “The Negro Problem.”

Black and white newspapers alike began to denounce the Southern Workman as being reactionary and conservative rather than a platform for different voices to be heard. Thomas Nast, the coauthor and illustrator of the pamphlet Harper’s Weekly, which featured world news, fiction, thought pieces, and humor, all alongside illustrations published “The Union as it was / The Lost Cause, worse than slavery” in response to the hate propagated by the Southern Workman.47 The image depicts two men, one labeled “White League” who is shaking the hands of the Ku Klux Klan. Their hands join at the head of a skull and crossbones, beneath the skull is a shield depicting a Black couple who appear to be mourning their possibly dead child, and behind them is a man is hanging from a tree and a schoolhouse is burning. A child’s book lay open in front of the couple and wording above the eagle at the top of the image reads, “The Union as it Was. This is a White Man’s Government.” The image highlights the violent struggle Blacks had to endure just to receive a basic education, albeit an education which taught them

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they were inferior. Blacks had to endure arson, lynching and various forms of intimidation just for existing in the South and attempting to better themselves. In this image Nast asserted through illustration that the environment of Reconstruction was “worse than slavery;” that the level of violence inflicted against newly freed Blacks in the South was far worse than the suffering they endured while enslaved.

As mentioned before, Booker T. Washington was an avid supporter of the Hampton Institute despite its racism. When learning about school and what it meant to be educated, Washington came to believe that “not even Heaven presented more attractions to me than did the Hampton Institute in Virginia.” Washington also described Armstrong as “a great man – the noblest, rarest human being that it [was] ever been [his] privilege to meet,” and how Armstrong’s presence offered any listener a “liberal education.” Later on Washington depicted Armstrong as a perfect being, without any flaws, which makes one question whether Washington knew about Armstrong’s blatant racism or chose to ignore it. This contradiction between who Armstrong was and who Washington believed him to be may perhaps have originated from the image of the Black education crusader which Armstrong projected to the students of the Hampton Institute. The language Washington uses in his autobiography when he writes about Armstrong blurs the line between adoration and worship, as Washington himself admits that he and other students worshipped Armstrong. There appears to be a sense of idolization. Washington goes a far as comparing Armstrong and the other missionaries to Christ.

Washington believed that “the history of the world failed to show a higher, purer, and more unselfish class of men and women than those who found their way into the Negro schools.” Blacks, especially those who lived in the South, were so unaccustomed to any white person recognizing them as human that anyone who showed them an ounce of sympathy was glorified. For example, while at the Hampton Institute, many of the Blacks who had migrated from the South would sleep in a bed with sheets for the first time. This exposure to basic human recognition can and should be attributed to the Hampton students’ deification of

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49 Ibid., 56.
50 Ibid., 59.
Armstrong. While at Hampton, Washington was socialized into believing that the newly freed Blacks were not ready for the true classical education that would free them from the shackles of manual labor, but rather were better suited for industrial education. Washington also came to see Reconstruction as a farce, where the North wanted to punish the Southern whites by placing newly freed Blacks into positions of superiority over their former masters. The internalized oppression and racism Washington exhibited is evident throughout his writings and were highly influential in maintaining and expanding his relationship with Armstrong and the Hampton Institute. Washington should be seen as a successful byproduct of the indoctrination of Black inferiority that the Freedmen’s Bureau and Missionary schools promoted.

As a result of the Bureau, missionaries, and the Hampton Institute creating all Black schools and centers, segregation was not only legitimized but also gave moral backing. In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court legalized segregation by declaring “separate but equal” constitutional. Homer Plessy brought charges against the city of New Orleans after he was told to vacate a train car that was for whites only, as he contended this removal violated his Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. The Supreme Court chose to ignore the protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, and instead focused on the sections that highlighted that it was the state’s right to choose how it chose to handle policing and the enforcement of laws. The Court alleged that the purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment was “to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law… Laws … requiring their separation… do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race.” The ruling also included a response to the claims against segregation because they believed the “assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is… solely because the colored race choose to put that construction upon it.”51 Only one Justice dissented in the vote, the white Kentuckian and former slave owner John Marshall Harlan, who believed that while the Constitution was intended to be colorblind, white racists viewed themselves as superior and used the law to legitimize their thinking. It can be argued that because the Black people of the South were not allowed classical educations, they lacked Black legal representation. By giving states the power to

impose “merely legal distinctions” between the white and Black races, the Constitutional decision would allow for segregation to take hold legally and influence American history forever.

Due to the educational stagnation created by the implementation of industrial education, the Black South lacked the legal system and civil servants to protect their rights. The few Black lawyers that existed during this time practiced in the North, and although they did attempt to help the Blacks of the South in certain cases, the Black South lacked its own legal voice. The Freedmen’s Bureau began its operations in 1865 and the influx of white missionaries from the North came immediately after, so between the opening of the Bureau and the defeat of Plessy in the Supreme Court over thirty-one years had passed. This means, if a Black child was either born during or Post-Reconstruction and they were given the appropriate educational resources and opportunities, this child could have been a practicing lawyer by the time the Plessy case was being taken to court for the first time.

As a result of the absence of an educated class of Blacks in the South during the beginning of the twentieth century, many of the first critiques of the failings of the Freedmen’s Bureau and Reconstruction came from Northern Blacks. The first of whom was W.E.B. Du Bois, who released his critique in 1901 in his self-published monthly, The Atlantic.52 Du Bois believed that both the Bureau and the missionary associations were attempting to offer temporary relief to a deeply systemic and institutionalized problem. The need for the Bureau and the AMA came from the visual destitution that the newly freed slaves were living under, with tattered clothes and no place to live, their situation was appalling to anyone who saw them. Du Bois’ critique was coming from a Black perspective and therefore was more critical towards the failing of the government to address the racial tensions that remained after the Civil War and Reconstruction. The U.S. Government assumed charge of the newly freed Blacks with the implementation of the Freedmen’s Bureau, but failed to realize and recognize how these “black men [had been] emasculated by a peculiarly complete system of slavery, centuries old; and now, suddenly, violently, they [came] into a new birthright, at a time of war

and passion, in the midst of the stricken, embittered population of their former masters."

General Howard, who was in charge of the Bureau, had too large a task to complete on his own without the support of the American people and the government. Du Bois believed that Howard, although good intentioned, had “too much faith in human nature” and too “little aptitude for systematic business and intricate detail.” Conversely, Du Bois also viewed Armstrong and other missionaries who opened schoolhouses in the South as “apostles of human development.” Maybe, like Washington, Du Bois was blinded by the positive intent of the missionaries and Armstrong to see the realities of the educational indoctrination that these individuals and groups were pushing for. Like many other historians, Du Bois believed that the lasting legacy and “greatest success of the Freedmen’s Bureau lay in the planting of the free school among Negroes, and the idea of free elementary education among all classes in the South.” Perhaps in 1901 it was too early to tangibly see the negative effects of the type of education that was being imposed on Black children in those schoolhouses.

In response to the failing of the mission schools and the closing of the Freedmen’s Bureau, in 1907 white Quaker philanthropist Anna T. Jeanes started the Jeanes Foundation, also known as the Negro Rural School Fund. The “Jeanes teachers” were white and worked in the public schools previously established by the Freedmen’s Bureau, and their supervisors were Southern Blacks. However, many of the teachers instead reported to the local white community, as segregation was in full swing and racial hostilities were on the rise. Again, local white communities wanted to influence the type of education Blacks would be receiving. There was a push towards maintaining the implementation of industrial education over classical education, because although the Freedmen’s Bureau attempted to create policies to “fix” inequality, it did not attempt to remedy the deep and entrenched racism of the South. The Jeanes teachers, despite their good intentions, should be examined and critiqued under the same lens as the Bureau and the AMA, given that they too went into the South with “good intentions.”

In 1930, Carter G. Woodson published his critique of the Bureau and the use of industrial education its consequences. Woodson, one of the first African

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
American historians and founder of the Association for the Study of African American life and history, was born in 1875 to two former slaves in New Canton, Virginia. Woodson’s parents had migrated to the North after they heard that Black high schools were being built and witnessing the shortcoming of the educational institutions of the South. Woodson would go on to earn his PhD from Harvard, the second African American to earn a degree after Du Bois. Two famous Woodson quotes are, “The mere imparting of information is not education” and “When you control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his actions.” These quotes in essence capture Woodson’s opinions regarding the use of industrial education and the work of the Freedmen’s Bureau and the AMA. Woodson was highly critical of the Civil War and Reconstruction as a whole, as he believed “Black people had [only] been liberated as a result of a sectional conflict of which their former owners emerged as victims.”55 Specifically in regards to industrial education, Woodson believed that “this undertaking was more of an effort toward social uplift than actual education” and the Bureau and missionaries goals were “to transform the Negroes, not to develop them.”56 Woodson noted that industrial education was the byproduct of an education system designed by the whites that had once enslaved Blacks and “now sought to segregate them.”57 Black teachers and the removal of white teachers, especially in schools ran by missionaries, was the first step in the successful and correct educating of a Black person. However, the Black teachers needed to be trained by fellow Black teachers, otherwise they would further “mis-educate the Negro.” Woodson asserted that education system set up during Reconstruction and the one that existed during his lifetime, which was under the control of whites, only served to “train the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of becoming white.”58 However, Woodson recognized the need for white teachers until Black trained teachers were a feasible reality, yet these white teachers would always be temporary.

Although some would see Woodson’s critiques as promoting separatism, Woodson was speaking on the truth and reality of the results of white dominated

56 Ibid., 17.
57 Ibid., 22.
58 Ibid., 23.
Black education. As a historian, Woodson repeatedly acknowledged how the history of both the “Negro” and the Freedmen’s Bureau had been white washed into a narrative that suppressed and erased Black intellect, while uplifting even the most racist of whites. Woodson holds everyone responsible, including “educated” Blacks, for Jim Crow and Segregation, as they are both institutions that people chose to participate and live within. A considerable majority of “educated” Blacks that lived in both the North and the South had “accepted segregation” and “became its fearless champions.” Woodson believed that “educated” Black acceptance was the direct result of the education that Blacks were force fed in industrial schools. The consent towards segregation, Woodson asserts, serves as “an opiate, [as it] furnishes temporary relief,” however, “it does not remove the cause of the pain.”

For many Blacks, especially those indoctrinated to believe that they were inferior, it was easier to live in compliance with the ways of the white dominated society, than have to actively challenge their position. Challenges towards the social hierarchy often resulted in violence and even death. Woodson saw segregation as the sequel to slavery, as society did “not show the Negro how to overcome segregation, but rather [taught] him how to accept it as final and just.”

