Volume XIX of *Historical Perspectives* is the seventeenth journal published by Santa Clara University's Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. This edition continues the tradition of providing its readers with articles that reflect the caliber of student scholarship at Santa Clara.
Volume XIX of *Historical Perspectives* is the seventeenth journal published by Santa Clara University's Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. This edition continues the tradition of providing its readers with articles that reflect the caliber of student scholarship at Santa Clara.
“One Only Hope Sustains All These Unhappy Pilgrims” – Migrant Adaptations of the Myth of California in the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl
Kayla Unger.................................................155

Silenzio: The Effects of World War II Policy on Italian-American Identity
Luca Signore................................................193

Recipes for an Instant American–Just Add a Side of Victory Cabbage and Jello-O: The Americanization of the United States through Cookbooks
Colleen Zellitti..............................................226

Mobilizing African-Americans against the “Peddlers of Bigotry”: The “NO ON PROPOSITION 14” Campaign in Los Angeles
Tracy Sullivan.............................................261

Introduction

Every year, Santa Clara University’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter publishes the Historical Perspectives undergraduate research journal. This journal represents the highest standard of student achievement within the history department during the most recent academic year. We were fortunate this year to once again have received an impressive selection of original research and would like to thank all of the students who submitted their work for review. It is our honor to present this year’s volume of Historical Perspectives.

The nine papers featured represent both a high quality of student research and writing, as well as the department’s focus on chronological and geographical diversity. We begin this year’s Historical Perspectives with scholarship in chronological order on the Latin West, followed by specific works about Europe, Asia and the Middle East and conclude with papers focusing on United States history. Lilian Oberdorfer’s research focuses on the development of the punitive imprisonment system, especially as it was influenced by religious practice. Michaela Ahlstrom writes about the experience of people of color in the French Empire, particularly in today’s Haiti, and how the experiences were memorialized in
"One Only Hope Sustains All These Unhappy Pilgrims" – Migrant Adaptations of the Myth of California in the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl
Kayla Unger..................................................... 155

Silenzio: The Effects of World War II Policy on Italian-American Identity
Luca Signore.......................................................... 193

Recipes for an Instant American–Just Add a Side of Victory Cabbage and Jello-O: The Americanization of the United States through Cookbooks
Colleen Zellitti.............................................. 226

Mobilizing African-Americans against the “Peddlers of Bigotry”: The “NO ON PROPOSITION 14” Campaign in Los Angeles
Tracy Sullivan......................................................... 261

Introduction

Every year, Santa Clara University’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter publishes the Historical Perspectives undergraduate research journal. This journal represents the highest standard of student achievement within the history department during the most recent academic year. We were fortunate this year to once again have received an impressive selection of original research and would like to thank all of the students who submitted their work for review. It is our honor to present this year’s volume of Historical Perspectives.

The nine papers featured represent both a high quality of student research and writing, as well as the department’s focus on chronological and geographical diversity. We begin this year’s Historical Perspectives with scholarship in chronological order on the Latin West, followed by specific works about Europe, Asia and the Middle East and conclude with papers focusing on United States history. Lilian Oberdorfer’s research focuses on the development of the punitive imprisonment system, especially as it was influenced by religious practice. Michaela Ahlstrom writes about the experience of people of color in the French Empire, particularly in today’s Haiti, and how the experiences were memorialized in
post-revolutionary literature. Kori Lennon examines the social implications of the British Royal Commission Report on Venereal Disease. Shelby Wright’s paper addresses the Modern Girl phenomenon in early twentieth century Japan. Will Zupan’s work focuses on the historical basis for Zionist policy of ethnic cleansing in Palestine with emphasis on the process of using various measures since 1948 and up to the present time. Moving into U.S. history, Kayla Unger’s research focuses on the mythical perception of California and the disillusionment of migrant workers upon arrival during the gold rush. “Silenzio” by Luca Signore moves into the experience of Italian-Americans during WWII and their post-war trauma. Colleen Zellitti writes about the use of cookbooks to promote the American ideals of the 1950s. Finally, Tracy Sullivan tackles the nuances of California’s Proposition 14 with regard to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

Acknowledgments

We congratulate all of the students who have put the time and effort into such excellent scholarship. We would also like to acknowledge the support of Father Paul Mariani, SJ, Professor David Skinner and office manager Judy Gillette who have played integral roles in the final product of the Historical Perspectives journal. On behalf of the History Department we would like to thank all faculty, staff and students who have contributed to the department this year. We are honored to be able to represent the department through our service on the editorial board and we sincerely hope you enjoy this year’s edition of Historical Perspectives.

