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“A Young Girl’s Blood”: Women and Empowering Violence in the Algerian Revolution

Brandon Schultz

“The Old Algeria is dead,” Frantz Fanon declared in 1959, “all the innocent blood that has flowed onto the national soil has produced a new humanity and no one must fail to recognize this fact.”¹ On 1 November 1954, members of Algeria’s National Liberation Front (FLN) began to fight for their nation’s independence from its colonial overlord, France. In the ensuing Algerian Revolution, the FLN—primarily composed of native Algerians rather than the European colonists who lived in the region—worked to secure both Algeria’s national independence and the people’s personal freedom, in the process toppling a system of invasive French colonialism that had existed since 1830. One of the most striking features of this revolution was the brutality of the violence wielded by both sides of the conflict: the French employed the advanced tools of its modern state to implement a savage and far-reaching policy of torture and terrorism, and the FLN pursued a guerilla strategy that targeted all members of the colonial system, including civilians.

Given this context, Fanon’s 1959 commentary in *A Dying Colonialism*, his analysis of the transformative nature of the Algerian Revolution, thus captured how colonized peoples employed decolonial violence to assert their formerly suppressed humanity. In particular, Algerian women embodied this humanizing phenomenon, for they participated in the FLN’s active resistance to a substantial degree. Building on the Fanonian concept of redemptive and empowering decolonial violence, this essay explores the way violence—weaponized both by and against

¹ Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1959), 27–28.

colonized women—expanded Algerian women’s access to new, transformative spheres of power and influence during the Algerian Revolution.

Because the FLN employed violence in the name of a just end, the group’s actions drew significant scrutiny and criticism from those who argued that moral causes ought to triumph without resorting to bloodshed. In his writings, Fanon attacked this idea and the undue burden it placed on colonized people, specifically criticizing the notion that, “in a war of liberation, the colonized people must win, but they must do so cleanly, without ‘barbarity’...even while its adversary ventures, with a clear conscience, into the unlimited exploration of new means of terror.”² Beyond merely asserting the right for colonized people to meet their oppressors with equal force, Fanon explained the unique need for colonized people to use violence in seeking freedom: “the arrival of the colonist signified the death of indigenous society...For the colonized, life can only materialize from the rotting cadaver of the colonist.” Therefore, in fighting for true independence from the annihilating colonial situation, the colonized person’s violence “is invested with positive, formative features because it constitutes their only work.”³

In 1956, the Algerian musician Slimane Azem wrote a popular song which revealed that the Algerian people had recognized the truth to Fanon’s approach to decolonial violence. “Locust, you sicken me,” Azem sang, “a heartache you give to me / With your larvae you infest the grain that should be mine / But the hour of the locust is now ending, my destiny is back in my hands.”⁴ Comparing the French to invasive locusts, Azem depicted

² Ibid., 24.

³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 50.

⁴ Slimane Azem, “Locust, Leave My Country (Berber Song): 1955” (originally “Criquets, quittez mon pays!” from Mehenna Mahfoufi, ed., *Chants kabyles de la guerre d’indépendance. Algérie 1954–1962* (Paris: Segquier, 2002), 180–81), in *Voices of Decolonization: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Todd Shepard (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2015), 104.

the colonizing oppressors as a diseased force with the power only to deprive the speaker of autonomy and, through infection, spread death. By ending the song with a reference to the hands, our most fundamental tool for violence, Azem acknowledged that the colonized people of Algeria would use their hands, in the form of the FLN, to drive out the “locust” of France and reclaim their right to health and independence. The FLN committed to this philosophy in a proclamation on 1 November 1954, promising “in conformity with revolutionary principles...the continuation of the fight by any means until our goal is realized.”⁵ Indeed, for the Algerian people—and especially for active members of the FLN, including the numerous women in the group—violence represented the most effective and morally justified approach to freeing Algeria from its colonial situation.