Slaves were taught that they were less than human and therefore deserving of their inferior position, and their slave status was further legitimized through the misquoting and paraphrasing of the Christian bible. Slaves were not allowed to be educated and even learning how to read was punishable by death, thus slaves were never able to question their status or challenge the racial allegations. The slaves, like their freed descendants, were mis-educated “innocent people who did not know what was happening.” The brainwashing of Blacks into positions of inferiority had been “so subtle that men have participated in prompting it without knowing what they were doing.” The realities and long lasting effects of industrial education were shockingly apparent by 1933; the Bureau and missionaries had arrived in the South with “good intentions” but the consequences were devastating and have affected many generations.

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59 Ibid., 100.
60 Ibid., 101.
61 Ibid., 102.
Quick fixes by white savior organizations and white government have repeatedly occurred since the closure of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Schools were desegregated in 1954 with the passing of Brown v. Board of Education, which declared “separate by equal” unconstitutional. However, laws that prompted states to implement civil and equal rights between Blacks and whites were ignored up until the 1970s. Integration, although mandated to create equality, proved to be a temporary performance. The backlash against integrative efforts resulted in the deaths of many Black activists, and history is narrated in such a way that erases the violence that lasted well into the 1970s against integrated schools. The anti-busing movement of Boston in 1974 mirrored that of the Civil Rights counter movements led by racist whites in Selma, Alabama just ten years prior. While America was shocked by the images of Black men and women being beaten while peacefully protesting, we remained silent when the images of “Wild, raging mobs of white men and women...confront[ing] armies of police, while youths in their teens and younger hurled rocks, bottles, and racial epithets at buses carrying terrified black youngsters to school.”62 The racial climate at the newly integrated schools is all but ignored in our textbooks, as America has decidedly chosen to depict an account of quick progressivism. The racism and entrenched hatred that Black students experienced and are still experiencing into at predominantly white institutions has been largely ignored since the 1970s. And as quickly as images of integration plastered every American’s T.V. screen, they disappeared. Schools stopped bussing in Black children and no one seemed to notice. Black issues would only be brought back to America’s attention through the Crack Epidemic and the War on Drugs.

America’s apathy stems largely from the false narratives and distraction tactics utilized by the Reagan and Clinton administrations. Reagan, arguably one of the most racist presidents in America’s history, actively fought against the Civil Rights Bill, supported apartheid in South Africa, and used the War on Drugs to criminalize Black America. The Reagan administration understood that mobilizing many of the racist whites who still felt scorned by the Civil Rights Acts would be the key to winning the 1980 election, so his administration implemented the “Southern Strategy.” Using the Southern Strategy, Reagan would use racist code

words during his campaigns and speeches, which spawned what has been now labeled “closet racism.” This is when one is no longer outwardly racist, but rather uses specified words that allude to racial innuendos and stereotypes. Clinton, similarly to Armstrong, has long been hailed a hero by Black America, but the laws and policies the Clinton administration implemented are largely responsible for the disproportionate number of Black men involved in the criminal (in)justice system.

We no longer see Blacks as victims of centuries of disenfranchisement, but rather a group that is holding onto the past that needs to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. America gave Black people Civil (but not Equal) Rights and access to an education (but fails to acknowledge the type), and therefore equality was achieved. But if this were the case, how is it in 2016 that schools are more segregated than they were in 1950? Why are universities that are not HBCUs struggling to have Black enrollment numbers over 3-5%? The legacies of the Bureau and the missionaries’ schools are not just free public school but rather something much uglier and we have failed to notice it because it has been so subtle, which poses the question, are we the new “mis-educated Negro” that Woodson condemned for allowing the system to function?
The Navajo Code Talkers of World War II:
The Long Journey Towards Recognition
Amanda Dahl

The history of World War II has largely been framed in terms of what historian Studs Terkel called the “good war.”¹ It paints a picture of the Allies rallying to a virtuous cause in order to fight the evil that the Axis represented. One of the major problems with this representation, however, is its failure to look at the complexities of the Allied side, in this case, specifically within United States. The history of many minority groups in World War II has been neglected, and only a limited scholarship in this area has focused on telling these groups’ stories.

In the case of the Navajo, much of what has been written has focused on reclaiming their place in this history. Through examining the story of the Navajo beginning in the pre-war era and continuing into the post-war era, I hope to delve further into the racial dynamics that spanned the war and demonstrate how this affected the Navajo war experience. I argue that although racist attitudes eased during the war, when the country was unified against a common enemy, with the return of peace, the American people once again splintered into groups, leading to the resurgence of racial prejudice. For the average white American, Native Americans became a distinctly different group once again, and the Navajo, although praised during the war, returned to a lower status upon their return home. Post-war, the Navajo did not receive praise for their efforts in part due to the classified nature of their role as code talkers, and this by no means helped unseat much of the entrenched prejudice. As much as the classification could be blamed for the lack of recognition, it was clear that during the war there was public awareness of the Navajo’s involvement, nonetheless. Thus, it becomes clear that racial prejudice also played a heavy hand in the failure to recognize the Navajo’s wartime heroism. Instead, the Navajo were regarded with contempt for the problems their community faced. As a result, it was not until many years later that they received suitable recognition.

A History of Oppression

The history of Native Americans and the United States government has always been fraught with tension and mistrust. Like many other Native American tribes, the Navajo people were forcibly removed from their ancestral lands in the latter half of the 19th century. Their displacement, known as the “Long Walk,” occurred in 1864 during which the Navajo were forced into confinement in Fort Sumner. Although the Navajo were eventually allowed to return to their lands, government intervention persisted. One of the major ways in which the American government interfered with Navajo life was the implementation of boarding schools for young Native Americans. The first boarding school for Native American children was established in 1860 and by the 1880s more had opened their doors. Although their ostensible goal was to educate children, many Navajo saw the ultimate aim of these schools to be Americanizing Navajo children and erasing their culture. There was such resistance within some communities that in order to increase attendance, children were “caught, often roped like cattle, and taken away from their parents, many times never to return.”

Student testimonials further demonstrate the discriminatory nature of boarding school policies. In an interview, Samuel Tso, a Navajo code talker, spoke about his experience at a federal government school. He recounted that school officials, “wouldn’t even let me speak my own native language.” Although these polices were supposedly to encourage students to become proficient in English, enforcement was harsh and punishing. In 1931, The San Francisco Chronicle reported that one boarding school student who “could not speak English...had been punished at the Burke School and shut up in a closet for speaking Navajo, the only thing she could speak.” The students were punished for expressing any element of their culture. Americanization may have existed under the guise of education, but

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5 Bill Robinson, "War Heroes Can Talk the Talk - WWII Navajo Code Talkers Visit Lexington 1 Schools to Tell Their Stories," *The State* (Columbia, SC), February 6, 2007.
6 Duffy, “Hardship of American Indian Educational System Revealed.”
the policies demonstrated a desire to repress all aspects of Native American culture.

Even in critiques of schooling conditions, racist undertones were present. Despite advocating for better management of boarding schools, Dr. Mary Roberts Coolidge also expressed the belief that Native Americans were less intelligent than white Americans. Based on the intelligence testing of the time, Coolidge stated that “California Indians had a medium score of 85.6 as compared with 100.3 for American-born whites, and higher than most [sic] of the darker races.” She implied that this higher intelligence made reform worth the effort and claimed that the Navajo also showed “superior qualities.” Tacit in the mention of the study, however, is the idea that Native Americans are intellectually inferior to whites. Dr. Coolidge reveals the prejudice that defined race relations during this era: she accepts intellectual inferiority based on skin color and ethnicity as a fact. In the pre-war era, overt repression of Native American culture through boarding school policies existed simultaneously with subtler forms of discrimination found in the ways people discussed Native Americans.

The Development of the Code and a Shift in Attitudes

With the entrance of the United States into WORLD WARII, the government and military officials quickly realized that it would be beneficial to reassess their attitudes of Native Americans. The military needed a means of communication that the enemy would be unable to understand. Thus when Philip Johnston, a former U.S. Army engineer, proposed the idea of creating a code from the Navajo language, the government decided to experiment with the idea. There was already a precedent set in WORLD WARI for using Native American languages as a code, and after WORLD WARI, the Navajo were among the few tribes that Germany had failed to infiltrate and learn their language during the inter-war period. Johnston specifically targeted the Navajo tribe because of his “intimate knowledge of its reservation, the people, and their language,” which he

8 Ibid.
had learned by living on an Arizona Navajo reservation with a missionary family. Additionally, with 49,338 members, the Navajo were one of the most populous Native American tribes. The complexity and oral distinctiveness of the Navajo language as well as the small number of speakers outside of the tribe also contributed to Johnston’s choice. These factors made the Navajo language ideal to use as code. Consequently, in May 1942, twenty-nine Navajo Marines were recruited and brought to Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, CA where they met Philip Johnston and worked to develop the code.

Demonstrations of the code proved that it had great potential for use in the war. As General Clayton Vogel noted in a letter to the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Core, “[m]essages were transmitted and received almost verbatim.” Impressed with the success of the program, General Vogel called for the additional recruitment of two hundred Navajo who were proficient in both English and their tribal language to transmit coded messages. Some of these young men, such as Thomas H. Begay, were recruited straight from boarding schools, while others, such as Keith M. Little, saw recruiting posters encouraging them to enlist.

This recruitment effort, based on the ability to speak Navajo, contrasted with earlier policies that rejected Navajo recruits if they could not speak English. The irony of this situation only underscores how prevalent racist attitudes were quickly subsumed when the minority group became useful for the war effort. Through recruitment campaigns, over 400 Navajo were engaged as code talkers, in addition to the numerous Navajo who participated in the war in other capacities.

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13 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Quay County Sun, "WWII Navajo Code Talker Speaks at Mesalands," Quay County Sun (Tucumcari, N.M.), November 19, 2014.
Worthy of Praise: Navajo on the Frontlines and the Homefront

The government’s stance on the Navajo was not the only view that changed during the war. Both fellow soldiers and newspapers praised their dedication and achievement both on the frontlines and on the home front. On the battlefield, their comrades came to respect the fundamental role the code talkers performed and soon the code talkers were highly praised. Major Howard Connor, a 5th Marine Division Signal Officer, believed that “were it not for the Navajos, the Marines would never have taken Iwo Jima,” and he was not the only white officer to have made such a comment.20

Despite these commendations, there was still prejudice within the military. Begay recalls racist episodes where soldiers called him “chief” or asked where his feather was.21 Thus although many military personnel recognized the Navajo for their important contributions, it did not preclude the continuation of racist behavior, such as these comments.