Michaela Ahlstrom
Kathryn Karasek
Student Editors

The History Department expresses its gratitude to John and Lulu McPhee, whose generous gift provided the financial support for the publication of this journal.
post-revolutionary literature. Kori Lennon examines the social implications of the British Royal Commission Report on Venereal Disease. Shelby Wright’s paper addresses the Modern Girl phenomenon in early twentieth century Japan. Will Zupan’s work focuses on the historical basis for Zionist policy of ethnic cleansing in Palestine with emphasis on the process of using various measures since 1948 and up to the present time. Moving into U.S. history, Kayla Unger’s research focuses on the mythical perception of California and the disillusionment of migrant workers upon arrival during the gold rush. “Silenzio” by Luca Signore moves into the experience of Italian-Americans during WWII and their post-war trauma. Colleen Zellitti writes about the use of cookbooks to promote the American ideals of the 1950s. Finally, Tracy Sullivan tackles the nuances of California’s Proposition 14 with regard to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

Acknowledgments

We congratulate all of the students who have put the time and effort into such excellent scholarship. We would also like to acknowledge the support of Father Paul Mariani, SJ, Professor David Skinner and office manager Judy Gillette who have played integral roles in the final product of the Historical Perspectives journal. On behalf of the History Department we would like to thank all faculty, staff and students who have contributed to the department this year. We are honored to be able to represent the department through our service on the editorial board and we sincerely hope you enjoy this year’s edition of Historical Perspectives.

Michaela Ahlstrom
Kathryn Karasek
Student Editors

The History Department expresses its gratitude to John and Lulu McPhee, whose generous gift provided the financial support for the publication of this journal.
The Economy of Salvation: The Origins of Punitive Imprisonment in the Latin West

Lily Oberdorfer

Introduction

Whether it is the maximum-security penitentiary that permeates the fibers of contemporary culture or the literary imagery of prisons that have housed persons as diverse as Socrates and John of the Cross, the prison is commonly perceived as synonymous with punitive justice. Various historians have studied the rise of the penitentiary system in Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most scholars, however, examine the philosophies of punishment and the decline of public executions rather than the origins of the prison and specifically how imprisonment began to be conceived punitively. Although the prison is traced back to early Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, punishment and imprisonment have not always gone hand-in-hand. Before the late thirteenth century, imprisonment was rarely used as a means of punishment; instead, it was either employed as a monastic space for spiritual growth or as a transitional space used to temporarily detain criminals.

---

1 See Bentham, An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation; Foucault, Discipline and Punishment; Rusche and Kircheimer, Punishment and Social Structure; Spierenburg, The Spectacle of Suffering; Garland, Punishment and Modern Society.

To fully understand the origins of punitive imprisonment, one must begin with the eremitic and anchoritic traditions that established confinement as the locus of religious life in their pursuit of asceticism and the purification of the soul. These traditions solidified the use of confinement for spiritual revelation by the fifth century, when cenobitic monasticism began to pervade the Latin West. A response to the isolation associated with the eremitic and anchoritic life, cenobitism was an early form of monastic living that continued to seek seclusion from the exterior world while also placing a new emphasis on community life within the monastery. During the twelfth century, the development of larger and more organized monastic orders, such as the Benedictines and the Cistercians, resulted in the need for a new ecclesiastical disciplinary procedure. By 1200, the emergence of both a new spirituality that centered its attention on suffering and penance as well as a rise in heterodoxy culminated in three fundamental developments that set the precedent for the juridical implementation of punitive imprisonment: the emergence of the monastic prison, the inquisitorial procedure, and the birth of Purgatory. During the thirteenth century, the prison cell had become a mandatory component of the monastery and the inquisitorial procedure had emerged, shifting both church and civil criminal court procedures. Concomitant with the rise of the monastic prison and the inquisitorial procedure was the conceptual development of Purgatory as a literal space of transition. An intermediary between heaven and hell, the concept of Purgatory intimately linked ecclesiastical and civil penology. By the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the concept and practice of
The Economy of Salvation: The Origins of Punitive Imprisonment in the Latin West

Lily Oberdorfer

Introduction

Whether it is the maximum-security penitentiary that permeates the fibers of contemporary culture or the literary imagery of prisons that have housed persons as diverse as Socrates and John of the Cross, the prison is commonly perceived as synonymous with punitive justice. Various historians have studied the rise of the penitentiary system in Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most scholars, however, examine the philosophies of punishment and the decline of public executions rather than the origins of the prison and specifically how imprisonment began to be conceived punitively.\(^1\) Although the prison is traced back to early Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, punishment and imprisonment have not always gone hand-in-hand. Before the late thirteenth century, imprisonment was rarely used as a means of punishment; instead, it was either employed as a monastic space for spiritual growth or as a transitional space used to temporarily detain criminals.