In addition to serving in the FLN, Algerian women were a subject of interest for colonial French authorities both before and during the Revolution. According to Fanon, Algerian women took on “a primordial importance” for colonial authorities, who during their occupation developed the following political doctrine: “If we want to destroy the structure of Algerian society, its capacity for resistance, we must first of all conquer the women; we must go and find them behind the veil where they hide themselves and in the houses where the men keep them out of sight.”⁶ Because Algerian women wore veils—public symbols of the colonized people’s Muslim culture—the French colonists targeted these women in order to disrupt pre-colonial societal norms and consequently oppress the Algerian populace. By forcibly removing the veils from these women, the French colonists asserted their supremacy over the Algerian men who supported this tradition while additionally depriving Algerian women of their autonomy. Due to

⁵ National Liberation Front, “Proclamation: November 1, 1954” (originally from Henri Alleg, ed., *La guerre d’Algérie* (Paris: Editions Temps Actuels, 1981), 3: 507–11), in *Voices of Decolonization: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Todd Shepard (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2015), 99.

⁶ Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, 37–38.

the symbolic power of this policy of de veiling, the French colonists made the regular abuse of Algerian women a foundational element of their colonial rule.

Moreover, during the Revolution, as Jaime Wadowiec notes, “the French military elite in Algeria framed women’s *évolution* to Western standards as proof of an unfulfilled component of the *mission civilisatrice* and as competition to male nationalists’ public assertions that women’s emancipation would emerge as a by-product of Algerian liberation.”⁷ In addition to using unveiled Algerian women as objects to demonstrate colonial control, French colonists also used the practice of de veiling to justify their continued rule and to slander the promised futures for women in a liberated Algeria. And because the French treated Algerian women as pivotal sites of colonial control, when these women interacted with violence during the Revolution, their violence took on a symbolic significance for the totality and morality of Algeria’s decolonization.

It is worth noting that the French colonists’ interpretation of colonized women—and in particular, veiled Muslim women—as passive signifiers of Algerian culture reflected an extreme ignorance of the dramatic changes in Algerian society that resulted from the imposition of colonial rule in 1830. According to Marnia Lazreg, pre-colonial Algeria boasted a diverse array of roles for women. For instance, one of the most potent pre-colonial symbols of womanhood was El Kahina, “a Berber queen from the Djaraoua tribe of the Aurès Mountains, who unsuccessfully fought advancing Arab soldiers in the seventh century.” As Lazreg notes, “El Kahina’s character and its various transformations in historical accounts may be read as a trope for the feminine condition” in Algeria.⁸ El Kahina provided a template for women-centered

⁷ Jaime Wadowiec, “Muslim Algerian Women and the Rights of Man: Islam and Gendered Citizenship in French Algeria at the End of Empire,” *French Historical Studies* 36, no. 4 (2014): 649–50.

⁸ Marnia Lazreg, “Women in Precolonial Algeria,” in *The Eloquence of Silence: Algerian Women in Question* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 21.

Algerian leadership that was inconceivable to the French colonial imagination. Similarly, Lazreg argues that "some young women" in pre-colonial Algeria "asserted their independence by eloping with a group of young men," returning "back home with the ones they chose as husbands," offering a portrait of a liberated form of Algerian women's sexuality rendered invisible by French-colonial narratives surrounding the cloistered nature of veiled Muslim women.⁹

But how did the popular image of the Algerian woman transform from the relatively liberated El Kahina into the seemingly passive and veiled woman targeted by the French? One explanation for this change was the suffocating effects of the colonial situation for Algerian men and the collapse of their societal power. Writing in the paper *Al manar* in the year before the Revolution, Fadila Ahmend argued "we, the women of Algeria, have two jailers: colonialism...and the apathetic men who hang on to customs and traditions inherited not from Islam but their ignorant fathers. The second...is worse than the first."¹⁰ Despite her de-emphasis of colonialism's role in shaping Algerian women's circumstances by the mid-twentieth century, Ahmend's comment was noteworthy for the way she specified that Algerian men—not the cultural practices of Islam—bore responsibility for subordinating the colonized women. Indeed, according to Lazreg, "a mantle of invisibility descended over Algerian women in the nineteenth century, spun not only by the ideological and contradictory colonial policies but also by natives' responses and reactions to them."¹¹ Expanding on Ahmend's frustration with the "apathetic" colonized men who imposed strict control over Algerian women, Lazreg exposes how the original sin of French colonialism deprived Algerian men of their societal power and thus prompted them to exercise what power remained over what they could control: Algerian women.