Back in the United States, there was also recognition of the Navajo soldiers abroad. One Chippewa writer, Wa-be-no O-pee-chee, praised Native American contributions to the war in a piece for the Los Angeles Times written in 1943.22 She informed the public that there was an “entire platoon of Navajos” serving in the army and estimated that there were 30,000 enlisted Native Americans total.23 O-pee-chee’s praise speaks to the changing times, as a Native American writer was published in a major newspaper like the Los Angeles Times. The war, at least temporarily, appeared to open up more avenues to minorities if they acted in favor of the war effort and achieved victory. Another column from the Los Angeles Times recognized the Navajo who trained with Staff Sergeant Philip Johnston, praising them as “crack shots” and heralding Johnston as a brilliant leader.24 These “crack shots” were certainly the forty-two code talkers who initially created the code. Even without knowing the impact of the code, the skills of the Navajo were

21 Ibid.
23 Wa-Be-No O-Pee-Chee, "A War Bond Example for All," Los Angeles Times, September 27, 1943.
commended. There was, however, a focus on Sgt. Johnston as their leader. Although the Navajo were praised, the white man leading them received higher recognition for essentially cultivating their success. By describing their relationship in this way, the paper constructs their relationship as one comparable to a parent and children, revealing the racial prejudice still inherent during the time. The Native American was inferior to the white man, and this notion reveals the subtle presence of racism during the war.

At home, many Navajo became involved in efforts to support the war. The press again commended the Navajo for their work and many writers noted the willingness of the Navajo to purchase war bonds. In her *Los Angeles Times* piece, Wa-be-no O-pee-chee noted how Native Americans in general “have been doing more than their share in the bond campaigns and thus have become examples for all.” Other non-Native American writers also echoed her commendation. Another piece run in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1942 showcased the example of Ulti Nez, a Navajo sheepman, who used his life savings or “$1000 in $5 bills and $500 in $10 bills” for Defense Bonds. Through explicitly stating that the money was in small bills, the author emphasizes the magnitude of this donation. However, the push for donations was attributed to a white trader known as O’Farrell rather than the Navajo themselves. Thus once again a white man was given a substantial amount of credit for what a Navajo man had done. Further underscoring racist undertones is the piece’s title: “Braves Give Wampum to Help Uncle Sam Along Warpath.” The title betrays a vast ignorance of Native American culture: Wampum, although historically a currency with European traders, was used in New England. The Navajo certainly were not a New England tribe. Moreover, the title praises the Native Americans for their contributions while failing to make the distinction between different tribes. The use of the term “brave” is also a generic term used for Native Americans, further emphasizing the idea that all Native Americans groups were the same and ignoring the complexity of their cultures.

25 Wa-Be-No O-Pee-Chee, “War Bond.”
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
Other reporters recognized the large number of Navajo who entered war industries. A 1943 *Los Angeles Times* piece by Charles B. Wilson recognized 2,500 Navajo for their work on the construction of the Ordnance Depot in Fort Wingate, New Mexico, even crediting the workers with saving the government $400,000 due to their efficiency. Wilson, part Native American himself, continued his article by critiquing the claim by German broadcaster Dr. Goebbels, who asserted that the fate of the “American Indian” was sad. Wilson worked to disprove this claim by providing multiple examples of Native Americans groups who demonstrated zeal and a proclivity toward the war effort.

Overall, during the war there was generally a positive perception of the Navajo in the military and at home in the press. It was demonstrated that they were contributing heavily to the war efforts, especially in proportion to their population. This positive perception was also likely due to the strong patriotism of the period. Everyone was an American and fighting against the enemy in a unified front. At least for the Navajo, it seemed as though racial differences were less harshly persecuted. The differences were even embraced to a degree within the military, largely because of the utility of the Navajo language. Public propaganda and articles on the war also tended to conjure the idea of a strong and united America. However, racist undertones persisted in many of the ways in which the Navajo were discussed and treated.

**The Return of the Soldiers: Non-recognition and a Resurgence of Racism**

Unfortunately, this quasi-acceptance of the Navajo, and Native Americans in general, lasted only for the duration of the war. Most striking was the reception some Navajo received upon returning to the United States. George Willie Sr. recalled arriving at a port where “a lot of people and balloons waiting for the ship,” yet the Navajo were “taken off the other side of the ship on wooden planks and immediately put on buses and sent home on trains.” Despite the recognition they had received during the war, the Navajo were denied a victorious return home. Instead they were removed from the spotlight and whisked away as if they had committed some offense. When Native Americans returned to their communities,

30 Charles B. Wilson, "No War Whoops, But...," *Los Angeles Times*, June 20, 1943.
31 Ibid.
they confronted renewed discrimination. Some businesses put up signs reading “No dogs or Indians.” Explicit racism, it seemed, had returned in full force. In some ways this is comparable to the experience of returning black soldiers in the Jim Crow south. The black soldiers were expected to return to a status subordinate to that of white men and women. One black soldier returning to Mississippi was warned by his father not to return in uniform, lest he be beat by the local police. Although this was much more severe discrimination than what returning Native Americans faced, the sentiments were the same. White men wanted the returning minorities to resume their pre-war statuses, essentially reversing any progress made during the war.

It was this shift back to an extremely discriminatory climate that in large part led to the non-recognition of the Navajo post-war. The Navajo code talkers were ordered to keep their role in the war a secret, even from their families. As such, it is easy to argue that because their role was not revealed, the Navajo naturally could not receive recognition. According to code talker Keith Little, many of those who returned home were reluctant to talk about their experiences even without orders to remain silent on the subject. It was not until 1968 that the code talker program was finally declassified. And in 1969 the Navajo code talkers were officially recognized with a formal ceremony in Chicago. Despite the long gap between the war and declassification, there is no truly satisfactory justification for the lack of recognition of the Navajo in general.

During the war there were numerous articles published about the Navajos’ contributions. The public was by no means ignorant of their role. This makes it difficult to support the claim that ignorance caused the failure to acknowledge the Navajo. Additionally, there were several slips that revealed the role of the code talkers. One article published in a 1943 *Arizona Highways* magazine even

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35 Ibid.
37 Little, "Navajo Code Talker Living History."
38 Kirk, "Navajo Code Talker Visiting Abilene Talks About His Unique WWII Service."
39 Simoneaux, "Talking the Talk - Breaux Bridge Honors Navajo Code Talkers."
mentions the use of the Navajo language as a code. In the book, *Indians in the War: Burial of the Brave* (1945), the role of Native Americans in the war was recognized, the efforts described in depth and the awards soldiers received outlined. In one section called the “Navajo Code Talker,” it explicitly outlines the role of the code talkers and indicates that “[p]ermission to disclose the work of these American Indians in marine uniform has just been granted by the Marine Corps.” An article in the 1945 *New York Times* also announced the existence of the code and was entitled “Navajo Code Talk Kept Foe Guessing.” Although the *Arizona Highways* article upset the War Department because it appeared mid-war, the other two pieces, written by Sergeant Murrey Mader, a Marine Corps Combat Correspondent, were military sanctioned and published just after the war, implying that at the end of the war the military must have decided to disclose the Navajos’ role in the war and then changed its stance. In theory, some of the public may have been aware of the Navajo code talkers’ role in the war, yet even those who were not would likely have been aware of their overall positive contribution to the war. Thus it is suspicious that after the war there was a drastic decrease in the number of newspaper articles praising the Navajo war efforts.

### The Navajo: People or Problem?

Instead the articles praising the Navajo were replaced with articles that constructed Native Americans as a problem that needed solving. This sort of discrimination correlates well with the reception Native Americans received upon their return home. Although appearing before the end of the war, an article in the 1944 *New York Times* claimed that “World War II has again focused attention on one of the country’s oldest problems – what to do with the Indians” and discussed the problem of what to do with all the Native American soldiers when they returned. While revealing a darker side of mid-war coverage of the Native Americans, the piece is arguably a look ahead at what is perceived to be a future

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42 Ibid., 25.
issue and is not a commentary on the war effort. The negativity stemmed from what the *New York Times* called the “New Indian Problem.”46 This piece foreshadowed the shift back to a more discriminatory public attitude.

In the years following the war, many articles were published outlining the problems faced by Native Americans, including the Navajo. The people themselves were not explicitly constructed as a problem; however, the issues these articles highlighted – namely starvation, lack of education, and high infant mortality rates – were implied to be the responsibility of the American government.47, 48 Although it is true that the US government did have a responsibility to the Navajo in light of past promises of aid, the portrayal of the Navajo nation as helpless and in need of a white, federal savior inherently and implicitly constructs them as a burden to be dealt with.49 Although these journalists may have been well intentioned in their efforts to raise awareness on the issues, they also created an innately racist construction of the Navajo.

While the Navajo code talkers’ role in the war was not widely revealed until many years later, there was no reason to avoid recognizing the Navajo for their other war efforts. Certainly nothing justified transforming the Navajo into a problem that needed solving. Thus in large part, the return of racist attitudes contributed to the lack of recognition of the Navajo. Press attention was transferred to the problems the Navajo faced, not their triumphs. It was not until 1982 that National Navajo Code Talkers Day was established under the Reagan administration.50 In his proclamation, Ronald Reagan stated “the dedication and unswerving devotion to duty shown by the men of the Navaho [sic] Nation in serving as radio code talkers in the Marine Corps during World War II should serve as a fine example for all Americans.”51 This well-deserved praise was years delayed. In addition, it was not until 2001 that the original twenty-nine code talkers, only four of whom were still alive, received the highest honors:

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46 Ibid.
49 "Indians: The Hungry Ones."
51 Ibid.
Congressional Gold Medals. Other code talkers received the silver Congressional Medal.

**Conclusion**

Prior to World War II, there was active government oppression of Native American culture. Boarding schools were harsh and militaristic and focused on Americanizing young Native Americans. With the United States’ entry into the war, there quickly became a need for a secret means of communication, prompting Philip Johnston’s proposal to use the Navajo language for code. This quickly led to the recruitment of the Navajo, often directly from boarding schools. Although their role in the war was secret outside of the military, other soldiers came to respect the Navajo code talkers for their skill; and within the American public, the Navajo received recognition for their other contributions to the war effort at home and abroad. In light of their success, there was an overall decrease in explicit racism and repression of the Navajo culture during World War II compared to the pre-war era. Racism was by no means eliminated, however, and there were still racially charged comments directed at Navajo service members. Moreover, subtle racism manifested in the way the press covered the Navajo war effort. On the whole, however, there was an improvement, in large part due to the unifying atmosphere of the war. Everyone was an American fighting for his or her country.

Yet upon the Navajo soldiers’ return, they did not receive a hero’s welcome; instead, they were greeted with slurs and expected to re-assume their prior low-class positions from the pre-war era. This return of strong racial prejudice led to the construction of the Native American as a problem once again. The Navajo were not the only tribe who faced many difficulties at the end of the war, but they became just another problem for the government to solve. And although code talkers may not have received recognition until after 1968 with the declassification of the code, this secrecy should not have precluded recognition of the Navajo soldiers in general. Even after declassification, it was decades before the Navajo

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54 American Indian Relief Council, "History and Culture: Boarding Schools."
55 Vogel, "Enlistment of Navaho Indians."
56 Vergun, "Pentagon Exhibit Highlights American Indian Wartime Achievements."
code talkers received praise befitting their contributions. The classification of the code talkers may have initially prevented proper government and public recognition of the Navajo role in World War II, but racist attitudes toward the Navajo further prolonged this journey toward recognition. Undoubtedly representing the sentiments of many of the Navajo, at the presentation of the Congressional Gold and Silver Medals in 2001, one code talker was reported to say, “Just maybe, just maybe, I have become an American citizen.”\textsuperscript{57} It had been a long journey through an era fraught with racial tension and prejudice, but finally, the code talkers and the Navajo nation had received the recognition that they had earned long ago.

\textsuperscript{57} Little, “Navajo Code Talker Living History.”
The Neutrality of Switzerland: Deception, Gold, and the Holocaust
Kyra McComas

From 1939 to 1945, Europe and Asia saw the deaths of 52 million people and the mutilation and displacement of millions more as a result of the Second World War. Amidst the carnage however, global commerce and the flow of capital continued. Notably, a sum of at least 1.7 billion Swiss francs worth of gold was deposited by Germany into the vaults of the Swiss National Bank in Bern. Additional unknown amounts from private German deposits of looted gold were laundered, making Switzerland one of the world’s wealthiest nations after the war.1 But how did Switzerland elude the scrutiny of the international community? This essay seeks to illustrate how Switzerland’s image of neutrality has been maintained, despite its complicity during the war, because of its history and political and economic factors. I will further argue that Swiss complicity was a decisive factor in the prolonged success of the Third Reich’s murder machine, bestowing partial responsibility on Switzerland for the Holocaust and under mining the myth of Swiss “neutrality.”

A History of Neutrality and Protection

The notion of Switzerland’s neutrality is grounded in its history as a protecting power. Swiss neutrality was formally recognized in 1648 under the Peace of Westphalia and renewed at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Seven centuries of cooperation between Romansh, French, Alemannic, and Italian cultures, with four principal languages and three religions, makes Switzerland unique in European history. Such coexistence has been far from multicultural however, as there is little cross-cultural engagement, yet Switzerland’s national identity is rooted in their alliance and neutrality. In other words, they avoid conflict among themselves by eschewing global conflict. As such, at least prior to World War II, Switzerland embraced a policy of neutrality that removed it from the international arena. As André Gorz interpreted it, denial of existing conflicts indicated no international actuality. Yet if the war did nothing else to Switzerland’s global image, it certainly modified the understanding of neutrality, refocusing it on


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furthering peace and preventing evasion of responsibility via moral indifference. The latter definition has been associated with pacifism (with a reservation on self-defense) and mediation. Importantly, neither definition includes neutrality in the banking or financial sector.

Switzerland exploited the former definition of neutrality to justify its lack of confrontational involvement in World War II, by side-stepping the war and the atrocities and unofficially providing aid for one side or the other. Ironically, assistance is exactly what they provided by laundering German plunder. They effectively used the narrative of neutrality to obscure their war-time actions. Today, the second definition is used to support the claim that they simply, mediated economic exchanges, which carried on despite the war and were crucial to the rest of the world, especially the other non-belligerent countries.

As an international protecting power leading up to and during the war, Switzerland had three primary roles: repatriating captives, transferring grants-in-aid, and visiting prisoner camps (in league with the International Committee of the Red Cross, headquartered in Geneva). Switzerland had demonstrated its dedication to these functions and was thus heavily favored and trusted by the international community, evidenced by its protective representation of at least thirty-five nations on the eve of the war. Although commendable, this does not excuse Swiss assistance to Hitler or the subsequent post-war suppression complicity. The Red Cross never issued a public appeal for the Jewish Holocaust victims, claiming that protestation would “produce a stiffening of the indicted country’s attitude with regard to the Committee, even the rupture of relations with it,” jeopardizing their humanitarian abilities and linking altruism to the neutral Swiss image.

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2 Ibid.


4 Ziegler, The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead.


6 International Committee of the Red Cross, Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on Its Activities During the Second World War, September 1, 1939 – June 30, 1947, vol. 1
Faith in Swiss diplomacy to protect national interests extended to capital interests as well. Long chosen as a repository for unstable countries’ finances, Switzerland appeared as the best option for the safekeeping of Jewish funds and valuables, especially with the rise of Nazism. The Swiss National Bank encouraged such deposits by fortifying banking secrecy laws in 1934 to ensure client anonymity. Who would have suspected that these same protective protocols would be exploited to conceal nefarious transactions with the Third Reich?

**Economic Crisis and the Failure of the Gold Standard**

On a more objective level, the Swiss had a very real obligation to the global economy. With the failure of the gold standard and the post-World War I economic downturn, Switzerland’s significant role in the international market was not just a matter of maintaining the Swiss national image, but was also crucial for the recovery of the global economy and the continuance of foreign exchange. The Swiss franc showed remarkable resilience in the aftermath of the war. It became one of the first European currencies to attain its pre-war parity in 1924 and prompted Switzerland to attempt to restore the gold standard. The Swiss franc was the only currency accepted worldwide and was thus crucial to stable foreign exchange, which continued despite wartime hardships. With the Swiss franc relatively unscathed, the Swiss global economic presence was enhanced.

**Gold Laundering in the Context of War**

Switzerland’s monetary history provided latitude for the Swiss National Bank (SNB) to orchestrate its dealings with the Third Reich amidst the context of wartime economics, politics, and militancy. One defense of the World War II gold transactions between the SNB and the German Reichsbank is that the Swiss were (1948), 21, quoted in Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 34.


fearful of German invasion and attack. However, such an invasion would have been unlikely, given Germany’s limitations on means of payment for their wartime imports. The SNB was the only willing acceptor of gold in exchange for Swiss francs, which importantly, were freely exchanged across the international market.\textsuperscript{9} Thus, the German economy relied on their exchange policy with the Swiss in order to pay other countries for raw material imports that were crucial to the German war effort. A memorandum from the German Reichsbank’s Ministerial Director Clodius evidences the belief that the Swiss were their only hope. He wrote, “Switzerland represents our only means of obtaining freely disposable foreign exchange,” and confirmed this with the president of the Reichsbank, Reich Minister Funk.\textsuperscript{10} This raises the question of Switzerland’s essential role in the longevity of the Third Reich.

From 1939 to three weeks before Hitler’s suicide in April, 1945, the Swiss gold-laundering machine exchanged gold from the German Reichsbank for 1.7 billion Swiss francs. The gold was deposited in bank vaults at Bern and was laundered via purported “triangular transactions.” In this system, Germany deposited looted gold in the SNB in exchange for Swiss francs, which they subsequently used to purchase war materials from Turkey, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, and other non-allied nations. These nations’ banks then used the Swiss francs to pay for gold from Switzerland, the same gold for which the Swiss had exchanged these very Swiss francs. Moreover, these nations could claim legitimacy for their gold purchases, which were strictly through “neutral” Switzerland, as part of the normal flow of foreign trade.\textsuperscript{11} Essentially, Switzerland functioned as the middleman. But was such “mediation” de facto benign?

The SNB continues to project its image of the “neutral banker” today. It denies the implications of “triangular transaction,” emphasizing its commitment to the gold standard and its resulting guarantee to accept any gold it is offered. It also claims that Germany certainly had its own gold reserves (that were not looted) as well as legally acquired gold from Austria and Czechoslovakia, and this was the gold involved in the transactions. Interestingly, the Swiss never mandated evidence of the legality of the German gold, perhaps in an effort to maintain their neutrality

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{10} Ziegler, \textit{The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead}, 47.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
by not being certain of the moral nature of the material they transacted.\textsuperscript{12} Their function in the world market would be heavily undermined if it was discovered they knew of the illicit nature of the gold, expunging their “neutral” front. But even ignorance does not abrogate responsibility.

Chairman Ernst Weber, Alfred Hirs, and Paul Rossy constituted the executive board of the SNB throughout the war. They continually referenced “neutrality” to manipulate and aggrandize the term in their argument for justification. They also called on the Swiss bank traditions of secrecy and clientele loyalty, which were paramount to their exchanges with Germany, primarily through Emil Puhl.\textsuperscript{13}

The dismal state of the German economy was a major factor in how Puhl would negotiate with the gold barons in Bern. In a letter to Hitler on January 7, 1939, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Board of the Reichsbank, elucidated the poor state of German finances, stating, “No increase in the production of goods can be achieved by increasing the amount of paper money.”\textsuperscript{14} The German dependence on foreign wartime materials mandated the need for a banker, but Schacht’s request for increased Reichsbank control did not please Hitler, who turned to Puhl for management of German funds.\textsuperscript{15} Unlike Schacht, Puhl was not a danger to Hitler’s authority, and was a friend and business partner of Weber, Hirs, and Rossy. “He played like a virtuoso on the Swiss neutrality myth,” and astutely assuaged their consciences with their own “neutrality” ploy to justify their dealings.\textsuperscript{16}

**Pervasive Anti-Semitism**

The manipulation of historic labels was not the only justification successfully employed by the Germans: anti-Semitism was a notable and ubiquitous ideology. After the war, the American Jewish Committee asserted, “Long before Hitler the environment of much of Eastern Europe was poisoned by

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Hjalmar Schacht, “Confidential Reichsbank Matter” letter from the President of the Board of the Reichsbank to the Führer and Reich Chancellor, Berlin (January 1939), in Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, 38.
\textsuperscript{15} Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, 39.
\textsuperscript{16} Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, 42.
anti-Semitism and was receptive to the anti-Jewish teachings of Hitlerism.”\footnote{Joseph M. Proskauer, “The American Jewish Committee: Statement to The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry,” \textit{World Affairs} 109, no. 1 (1946), 19.} Switzerland was no exception. As a historic amalgam of communes and regions, Switzerland was not a traditional nation-state. Xenophobia would become a prominent feature of the Swiss Confederation. With such a prejudicial notion already enmeshed in the nation, it is no surprise that anti-Semitism caught on so easily. Due especially to the potency of Joseph Goebbels’s propaganda machine and the inspirational rhetoric espoused by Hitler, anti-Semitism was readily integrated into the \textit{zeitgeist} of countless European countries. Anti-Semitism became an official policy. A 1938 law mandating a “J” to be stamped onto the passports of German Jews and the refusal to allow Jews to enter Switzerland as refugees are two among many anti-Semitic actions undertaken by the Swiss government.\footnote{Ziegler, \textit{The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead}.}

A 1998 study of Swiss World War II camps confirmed the prevalence of Swiss anti-Semitism. In these camps, Jewish refugees were often forced to work with little to no pay under harsh and cruel conditions and were subjected to a “special Jew-tax,” which other non-Jewish refugees were not required to pay. Families were frequently torn apart as children were separated from their parents and “adopted” by Christian families who supposedly (and perhaps genuinely) wanted to help. The British Foreign Office declassified records revealing that 80 to 98 percent of the camps’ inmates were Jewish, suggesting that they were intended expressly for Jews.\footnote{John-Thor Dahlburg, “Jews Mistreated in Swiss WWII Camps, Study Says,” \textit{Los Angeles Times} (Los Angeles, CA), January 13, 1998.}

The potency of the anti-Semitism, which would infiltrate Swiss mentality and be used to legitimize actions such as looting, is evidenced in the writings of Austrian cabinetmaker Felix Landau. While on the Russian campaign, his faith in Germany and his admiration of the Wermacht and Hitler were deepened. He described how the “Ukrainians had done a pretty good job plundering. [But] they had really thought they were the masters,” until they saw the power of the German
forces. 20 His arrogance and confidence in Germany reflects broader European anti-Semitism which nurtured a sense of identity which pitted the supposedly good, the non-Jewish supporters of Hitler’s leadership and Nazism against the repulsive Jew. For Landau, sparing the Jews was unthinkable. Tellingly, he believed that the major in charge of his battalion was an imbecile because “his actions [were] a danger to the state. Take his remark that the Jews fall under the protection of the German Wehrmacht. Who could have thought such a thing possible? That’s no National Socialist.” 21 Understanding the prevailing anti-Semitic culture and indoctrination helps explain why the Swiss may have ignored the ethical implications of laundering Nazi gold.