⁹ Ibid., 33.

¹⁰ Wadowiec, "Muslim Algerian Women and the Rights of Man," 654.

¹¹ Lazreg, "Women in Precolonial Algeria," 33.

This devolution of power along the gendered and racialized colonial hierarchy contributed to what Fanon described as the phenomena “in the Algerian family” in which “the girl is always one notch behind the boy...The girl has no opportunity, all things considered, to develop her personality or to take any initiative.”¹² Thus, Algerian women’s supposed passivity, which the French viewed as an inherent weakness of the native culture, was ultimately a direct consequence of the French colonial authorities depriving Algerian men of their own power. And this crucial transformation over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries explained the uniquely oppressed status of Algerian women, as well as the humanizing significance of their eventual use of violence, before and during the Revolution.

The oppression wrought by both the colonial Frenchmen and the colonized Algerian men also heightened the controversy surrounding Algerian women’s veils as these women began to wield force alongside their Algerian brothers and against their French occupiers. On the subject of French authorities’ practice of deveiling Algerian women, Fanon detected “in the European the crystallization of an aggressiveness, the strain of a kind of violence before the Algerian woman. Deveiling this woman is revealing her beauty; it is baring her secret, breaking her resistance, making her available for adventure. Hiding the face is also disguising a secret; it is also creating a world of mystery, of the hidden.”¹³ Through deveiling, Fanon argued, French colonists grappled with the contradictions of their colonial rule by confronting the contradictions inherent in their sexual objectification of the women they deveiled and their undeniable sexualization of the women who remained veiled. As a result, for Algerian women, the veil—regardless of if worn or not—became a symbol of colonial power and oppression. This also transformed the veil into a tool, or weapon, for women in the fight for Algeria’s independence.

¹² Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, 105.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 43.

Psychoanalyzing the confessions and dreams of unveiled women, Fanon found that, for Algerian women, “the veil covers the body and disciplines it, tempers it...The veil protects, reassures, isolates...Without the veil she has an impression of her body being cut up into bits, put adrift; the limbs seem to lengthen indefinitely.”¹⁴ Though colonized Algerian men undoubtedly contributed to the use of veiling as a method of controlling women, Fanon’s analysis suggested that Algerian women—or at least those who had access to psychological treatment—generally interpreted the veil as a source of security and comfort. In fact, without the veil, these women expressed feelings resembling those of a victim of violence. Accordingly, this understanding of the veil prompted many Algerian women to reclaim the space created by its absence through revolutionary, and often violent, actions. As Fanon elaborated, without the veil, the Algerian woman “has to invent new dimensions for her body, new means of muscular control,” creating a situation in which “the Algerian woman who walks stark naked into the European city relearns her body, re-established in a totally revolutionary fashion. The new dialectic of the body and of the world is primary in the case of one revolutionary woman.”¹⁵ Because French colonists committed violence, both symbolic and physical, in de veiling Algerian women, these colonized figures thus transformed the new negative space into a source of unique power as they turned to violence to restore the autonomy that the French colonists had taken from them.

These myriad colonial pressures—in particular the role of colonial violence against women through de veiling—culminated in colonized Algerian women’s embrace of violence during the Revolution. As Lazreg relates, “there were veiled women in urban centers who participated in the movement as weapons carriers and liaison agents. At times, a woman would team up with a man in carrying assignments, using her veil as a hiding device to get rid of

¹⁴ Ibid., 59.

¹⁵ Ibid.

a gun. Other women removed their veils in order to carry out assignments.”¹⁶ With or without the veil, women’s active participation in the FLN’s revolutionary violence became a striking feature of Algeria’s War of Independence. Describing these fighters, Fanon wrote:

Carrying revolvers, grenades, hundreds of false identity cards or bombs, the unveiled Algerian woman moves like a fish in the Western waters. The soldiers, the French patrols, smile to her as she passes, compliments on her looks are heard here and there, but no one suspects that her suitcases contain the automatic pistol which will presently mow down four or five members of one of the patrols.¹⁷

Indeed, Algerian women proved to be a resourceful force for the FLN due to their ability to move past French checkpoints—either due to French authorities’ sexist assumption that they posed no threat to the Europeans or because the French police wanted to gain these women’s approval, and perhaps interest, by extending kindness and deference to them as they smuggled bombs and other weapons into urban centers. Due to the lack of scrutiny applied to their gender, Algerian women became invaluable assets for the liberation movement.