Consequently, rampant anti-Semitism legitimized the theft of Jewish possessions such as art, gold, and capital. At a time when one could be “arrested for having an anti-German attitude,” looting Jewish people and property became a method of conveying German power and supremacy. 22 This translated at the national level, wherein acceptance of Jewish loot was not only condoned, but was encouraged, as in the case of the SNB. Greed, perhaps even more so than anti-Semitism, drove people to willingly plunder. One German police official noted “that people today give a false impression when they say that the actions against the Jews were carried out unwillingly. There was great hatred against the Jews; it was revenge, and they wanted money and gold.” 23 And much of this loot was then sent to Swiss banks for safekeeping.

International Response, or Lack Thereof

While Swiss covertness proved successful during the war, how were they able to continue avoiding responsibility once the war ended and the international community turned to judgment? The most obvious answer comes from the context of war. The overwhelming economic, political, and cultural upheaval of World War II and the extent of human loss was more than enough to overshadow the

21 Ibid., 95.
22 Ibid., 101.
23 “A Police Official from Neu-Sandez Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Cracow District/General-Gouvernment),” in The Good Old Days, 76.
relatively petty monetary crimes of the Swiss (who were notably not directly involved in the killings or atrocities of the Holocaust). Still, the Washington negotiations that were held in 1946 to hold the Swiss accountable for looted and laundered gold and dormant accounts were meant to serve due justice, but even those fell short. As Ziegler notes, “The Swiss vanquished the victors of World War II.”

The main reason for the ineffectiveness of the 1946 Washington Agreement was its lack of evidence and objectivity. The United States made the mistake of leveling preposterous claims against Switzerland, blaming them for organizing Operation Odessa and personal theft of central European banks. Plus, there was no physical list detailing all the Nazi transactions with Swiss banks. Such overt disregard for and exaggeration of actual transgressions facilitated Swiss evasion.

Swiss representative Walter Stucki capitalized on such absurdities and deliberately manipulated the course of the accords, creating compromises that favored the Swiss. In addition to the emotional nature of the negotiations was the stress of the looming Cold War and the perceived threat of communism to the Western world. This became a far higher priority for American foreign affairs than obtaining justice for the victims of the war. In the end, Switzerland agreed to pay 250 million Swiss francs as the final settlement of all claims relating to the laundering of Nazi gold. Stucki exploited the language of altruism by shrewdly labeling this as “Switzerland’s voluntary contribution to the reconstruction of Europe,” injecting the reparations with neutral undertones and reifying a positive Swiss global image. Stucki’s success in defying the victorious Allies at the Washington Agreement and avoiding responsibility for war-time atrocities lasted for nearly fifty years. It was not until the World Jewish Congress finally forced the reopening of dormant Jewish accounts, which they later documented at $1,297,240,126 attributed to 457,100 Jewish descendent claimants.

The pardoning of Swiss gold laundering was also predicated on the fact that there were dormant accounts in other European countries, the United States, and Israel. If the international community condemned the Swiss for hiding and

24 Ziegler, 193.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., 184.
benefiting from dormant accounts, they would subsequently have to recognize their own financial profiteering. In other words, plenty of other nations were guilty of similar dealings. Hence, the origins of personally beneficial funds (that functioned to augment global image and presence) became a null point of condemnation for the Swiss. Other nations, especially the United States, which dominated the Washington Agreement, had their own greedy motivations. In fact, between 1939 and 1945, the Allies exchanged substantially more gold with the SNB than did the Reichsbank. The United States sold 2.242 million francs worth of gold, and France and Great Britain sold even more at 189 million francs and 673 million francs, respectively. This was largely as a result of the growing importance of the Swiss franc in international trade, attesting to the fact that gold had become the most important form of payment by 1941. Moreover, just as they employed a neutrality argument for their dealings with Germany, the Swiss did the same in accepting blocked gold in the United States since Swiss francs had become so vital.

With money as a major motivator, the Allies wanted to benefit from their holdings as much as the Swiss, so they had to be cautious of how they accused the Swiss. Thus, the focus of the debates at the Washington Agreement was on “the symbolic issues... such as whether governments and companies are willing to acknowledge their responsibility as beneficiaries from or collaborators with the Nazi regime.” But because of the successful secrecy of SNB actions and its policy of confidentiality, most evidence for supporting an ethical case against direct Swiss dealings with the Nazis (thereby implicating themselves as accomplices in genocide) was highly censored and effectively hidden.

**Swiss Fear of a Faltering National Image**

While Switzerland may have evaded just international scrutiny, they faced a looming identity crisis. The historical narrative of neutrality had long been essential to Swiss self-perception; to avoid a plight around national identity, the Swiss could not afford to allow such a narrative to be unraveled and doubted. The

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30 Ludi, “Waging War on Wartime Memory,” 117.
Washington Agreement enabled Switzerland to transform itself from a Nazi accomplice into an esteemed member of Western democracy, largely for economic reasons. Once again, global politics played a key role, since Zurich, Basel, and Geneva were pivotal financial centers in the fight against communism. This heavily benefited the West: the United States knew it was to their advantage to appease the Swiss in the interest of the future global economy and trade. Thus, they arguably allowed themselves to be beguiled by Stucki and the other cunning Swiss representatives. This reassurance and reinstatement as a respected member of the free world may have prevented the complete shattering of Swiss national identity.

Interestingly, the Swiss have been paradoxically bound together by modern controversies regarding their wartime position, with national pride in armed neutrality dominating any moral disgust in their economic service to the Third Reich. Both sides accounted for the German sparing of Switzerland from invasion to independent Swiss activity for its own survival, essentially reinforcing the historical image of self-preservation as a defensive confederation. The Swiss laundering case reveals how fear drives history, as the Swiss were motivated by a genuine fear of losing economic prestige as well as the moral high ground they held as a soft power. Such fears contributed to the national identity struggle, which inevitably failed to fully manifest thanks to a potent, albeit falsified, narrative of national, yet purportedly neutral, heroics.

The Problematic Confines of Bifurcated Guilt and Complicity

The issue with Switzerland’s “neutrality” emerges in political labeling: they are officially equivocal regarding the war. Ludi contends that “the government endorses the reinterpretation of Swiss history of the Nazi era... [and simultaneously] rejects the legal responsibility this shift would entail.” In an effort to support the reevaluation of their history with Nazi Germany, the Swiss parliament established the Independent Commission of Experts (ICE) in 1996 to officially investigate the dormant accounts. Importantly, however, the 2002 final

31 Ziegler, The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead.
32 Ludi, “Waging War on Wartime Memory.”
33 Ibid., 135.
report did not receive much media response, indicating the waning interest in wartime history.\(^{34}\) This reveals the deeper challenge of objective analyses of genocide as it gets farther away in memory, which is exacerbated by the tendency of post-genocidal silencing. It also suggests the decrease of Swiss global presence, since Switzerland seems less financially powerful with growing unemployment and bankruptcy claims by major Swiss companies; they have shown vulnerability to international market fluctuations, becoming financially more like other European nations.

In turn, this gives Switzerland some flexibility to redefine their international image despite their past transgressions. Claims lose potency as events fade into history and historians must be cognizant of this when evaluating key historical events, especially complex ones such as the Holocaust. Relying on a binary narrative of “guilt” only hampers attempts to sift through historical complexities. It is crucial to note the genuine Swiss honesty and altruism that has existed in dialogue with the deviance. As a Swiss native, Ziegler suggests that the vast majority of Swiss people “harbor but one ambition, that of fulfilling in the world an active role characterized by humanity and solidarity with other nations.”\(^{35}\)

Internal anger also evidences the diversity of Swiss intentions, far from being one homogenized, greedy ideology. Cash, a leading Swiss financial organ, blatantly denounced the greed and lies of the SNB, printing one headline stating, “But for Switzerland’s gold turntable, the war in Europe would have ended much sooner.”\(^{36}\)

An important note here is that such decrial waited until 1996 to be heard, reinforcing the successful evasion from condemnation immediately following the war.

Aside from problematizing binary guilt labeling, this internal anger simultaneously raises concerns about the role of complicity. While such local Swiss differences do not condone the actions of the SNB as a Nazi accomplice, they blame the endurance of the Third Reich solely on Swiss aid. Fifty years after the Holocaust, the international community rallied behind these accusations, legitimized internally by the Swiss. But did this not also transform Switzerland into a scapegoat to assuage the broader international community’s guilt about the

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, 266.

\(^{36}\) Quoted in Ziegler, *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*, 7.
Holocaust? The United States certainly capitalized on this opportunity to distract from its own responsibilities; it was an opportunity to call for Swiss justice without bringing attention to American financial offenses during the war. Thus, the notion of collective guilt becomes relevant in light of dormant Jewish accounts both in the United States and Switzerland (among other countries). But there is still the problem of how complicity actually implicates nations in assuming responsibility for the Holocaust. While the Swiss may have prolonged the Holocaust and the survival of the Third Reich, challenging the narrative of neutrality, the lack of direct killing separates them from the Nazis on the spectrum of guilt. At the same time, acknowledging the spectral nature of guilt does not pardon any nation from their responsibility to humanity. The atrocities of genocide demand robust international response such that complicity or claims of “neutrality” cannot abrogate responsibility. This is a matter not of economics or politics, but one of morality, whereby our humanity implicates us should we ignore injustices against our fellow human beings.
The Right’s Revolution:  
How the Rise of the Religious Right and the Nomination of Barry Goldwater Harnessed the Changing American Political Landscape  
Ryan Polito

A year ago no one would have believed that it would be Donald Trump, a billionaire whose campaign for president in 2012 was considered laughable, would be the GOP candidate. Trump claims to represent the “silent majority” of Americans, a term coined by Richard Nixon in a speech supporting the Vietnam War, contrasting this group to the vocal anti-war protestors. Clearly, the radical ideas Trump is proposing are striking a chord with a large majority of Americans, representing a shift in U.S. politics. This sudden emergence of a new section of the GOP, one not supported by the current establishment, is difficult to explain. The rise of conservatism and neo-conservatism, which peaked with the elections of Ronald Reagan and Bush Sr. and Jr. to the presidency, exhibits patterns that are eerily reflective of the current political situation.