The actual number of women actively involved in the decolonization effort remains unknown. According to registrations with the Ministry of War Veterans, at least 10,949 women fought against French colonial rule in Algeria; however, this estimate significantly undercounts the true number.¹⁸ Regardless, these guerilla fighters were predominantly educated women born in the 1930s. Some joined out of commitment to liberation, others enlisted because of family connections, and some were even recruited for their “European features” and their associated ability

¹⁶ Lazreg, “Nationalism, Decolonization, and Gender,” 114.

¹⁷ Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, 58.

¹⁸ Lazreg, “Nationalism, Decolonization, and Gender,” 112.

to evade police scrutiny.¹⁹ Explaining why such a noteworthy number of Algerian women joined the decolonization effort, freedom fighter Zohra Drif appealed to the universality of the liberation movement and the way its messaging connected to Algerian national identity, declaring "it is all Algerian people's business, women, men, and children."²⁰

One of the most direct consequences of Algerian women's involvement in militant FLN activity was that the women who turned to violence gained access to previously unavailable spheres of power in Algerian society. "At the individual level, violence is a cleansing force," Fanon asserted in 1961, specifying "it rids the colonized of their inferiority complex, of their passive and despairing attitude. It emboldens them and restores their self-confidence."²¹ If the use of violence enabled the colonized man to assert the humanity quashed by the colonial situation, then violence had the additional effect of enabling the colonized woman to reclaim her humanity from both the colonial oppressor and the colonized man who lashed out at her due to his sudden loss of societal influence. Women's use of violence thus undermined the dehumanizing project of colonialism, and this revolutionary relationship became particularly apparent during the Revolution.

In her 2017 memoir, Drif reflected on her role in killing French colonists: "perhaps the reader of today expects me to regret having placed bombs in public places frequented by European civilians. I do not. To do so would be to obscure the central problem of settler colonialism by trying to pass off the European civilians of the day for (at best) mere tourists visiting Algeria or (at worst) the 'natural inheritors of our land in place of its legitimate children.'²² Roughly 55 years after the conclusion of the conflict in Algeria, Drif's blunt and unapologetic commentary testified to the

¹⁹ Ibid., 113–14.

²⁰ Ibid., 113.

²¹ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 51.

²² Zohra Drif, *Inside the Battle of Algiers: Memoir of a Woman Freedom Fighter*, trans. Andrew Farrand (Charlottesville, VA: Just World Books, 2017), 105–06.

confidence she clearly possessed in both the righteousness of her cause and the violence she committed in working to realize her vision for a liberated Algeria. Moreover, Drif's intense identification with Algeria—evident in the way she pointedly condemned the insidious colonial Europeans who presented themselves as either innocent visitors or divinely sanctioned overlords—demonstrated the extent to which Drif's use of violence enabled her to transcend her previously limiting identity as a colonized Algerian woman, mirroring her goal of liberating her nation from colonial control. Therefore, through wielding violence in the name of liberation, freedom-fighting women like Drif managed to ascend to the top of the colonial power hierarchy, casting out colonial forces and asserting a humanity equal to that of the colonized men they fought alongside. In the Algerian case, the use of decolonizing violence—at least for a time during the Revolution—enabled colonized women to access more societal power and influence.

Beyond the scope of the individual, women's use of violence also suggested a new national identity for Algeria in which women, by virtue of their brave revolutionary efforts, could enjoy more significant roles. Addressing the effect of decolonizing violence on the community, Fanon argued “when it is achieved during a war of liberation the mobilization of the masses introduces the notion of common cause, national destiny, and collective history into every consciousness...The violence of the colonized, we have said, unifies the people.”²³ For Fanon, violence, when employed by the oppressed or the colonized, acts as a bonding force, bringing together those seeking liberation and justice in the form of a new, postcolonial community. Because the FLN made decolonizing violence one of its main strategies for pursuing liberation, Algerian women who employed violence were consequently able to share in the foundational activities of the soon-to-be free Algeria.

²³ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 51.

In her account of a meeting with top members of the FLN—including FLN leader Yacef Saâdi—Drif recalled “from that family emerged an atmosphere of complete solidarity and unbreakable fraternity, filling the whole room and beyond and penetrating...these people were life itself and all its promises. And it was because they embodied life itself that they fought and waged war to earn it: to free the country, whatever the price.”²⁴ In this instance, Fanon’s theory of the empowering nature of decolonizing violence helps to explain Drif’s genuinely warm portrait of the FLN operations despite the fact that the ostensible purpose of the meeting was to plan and organize guerilla strikes. Violence united the colonized Algerian man and woman, and through this shared experience emerged the unique identity of the ensuing, postcolonial Algeria. Since violence was the primary method of decolonization, women’s active use of violence against colonial powers signified Algerian women’s embrace of a new level of power on more equal footing with the Algerian men also engaged in the same tumultuous conflict. While this radical gender dynamic did not continue in postcolonial Algeria, the use of decolonizing violence during the Revolution enabled Algerian women for a time to access new spheres of power through asserting both their own humanity and that of their nation in the same way as their colonized Algerian brothers.

That said, the use of force was not the only way violence led to an expansion of Algerian women’s influence during the Revolution. France’s brutal torture practices, especially when weaponized against women, also played a significant role in enhancing Algerian women’s influence. At first, however, French torture and terror was described predominantly in masculine terms, rendering the women who were victims of imperial torture invisible. For example, in the introduction to *La Question*—Henri Alleg’s controversial exposé of French torture methods during the Algerian Revolution—Jean-Paul Sartre made men the sole object

²⁴ Drif, *Inside the Battle of Algiers*, 102.

of the violence. “We fascinate ourselves with the whirlpool of inhumanity,” Sartre wrote, “but it only needs a man, hard and stubborn, obstinately doing his duty to his fellow man, to save us from vertigo. The ‘Question’ is not inhuman; it is simply an ignoble and vicious crime, committed by men against man and that another man can and must rebuke.”²⁵ According to Sartre, not only were the French paratroopers’ torture tactics employed just against men, they required other men to defeat and end them. While certainly evocative, this phrasing nonetheless obscured the violence against women perpetrated by French forces as they tortured Algerian women who fought for their nation’s freedom.

The relative invisibility of the Algerian women victimized by French torture made the case of Djamila Boupacha all the more attention-grabbing. Here the violence perpetrated against Algerian women also served to enhance their power in Algerian, and even French, society. Boupacha was a young member of the FLN who, on 10 February 1960, found herself arrested by French authorities for allegedly planting a bomb in a restaurant in Algiers six months earlier. During her arrest, French authorities tortured Boupacha and compelled her against her will to sign a confession. Only with the aid of her attorney Gisèle Halimi and the writer Simone de Beauvoir did Boupacha evade execution.²⁶ Beauvoir’s writing, in particular, helped thrust Boupacha’s case to the forefront of French public consciousness, exposing France’s torture network in Algeria and dealing a crippling blow to efforts to maintain control over the colony.²⁷

In her preface to *Djamila Boupacha*, Beauvoir declared “a twenty-three-year-old Algerian woman and liaison for the FLN was imprisoned, raped with a bottle by French military men, and

²⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, “Introduction: ‘A Victory,’” in *The Question*, by Henri Alleg (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1958), 19–20.

²⁶ Karen L. Shelby, “Introduction,” in *Simone de Beauvoir: Political Writings*, ed. Margaret A. Simons and Marybeth Timmermann (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 261.

²⁷ Shelby, “Introduction,” 263.

it's considered ordinary."²⁸ The simplicity of the line, and its matter-of-fact presentation of the hideous facts of Boupacha's case, belied the claim to the "ordinary," for Beauvoir forced French readers to confront the truth of the torture conducted in their name in Algeria. According to Judith Surkis, at stake in this text was a fundamental moral question: "could we or should we still be moved by 'a young girl's blood' ...in the midst of a genocide ([de Beauvoir's] word) and mass internments, which Beauvoir likened to 'extermination camps.'"²⁹ By focusing on Boupacha, Beauvoir boiled down the moral grayness of the Algerian conflict into an easily understandable moral issue, of which the French clearly stood on the wrong and inhumane side. The combined efforts of Boupacha, Halimi, and Beauvoir thus transformed the violence perpetrated against Boupacha into a powerful force through which Boupacha could reclaim her own life along with the other colonized Algerian women who would soon enjoy freedom as a result of the French public finally recognizing the inherent immorality of French occupation. Boupacha's case highlighted how Algerian women could achieve humanizing power even when suffering from violence.