In the late 1950s and early 60s, a grass roots movement emerged across the nation, but especially in Southern California. The conservative movement, fueled by Evangelical migrants from the dust bowl, would champion small government, Christian moral values, and a policy of strong anti-communism and a powerful American military. The catalyzing moment for this group came with the nomination of Barry Goldwater as the GOP candidate. A polarizing figure, not supported by traditional Republicans, Goldwater owed his victory to this new class of Californian conservatives.

But why was it that this group of Evangelicals became so involved in politics, so determined to impose their moral values on the nation? The answer lies in the heart of Southern California, where the conflict between the religious right and secular liberals began. During the Great Depression, migrants from the south felt oppressed in their new home on the west coast. The roots of conservatism were planted here, but it required the work of charismatic leaders, such as Billy Graham,


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William F. Buckley Jr., and Robert Welch to spur this disenfranchised population to take an aggressive stance against communism and embrace an active role in the public sphere, forever changing the landscape of American politics. Goldwater’s polarizing politics reflected a historical trend in which a vocal minority of Americans supported an extremist candidate. Conservatives were tired of the liberal establishment and felt their government had failed to support them. This historical trend is being seen today as a modern vocal minority stands in favor of a new extremist candidate. Understanding the factors that contributed to right wing, populist extremism in the 1960s provides a better understanding of conservative extremism today.

**Southerners Come to California**

The rapid expansion of the American west in the nineteenth century led to a massive land grab, where Americans seeking new opportunities sought to stake a claim and farm the open spaces of the American frontier. However, by World War I, rapid population increase and shortsighted farming techniques had rendered many parts of Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma uninhabitable. Disaster would strike in the 1930s with the worst droughts experienced in over 40 years combined with America’s entry into the Great Depression. According to historian James Gregory, “In excess of 1,300,000 people left the Southwest between 1910 and 1930, roughly 24 percent of them resettling in California,” a total influx of approximately 312,000 migrants to California.\(^2\) Seeking new opportunities, families piled into cars by the thousands and made their way west. With them they brought new ways of living, new ways of talking, and most importantly, deeply engrained belief systems. The “Okies” as they were called, not so cleverly named after their state of origin Oklahoma, “brought many denominations westward including various Baptists, Pentecostalists, Assemblies of God, and other groups of that which John Reed has called ‘low church Evangelical religions’…”\(^3\) These new religions opposed the traditional views of the Californians already living in the area. As historian Thomas D. Norris puts it, the new immigrants were, “fervently religious in a fundamentalist, independent, and wholly southern-oriented fashion


that was alien to the more staid and hierarchical churches predominant in the
Pacific states prior to the 1930’s. Their religion supplied them with a feeling of
home in what was in many respects a foreign land.” 4 This need to find a home was
exemplified by an intense pushback against this group by the natives of California.
Like many immigrants before them, the plethora of southern immigrants were
ostracized and discriminated against. In the peak of the depression, these migrants
were viewed as a burden on society. This backlash prompted Okie communities to
further embrace their own culture, which further differentiated them from
Californian society.

Okies were branded lazy, a burden, and as a group that demanded extra
government aid that was not warranted. California farmers struck out against the
new influx of families attempting to find a new place in their society. An article
from the Los Angeles Times on March 18th 1940, defended this aggression, “The
farmers were very much in the same position as any of you city people would be if
you should wake up some morning and find ten or a dozen families camped on
your lawn or on the sidewalk in front of your home, all asking for jobs you didn’t
have or relief you couldn’t afford to give.” 5 In the context of a 30% unemployment
rate, these responses were understandable, but the consequences of being
ostracized would be severe and create tensions between older Californians and this
new group.

These tensions would manifest themselves not just economically, but would
also center on cultural and religious differences between these two groups. The
majority of migrants were Southern Baptist, which even today remains the largest
Protestant denomination in the United States. 6 Southern Baptism was a religion
steeped in moral certainties and close-knit community values. These folk were
shocked by the seeming moral laxity and lack of traditionalism seen in the
Northern Baptist churches and other established groups already present in
California. Gregory writes of southern migrants, “religious culture infused nearly
every aspect of life in the Southwest… the area participated vigorously in the
moral reform crusades of the early twentieth century, passing in many jurisdictions

4 Ibid.
5 “Nation Challenged on ‘Okies’ Problem: Four Students of California Situation Fear Thousands
More Will Join ‘Joads,’” Los Angeles Times, March 8, 1940.
not just prohibition legislation but also tough laws limiting divorce.”7 Migrants brought their certainty in these ideals with them and were disappointed in the lack of religious fervor felt by their Californian counterparts. It is in attempting to impose these ideals that the first tracks of religious political intervention are seen and the religious right was born.

Both groups contributed to the tensions. The migrants were looking for a new home, and had it not been for the hostile reactions of Californians, they likely would not have closed ranks so completely. Farmers in California were the most actively hostile towards Okies, but so too were politicians and religious leaders. Baptists arriving were welcomed with less than open arms by the Northern Baptists already in place. Norris writes, “Northern Baptist ministers had reviled George Mouser and his followers (Southern Baptists) as ‘no-good Okies and Arkies,’ shiftless drifters and migrants.8 Unable to join local churches, southerners established their own worshipping communities, termed “fellowships,” not yet established churches or affiliated with the national church.9 Once again forced out of Californian society and determined to band together, these new people began their new lives isolated from society, from work, and even from their chosen religious denomination.

Within the farming camps, migrants formed tightly knit communities in which they were able to maintain their culture and provide each other with a support system in a hostile environment. Once relocated however, this sense of community was to be found in their local churches. Dochuk gives the example of one Melvin Sahan who “saw his parents falling into debt, even with his own weekly ten dollar paycheck from Goodyear helping out. In response, the Shahan’s church organized a ‘pounding,’ a ritual that saw congregants stock the pantry of a needy and unsuspecting friend with canned goods, preserves, and smoked meat.”10 In their time of hardship, it was neither the New Deal nor the government that stepped in on their behalf. It was their own community, and a strong and undying faith, which had saved them. In this context, the seeds of belief in community values and imposing moral authority were planted. After

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7 Gregory, American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California, 192.
9 Ibid., 41.
all, had the native secularists of California not spurned them when they had asked for help as fellow Christians and fellow Americans?

The teachings of Jesus Christ had clearly been forgotten among their new neighbors. True to their faith, the marginalized Okies sought to spread their belief systems and to learn to help themselves rather than accept their newfound inferior position in life or resort to violent measures. Collective witness “door-to-door campaigns in hopes of drawing interested-but ‘spiritually lost’ neighbors” became the means of shifting the mindset of those who had pushed so hard against their relocation.¹¹ These Protestants “were among the most active in building cross--denominational alliances to counter what they perceived as illicit activities in their communities.”¹²

These new migrants, while still voting republican, came out against the progressive reformers of the early twentieth century. Progressives championed large governmental intervention and the migrants opposed it, instead focusing on the value of the community organizations in place that helped them in their new home. The massive influx of migrants had a profound impact on changing the voting demographics even before the 1930s. Historian Casey Sullivan outlines the importance of this new group in the gubernatorial election of 1926, “Richardson’s (Friend Richardson, governor from 1923-1927 was running for re-election as a Progressive Republican) best performance came from southern California, where regulars now consistently outperformed progressives in statewide and national elections.”¹³ Clearly, this new group had significant voting power in California and served as an important population to be won over by both parties.

Drought, poverty, famine, and forced migration had all taken a heavy toll on the migrants from Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. Many Californians responded as Californians had done in the past to Chinese immigrants, or as some do towards Mexican immigrants today, and blamed the State’s problems on the new migrants. Forced to form new communities, these migrants turned to God and to each other. As we will see, these hostilities

¹¹ Ibid.
continued and these frustrated and passionate southern Christians would turn towards politics and powerful religious leaders who encouraged their participation.

**The Cold War: A Response to Liberalism**

Bible-Belters in the south utilized political activism to encourage a morally upstanding society. In California, the religiously devout would attempt similar tactics, but with the start of the Cold War, these Christians turned to anti-communist leaders and crept ever closer to conservative extremism. In the spirit of compassion and the Christian values of charity and community, Baptists and Evangelicals had traditionally leaned towards the political left. Strong support of the Townsend plan from these groups in southern California, serves as a prime example of then liberal beliefs. This plan, put forth by physician Francis Townsend, would grant money to all unemployed Californians over the age of 60. This monumental piece of legislation, proposed during the height of the great depression, is considered to be one of the key precursors to Roosevelt’s New Deal.  

Those against the plan argued that it would be too costly and inhibit business. Henry Pritchett, President Emeritus of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, argued in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1936 that the plan, “proposes to have the government of the United States go into the pension business for the entire population. This would be to destroy the integrity of our political system.” Conservative opponents of this plan claimed it was communist sympathizing and would damage the already fragile economy by allocating resources away from business. Evangelicals, though never supportive of big government, were in favor of the charitable nature of the plan. In addition, as a group primarily consisting of individuals of low socio-economic standing, this plan directly benefited them. In addition, they were still willing to support legislation allied with their religious views, including the value of charity. The large group of Evangelicals in southern California waged a campaign in favor of

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the bill, and although the bill was not passed it nevertheless demonstrated the potential power of this group in Californian politics.

By 1940, western southern natives, the migrants of the dust bowl, made up 10.8% of the population of California. America’s entry into World War II finally put an end to the Depression, and southern Christians had established themselves as a close knit and permanent group in the southern part of California. Already busy changing the society around them with evangelizing missions, their potential as a unified political entity was undeniable. Democrats, now the liberal party in the United States, seemed the natural party toward which this blue-collar group would gravitate. However, in the Cold War context and with increasing liberalization of the morals of American society, southern Californian Christians were forced to decide between their religious convictions and their political ones. Ultimately, they would consolidate both within the GOP and propel religious conservatism to the forefront of American politics.