Whether they were using violence or suffering from it, Algerian women's frequent encounters with brutality during the Revolution undeniably led to lasting change in regard to women's roles in Algerian society. During the Revolution, according to Fanon, colonized Algerians "came to realize that if they wished to bring a new world to birth they would have to create a new Algerian society from top to bottom."³⁰ As a result, the societal upheavals brought about by the FLN and other revolutionary forces created a situation in which the old traditions and customs

²⁸ Simone de Beauvoir, "Preface to *Djamila Boupacha*," in *Simone de Beauvoir: Political Writings*, ed. Margaret A. Simons and Marybeth Timmermann (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 272.

²⁹ Judith Surkis, "Ethics and Violence: Simone de Beauvoir, Djamila Boupacha, and the Algerian War," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 28, no. 2 (2010): 45.

³⁰ Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, 101.

of Algerian society could be remade, and women—through their active and violent engagement in the revolutionary process—ensured that they would occupy a seat of influence in the rebirth of their nation.

Through violence, Fanon contended, “the woman ceased to be a complement for a man. *She literally forged a new place for herself by her sheer strength,*”³¹ and this strength was evident both when Algerian women planted bombs in urban centers and when they withstood horrific rape by bottle while being tortured by colonial French authorities. Indeed, the violence used by and against Algerian women rendered the previously absolute judgment of the father “altogether absurd in the light of the immense tragedy being experienced by the people,”³² prompting the father to “not be displeased to hear his daughter speaking out” and refrain from “remind[ing] her that a woman should be silent.”³³ The Revolution disrupted the Algerian family, but women’s close confrontations with brutality and violence enabled them to return to the family unit with an enhanced status that afforded them more freedom and power than before. Algerian women who turned to violence, then, served not only to liberate the nation, but to liberate themselves as well.

Ultimately, the noteworthy violence employed both by and against colonized Algerian women during the Algerian Revolution allowed these women to gain access to new spheres of power and influence in society. Although many Algerian women enjoyed relatively liberated lives before the French colonized Algeria in 1830, the imposition of the colonial system gave rise to twin oppressors: the French colonists and the colonized Algerian men who sought to control women as a reaction to their diminishing societal power. Because these groups infused Algerian women with a significance deeply connected to the colonial project, when the Revolution began in 1954 and colonized women joined the

³¹ Ibid., 109.

³² Ibid., 108.

³³ Ibid., 109.

FLN in large numbers, the violence perpetrated by these Algerian women took on a symbolic meaning for the liberation movement. In particular, colonized women's weaponization of the veil—or its lack thereof—represented a dismantling of both the colonial project and the cultural order of colonized Algerian men.

In accordance with the Fanonian concept of empowering decolonizing violence, women's subsequent use of violence in fighting for Algeria's independence also enabled women to assert their own dignity and humanity among their Algerian brothers, as well as within the context of the entire liberation movement. As a result, women who participated in the FLN reversed their calcified second-class status and asserted their value to the emerging independent Algerian society. Even women who were victims of violence and torture, like Djamilia Boupacha, demonstrated the empowering effects of their interaction with violence by using their stories to expose the moral rot at the center of France's claim to Algeria. Ultimately, violence became a tool for Algerian women to assert the independence of their nation and themselves, creating a permanent change in the consciousness of the newly freed Algeria by the end of the Revolution in 1962.

Author Bio:

Brandon Schultz graduated in 2021 after studying History and English. His primary research interests include film history, left-wing history, and nineteenth-century revolutionary historiography. Brandon's essay received the McPhee Prize, which is awarded to the History major or minor with the most outstanding paper in a senior seminar. In 2021, he also wrote one of the two theses honored with the Mehl Prize, a prize given to the writer of the best senior thesis. Brandon is forever grateful to the students and faculty of the History Department for their support and encouragement