Darren Dochuk identifies the catalyzing event that initiated the shift of Evangelicals from the left to the right as the Ham and Eggs movement. This was an important event, but it was not the only defining moment, it was merely one step in the process that would really gain traction in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s. The Ham and Eggs movement was a plan originally put forward in 1937 and mirrored the Townsend Plan. According to Dochuk writes, “led by the brother tandem of Willis and Lawrence Allen and engineered by one-time End Poverty in California (EPIC) official Sherman Brainbridge, Ham and Eggs was formed in 1937 with hopes of curing economic depression by making the government fund pensioners with a weekly allowance.” This allowance was to be 31 dollars paid weekly to unemployed citizens over the age of 50. The term Ham and Eggs was coined by Bainbridge who eloquently proclaimed, “We must have our ham and eggs!”

World War II put the bill on hold as politicians were focused on defeating the spread of fascism; welfare related issues were put on hold. After the war, the Allen brothers once again tried to reintroduce their plan. After their initial failure, they were very aware that a change in political strategy was necessary. Appealing

17 Dochuk, “Christ and the CIO,” 79.
18 Ibid.
to the Evangelicals who had so staunchly supported the Townsend act seemed to be a logical conclusion. Still, the Allen brothers were themselves not the most devout men and therefore sought alliances with religious leaders in Southern California. They reached out to pastor Jonathan Perkins, who “assembled the ‘California Pastors’ Committee,’ comprised mainly of local Pentecostal and Baptist ministers but also of more prominent clerics like Trinity Methodist’s Reverend Bob Shuler… this band of preachers immediately set about encouraging those in their pews to rally behind Ham and Eggs.”19

During this campaign the Soviet Union and United States emerged as competing world superpowers in the wake of Germany’s defeat. The Cold War had begun. Fear of socialism and communism swept the nation and there was large support for “extreme red-baiters such as Senator Joe McCarthy, who applied constant pressure on the White House to live up to their rigid standards of anticommunist purity.”20 The leaders of the Ham and Eggs movement jumped on this political movement, maintaining that their new law was fundamentally anticommunist and would provide support for the hardworking people of California without redistributing the wealth. To hammer this point home, the Allens turned to Gerald L. K. Smith, a devout Christian and fierce anticommunist. Smith doubled the number of subscriptions to the Ham and Eggs newsletter.21 The fervor of the Ham and Eggs movement died quickly as William and Lawrence Allen shifted the movement in favor of liberal agendas in a shrewd political move. They traded alignment with the left in exchange for Lawrence’s ascension to the Attorney General should the left be victorious. The disappointed conservatives, who had so willingly supported the cause, still imbued with anticommunist sentiment and with even more disdain for large government, looked for new political and spiritual leaders.

Dochuk argues that the Evangelicals reluctantly went along with this new anticommunist stance, privileging their religion over their status as blue-collar workers. The decade leading up to Goldwater’s nomination in 1964 demonstrated a continued pattern of eagerness by Evangelicals to support radical anticommunist leaders and moral imperialists. In ever increasing numbers, Evangelicals took up

19 Ibid., 82.
the crusade against communism, liberalism, and traditional conservatism. Three men, William F. Buckley Jr., Richard Welch, and Billy Graham were instrumental in organizing this transition, and stand as examples of the shift in thinking among Californian conservatives.

A variety of developments had taken place in Southern California since Evangelical migrants had first begun arriving in the early 1930s. They help to explain how this group was able to take up seemingly contradicting causes: The desire for a small government that would stay out of people’s lives while imposing religious moral authority, all the while spending billions on defense.

In the era leading to the great depression, Evangelicals had been content to bow down to the moderate conservatives. Many more were willing to accept some of the New Deal policies put forth by Roosevelt and his cabinet. After all, this group was hit hardest by the free market policies of the earlier era and relied of the charity of primarily their communities, but sometimes the government to survive in the 1930’s. However, World War II led to a dramatic shift. Southern Californian was the heart of American war manufacturing. It was here that the American war machine was designed, manufactured, and propagated.22 The farmers who had so struggled to find work found themselves at the center of an economic boom. A remarkable two million new jobs were created in California, and Los Angeles had grown by half a million new residents, earning its place as the second largest manufacturing city in the nation.23 Southern Californians found a new reason to defend big businesses and, more importantly, to defend the military budget.

Throughout this process, despite their newfound political interests, these California conservatives remained devoted to their respective faiths, Pentecostalism, Southern Baptism, and other Evangelical religions continued to flourish in the region. These religions were not just maintaining their memberships, they were growing. The Southern Mission Baptist Church tripled between 1951 and 1953.24 A newly prosperous, but morally unchanged population had emerged in the Cold War and its members sought to take the advantages God had bestowed upon them to fight the spread of communism, an ideology that claimed religion to be, “the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul

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22 Dochuk, From Bible Belt to Sunbelt, location 1107.
24 Dochuk, From Bible Belt to Sunbelt, location 1176.
of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.”

Onto the public stage entered recent Yale Graduate William F. Buckley Jr. His first publication in 1951, *God and Man at Yale: The Superstition of “Academic Freedom,”* attacked any idea system that did not support individualism and Christianity. Buckley and his brother in law L. Brent Bozell quickly came out in support of Senator Joe McCarthy following his infamous trials against alleged communist sympathizers. For many, even conservatives, these trials were viewed as oppressive attacks and, at the very least, poorly managed. Buckley and Bozell managed to weave a story that McCarthy’s stance against communism rendered him a man around whom “men of good will and stern morality may close ranks.” For newly wealthy Evangelicals, McCarthy represented a moral stance against the increasingly liberal world closing in on them.

This discontent with not only the left, but also the moderate conservatives, represented by Eisenhower’s government is demonstrated in the content of *The National Review,* the magazine set up by Buckley that to this day serves as a voice of conservatism. Buckley and his readers believed that everything possible should be done to stop the spread of communism, even going so far as to suggest revolution should a communist government be democratically elected. The publication’s religious rhetoric appealed to the crusading hearts of Evangelicals. Its publisher, William Rusher, wrote, “I think we had better pull in our belts and buckle down to a long period of real impotence. Hell, the catacombs were good enough for the Christians!”

Through such militant rhetoric, Bozell and Buckley opposed anything that remotely resembled communist ideals including welfare of any kind and a large government funded through high taxes. Bozell’s account of Barry Goldwater, written under the pseudonym Barry Morris, asserts “by reducing taxes and spending we will not only return to the individual the means with which he can

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29 Ibid., 76.
assert his freedom and dignity, but also guarantee to the nation the economic strength that will always be its ultimate defense against foreign foes.” Of course, it is hard to imagine how a military strong enough to defeat communism was to be funded in the absence of significant taxes. These leaders had embarked on a slippery slope of political contrarianism and inspired the shift to a new conservatism.

Even more vocal opponents of communism also laced their sentiments with Christian rhetoric. The radical Robert Welch founded the most notable anticommmunist organization in 1958 shortly after Buckley took a public role. The John Birch Society was named for a Christian missionary turned anticommmunist who “met his death at the hands of Mao Zedong’s Red Army.” Under Welch’s leadership these new Christian soldiers sought to eradicate communism from the U.S. government and abroad.

Robert Welch was a controversial figure in the early years of American movement conservatism. Many, even those on the extreme right, felt Welch to be a reckless and far too unstable leader. Some members of his own rank and file deemed his views to be unreasonable. An article published in The National Review on February 13, 1962 reported, “months before the Liberals even heard of Mr. Welch, many of his associates and enthusiasts were urging Mr. Welch to reshape his views, and they proceeded on the assumption that in due course he would.” Of course, he did no such thing. Among the statements made by Welch cited in the article is the claim that Dwight D. Eisenhower, the hero general of World War II, was a communist, and a call for full atomic war against the Soviet Union. Conservative political analyst Steve Allen wrote in 1963, “those who think that Robert Welch is more patriotic than Dwight Eisenhower are truly in need of psychiatric advice.”

Welch’s opinions on the political extreme alienated many from his cause, but aspects of his philosophy appealed to a wide range of Evangelicals. The John Birch Society focused heavily on fighting communism, protesting the Civil

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32 Ibid., 64.
34 Steve Allen, “How to Attack a Liberal.” National Review 14, no. 8 (February 26, 1963), 149.
Rights movement, and promoting government at the local rather than national level. It is this last level that probably most appealed to the mass of Evangelicals at the time. The John Birch Society utilized rhetoric and strategies familiar to those used to going door to door to spread their faith. In a speech Welch gave on the role of schools, for example, he proclaimed, “Join your local P.T.A at the beginning of the school year, get your conservative friends to do likewise, and go to work to take it over.” The Birch Society built off established and organized local groups that, significantly, were often powered by the work of women, extending their traditional conservative roles as mothers and homemakers. Michelle Nickerson, a professor at Loyola University of Chicago who specializes in conservative studies wrote, “It was women’s moral and spiritual responsibility, as mothers, to protect their families and communities from godless Communism.”

All of the John Birch Society’s arguments focused on its opposition to “godless Communism.” Even their stance against civil rights was rooted in a belief that liberal agendas were advancing communism. A pamphlet printed by the organization in 1965 titled *What’s Wrong with Civil Rights* details their opposition. They even go so far as to suggest that the movement was “deliberately and almost wholly created by the Communists.” Their arguments are obscure and extreme to the point of absurdity. Their main argument is based on the idea that because Blacks in the United States have it better than Blacks in other countries, and even better than white people in certain countries, they have no claim to demand more rights and in doing so they instill disunity and insurrection at home. They even go so far as to advocate the merits of imperialism and to advocate for its return. The John Birch Society was a brash, vocal, and polarizing group. Still, the John Birch Society and organizations like it would ensure the nomination of Barry Goldwater.

Although these groups represented the beginning of the extreme right and began to fuel that fire, they still represented only a loud minority. It took more moderate leaders appealing specifically to Christian rather than anticommunist

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36 Michelle Nickerson, “‘The Power of a Morally Indignant Woman’ Republican Women and the Making of California Conservatism,” *Journal of the West* 42, no. 3 (Summer 2003), 35–43.
37 *What’s Wrong with Civil Rights?* (Belmont, Mass.: American Opinion, 1965).
extremism to turn the tide in favor of Goldwater. Billy Graham served as the moderate yet passionate religious leader to trumpet this cause. In a religious movement that would sweep the nation, Graham’s annual “Crusades” prompted a massive conversion to Evangelical Christianity of conservative values. 38 The grassroots religion had found itself a national organization to rally behind and the effectiveness of this administration would be demonstrated in the ‘50s and early ‘60s.

Billy Graham was born in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1918. His father was a Methodist and his mother a Presbyterian.39 In his autobiography, Graham credits his first spiritual connection with Evangelicalism to a visiting preacher by the name of Dr. Ham. Although Graham was only 16, he recorded that Ham’s “words, and his way with words, grabbed my mind, gripped my heart.”40 Graham was inspired to use words as Ham had and his charisma and classic good looks fueled a religious fervor. According to one article written in 1969, when Graham was 50 and past the vigor of youth, “The tall, athletic body is still lean and hard, the blue eyes still flash the fire of righteous indignation.”41 His followers believed in the divinity of his message and his status as a man touched by God. A biography written by Stanley High in 1956 quotes the editor of The Church of Scotland magazine who in referencing Graham stated, “the spirit of God was speaking through him.”42

With this kind of rhetoric and devotion it is no wonder that Graham was able to attract millions of followers to his take on Evangelicalism under the banner of his organization, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). Graham was noted for his massive rallies and Evangelical activism.43 These rallies were huge even by modern standards, newspaper clippings from the late

40 Ibid., 27.
42 High, Billy Graham, 30.
43 Ibid., 45.
‘50s and early ‘60s frequently reference rallies in excess of 50,000 attendees. Graham was converting people from all walks of life, but he especially appealed to those in the West, like Southern California, and in the southern states populated by Baptists, Methodist, Pentecostalists, and Evangelicals.

In addition to meetings with political leaders from around the world, Graham met with every president from Truman to Obama. There were those who promoted his entry into the political game. One follower was quoted as saying, “He is so eloquent and so handsome. Isn’t it a shame that he isn’t in politics?”

Once Graham began to promote his political agenda it tended to align with the new conservatives, although he did not agree with the extremism of organizations such as the John Birch Society and supported progressive movements such as Civil Rights. Nevertheless, Graham and his followers would take a vocal anticommunist stance. The Los Angeles Times quoted him in 1962 as saying, “A dedicated Christian can defeat a Communist in a debate… and I don’t fear the Russian military power.” This article outlines the two main points of Graham’s anticommunism. First, it should be solved through peaceful and political negotiations rather than through aggressive military action. Secondly, communism is not the epitome of evil, but simply the root of deep world problems.

Graham was not radical or new, but served as a charismatic and clever leader who was able to unite those who wished to spread the word of God and live their lives according to a conservative Christian morality. Graham and others like him had started a religious movement and these leaders were able to channel the religious passion they generated into the political realm.

**Barry Goldwater: The Beginning of the End**

On June 2, 1964 Barry Goldwater shocked the nation by beating New York Senator Nelson Rockefeller, the champion of traditional conservatism, Governor James A. Rhodes of Ohio, Governor Harold Scranton of Pennsylvania, and UN

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45 High, Billy Graham, 19.
46 Perlstein, Before the Storm, 125.
47 Shaw, “Subtler Billy Graham Still Crackles Thunder.”
Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, along with four other less notable candidates, in the Californian Republican primary. Goldwater managed to win a hard fought nomination, taking 38.3% of the total votes in the California primary. The Senator from Arizona came nowhere close to defeating Lyndon B. Johnson in the presidential vote that November, but the strength of the support for Goldwater marked a significant turning point in the Republican party. Its leaders were now very aware that in order to secure the presidency for their party, they would need to appeal to these new movement conservatives bolstered by millions of Evangelical Americans.

It was a fortunate combination of events and rules that allowed for a Goldwater victory and California played a central role. The explosion of California’s population following World War II, in response to the rapid expansion of the defense industry, meant that by 1964 California surpassed New York as the most populous state in the Union. In addition, the rules of the Republican California primaries outlined a winner take all contest so that whoever secured the highest percentage of votes would secure all 86 of its delegates. California ensured Goldwater’s nomination and shut down any effort at nominating a different candidate.

Prior to the primary in California, Rockefeller was the clear frontrunner in California and Goldwater’s lead overall was tenuous. Following the Florida primary on May 24th Goldwater had established himself as the front-runner with 304 total delegates. Second was Scranton with 70, Rhodes came in third with 58, Lodge had 44, and Rockefeller pulled in at 39. Despite Goldwater’s commanding lead, a remarkable 224 votes remained uncommitted. Any candidate able to secure the California delegation would be able to appeal to the mainstream conservatives and potentially steal the nomination away from Goldwater. However, polls had repeatedly placed Goldwater behind Nelson Rockefeller. Much like the pact formed between John Kasich and Ted Cruz to stop Trump in 2016, the remaining conservatives united behind Rockefeller in a “stop Goldwater” pact. This ploy united the traditional conservatives and seemed to be working in their favor. On May 29th, just days prior to the primary, the Louis

49 Perlstein, Before the Storm, 362.
50 Kalb, Guide to U.S. Elections, 149.
51 Goldberg, Barry Goldwater, 192.
Harris Poll attributed 40% of the votes to Goldwater and 49% to Rockefeller.\textsuperscript{52}

Elections are always heated, but this one was particularly so. The unified front against Goldwater’s politics by traditional conservatives marks a fascinating development. There was a clear disdain for Goldwater and his supporters, so much so that according to an article published in \textit{The National Review} in October of 1964, “three men drew a parallel between Goldwater and Hitler. Specifically, George Meany, head of the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations: the largest federation of unions in the US), Martin Luther King, head of the nonviolent Negro Movement, and Emanuel Celler.”\textsuperscript{53} Today, Trump has similarly been compared to the leader of Nazi Germany by many sources. Moderate conservatives and liberals were fiercely opposed to Goldwater’s campaign, which championed the small government ideas and anticommunist stance of the movement conservatives. \textit{The Washington Post} commented in June of 1964 that, “a victory for Goldwater would be a victory for the John Birch Society.”\textsuperscript{54} This claim was not far from the truth as it was the committed work of Buckley’s and Welch’s followers that had promoted unprecedented showings at the polls, and they had supported Goldwater throughout.

Graham would serve as the exception to this group, as he supported Lyndon B. Johnson. He admitted to a close relationship with Kennedy and, by extension, his Vice President. In addition, Graham favored the Civil Rights Movement that Goldwater openly opposed. However, those who followed Graham had no problem applying his political and religious beliefs in support of Goldwater, including his own daughter Anne.\textsuperscript{55} To these Evangelicals, it made sense to follow the new conservatives represented by Goldwater over the moderates who had done little to combat the Soviet Union and represented the interests of big business and government rather than their local communities.

These groups worked hard to ensure high voter turnout, which would be seen clearly in Southern California. Northern California was firmly in the grasp of Rockefeller as business owners supported the mogul. Goldwater countered

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 193.
\textsuperscript{55} Graham, \textit{Just as I Am}, 407.
Rockefeller “with a grassroots army of activists recruited through Young Republicans, Young Americans, and the John Birch Society.”

These groups were not just willing to campaign door to door, but also organized their communities on voting day by “tending children, making telephone calls, and carpooling every Goldwaterite to the polls,” strategies similar to the community safety nets that Dust Bowl Migrants utilized 30 years earlier. Goldwater supporters were still evangelizing, but instead of evangelizing the word of God, they evangelized New Conservatism.

Goldwater’s supporters were just as devoted to their candidate as they were to their faith. On Election Day, “10,000 workers would make at least two checks of each voter to ensure that he or she went to the polls. Rockefeller had 2,000 precinct walkers.” The Republicans in power may have been in favor of the establishment, but the minority supporting Goldwater was passionate, committed, and willing to take to the polls. To counter this and gain the support of old and new swaths of conservatives, Rockefeller and his allies would, as The National Review put it, “continually raise the ‘extremist’ issue, charging that the California GOP is falling into the clutches of the Birchers, and that the Goldwater ranks are riddled with radical rightists.” Indeed, his ranks were riddled with radical rightists, the same radical rightists who had won him the nomination. In defense of his campaign Goldwater famously proclaimed in his nomination acceptance speech, “Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice, moderation in pursuit of justice is no virtue.” It was clear that Goldwater had no intention of modifying the stances that had made him the Republican nominee.

The rest of the nation did not share the same opinion as Goldwater and his followers. In November, Johnson beat Goldwater in a landslide victory, grabbing 486 electoral votes compared to Goldwater’s 58. Despite the continued efforts of his dedicated supporters, moderate conservatives and democrats could not tolerate Goldwater’s radical beliefs. Johnson adeptly played the cards laid out

56 Goldberg, Barry Goldwater, 190.
57 Ibid.
58 Perlstein, Before the Storm, 353.
61 Kalb, Guide to U.S. Elections, 158.
before him, claiming himself to also be a conservative in favor of aggressive foreign policy, but not as extreme as the war trumpeting Goldwater. Of course there were other factors at work, such as the failure of the Goldwater campaign to mobilize the grassroots forces that had helped them win previously. The nation was not yet ready for this New Conservatism. Scotty Reston wrote in *The New York Times*, “Barry Goldwater not only lost the presidential election yesterday but the conservative cause as well… He has wrecked his party for a long time to come and is not even likely to control the wreckage.” Such a prediction, however, was not to be realized. The next half of the century would see domination by the Republican Party featuring neoconservative leaders who echoed the ideas of Goldwater and his followers.

**Conclusion: Politics Today**

While Goldwater lost the election, he and those who followed him capitalized on the fact that many conservatives were not happy with the current establishment. With the rise of the New Left and a more extreme liberalism from Universities in the late 1960s, conservatives realized that they would need to unite in order to win elections. The John Birch Society was for the most part condemned, as it was deemed too radical even by its own members. Other organizations remained, and *The National Review* would continue to be an important voice about party politics. Patrick Buchanan’s *The Greatest Comeback*, which is about Nixon’s election to the presidency, asserts that, “If *The National Review* (NR) started attacking Nixon for trashing Buckley and those who admired him, ‘the Buckleyites,’ Nixon could not unite the Right behind him.”

The Evangelical form of Christianity had made its way into the mainstream of conservative politics. Richard Nixon supported some of these ideas and the vocal minority shifted to the silent majority as conservatism shifted. The ultimate triumph would be the election of Ronald Reagan. His moral crusade against drugs, support for the Economic Recovery Act of 1981 (the largest tax cut in U.S history), aggressive Cold War policies, and open religious devotion were just

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63 Perlstein, *Before the Storm*, 506.
64 Ibid., 513.
what the New Conservatives desired. Movement conservatism, and by extension neo-conservatism, rose from the ground up as a small vocal group took a stand when they felt misrepresented.

There are many indicators that a similar kind of movement is establishing itself in American politics and especially within the Republican Party. Despite the opposition of neo-conservatives, now the traditionalists of our time, it is the much more extreme voice of Donald Trump that has triumphed in the primaries. Like the Evangelicals of California’s past, the white working class has come to the polls in unprecedented numbers to pull off an extremist upset victory. The similarities to Goldwater are numerous. Both are labeled extremists and even compared to Hitler, both candidates promote radical and discriminatory policies such as enforcing segregation or deporting Muslims, and they took the nomination on the wings of voters rather than republican representatives. The beginning of a new form of conservatism is taking shape, and regardless of whether Trump wins the presidency or not, history indicates that the results will undoubtedly shape future American politics.

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