To fully understand the origins of punitive imprisonment, one must begin with the eremitic and anchoritic traditions that established confinement as the locus of religious life in their pursuit of asceticism and the purification of the soul. These traditions solidified the use of confinement for spiritual revelation by the fifth century, when cenobitic monasticism began to pervade the Latin West. A response to the isolation associated with the eremitic and anchoritic life, cenobitism was an early form of monastic living that continued to seek seclusion from the exterior world while also placing a new emphasis on community life within the monastery. During the twelfth century, the development of larger and more organized monastic orders, such as the Benedictines and the Cistercians, resulted in the need for a new ecclesiastical disciplinary procedure. By 1200, the emergence of both a new spirituality that centered its attention on suffering and penance as well as a rise in heterodoxy culminated in three fundamental developments that set the precedent for the juridical implementation of punitive imprisonment: the emergence of the monastic prison, the inquisitorial procedure, and the birth of Purgatory. During the thirteenth century, the prison cell had become a mandatory component of the monastery and the inquisitorial procedure had emerged, shifting both church and civil criminal court procedures. Concomitant with the rise of the monastic prison and the inquisitorial procedure was the conceptual development of Purgatory as a literal space of transition. An intermediary between heaven and hell, the concept of Purgatory intimately linked ecclesiastical and civil penology. By the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the concept and practice of
imprisonment as a form of punishment had expanded beyond Church law with the establishment of the municipal prison throughout Italy. Although the penitentiary system may be a modern construct, the ultimate inception of imprisonment as a form of punishment is situated within the Middle Ages, when it emerged within the confines of western monasticism and subsequently began to extend beyond ecclesiastical sanction to the penology of civil society.

**Confinement in the Religious Imagination**

The notion of confinement is an important aspect of the religious imagination of the Latin West. Early Christendom employed various metaphors of imprisonment that influenced the construction of punishment in the medieval world. These metaphors can be observed as setting the foundation in which the idea of imprisonment as a punitive apparatus emerged and matured. Preceding the cenobitic lifestyle and the formation of early monasticism that was developing by the fifth and sixth centuries throughout Europe, the eremitic tradition solidified the idea of confinement as a penitential experience. Associated with the 'Desert Theology,' eremeticism emphasized a solitary lifestyle in which one would live in individual isolation as a means for seeking spiritual correction and expiation. Although eremitism and anchoritism shared certain characteristics, anchoritism differed in that it entailed the specific practice of religious solitude in which an individual would be locked away within structures known as “anchorite cells, anchorages, or ankerholds.” By the sixth century, the spiritual tradition of cenobitism emerged, which focused on community life rather than a life of individual seclusion. The cenobitic life therefore became associated with the development of monasticism, specifically its expansion and the establishment of monastic orders throughout the twelfth century.

Both the eremitic and cenobitic traditions fostered the link between confinement and religious mysticism. As a result, confinement began to be employed as a metaphor for spiritual revelation and salvation. Megan Cassidy-Welch speaks of the ‘medieval spatial mentalité,’ which refers to a “conception of the relationship between confinement in all its forms (imagined or actual, forced or voluntary, bodily or spiritual) and the promise of eternal liberation through participation in the Christian devotional economy.” This ‘spatial mentalité’ refers to a common monastic tradition that viewed the outside world, essentially anywhere other than the hermitage or monastery, as a form of prison. Even the physical body of an individual would often be referred to as the prison of the soul. Both the hermit cell and the monastic quarters were therefore perceived as sanctuaries that protected one’s body from the vices of the exterior world while also providing a structured space within which one’s soul could be...

---


4 Ibid., 18.


imprisonment as a form of punishment had expanded beyond Church law with the establishment of the municipal prison throughout Italy. Although the penitentiary system may be a modern construct, the ultimate inception of imprisonment as a form of punishment is situated within the Middle Ages, when it emerged within the confines of western monasticism and subsequently began to extend beyond ecclesiastical sanction to the penology of civil society.

**Confinement in the Religious Imagination**

The notion of confinement is an important aspect of the religious imagination of the Latin West. Early Christendom employed various metaphors of imprisonment that influenced the construction of punishment in the medieval world. These metaphors can be observed as setting the foundation in which the idea of imprisonment as a punitive apparatus emerged and matured.  

2 Preceding the cenobitic lifestyle and the formation of early monasticism that was developing by the fifth and sixth centuries throughout Europe, the eremitic tradition solidified the idea of confinement as a penitential experience. Associated with the ‘Desert Theology,’ eremeticism emphasized a solitary lifestyle in which one would live in individual isolation as a means for seeking spiritual correction and expiation.  

3 Although eremitism and anchoritism shared certain characteristics, anchoritism differed in that it entailed the specific practice of religious solitude in which an individual would be locked away within structures known as “anchorite cells, anchorages, or ankerholds.”  

4 By the sixth century, the spiritual tradition of cenobitism emerged, which focused on community life rather than a life of individual seclusion. The cenobitic life therefore became associated with the development of monasticism, specifically its expansion and the establishment of monastic orders throughout the twelfth century.  

5 Both the eremitic and cenobitic traditions fostered the link between confinement and religious mysticism. As a result, confinement began to be employed as a metaphor for spiritual revelation and salvation. Megan Cassidy-Welch speaks of the ‘medieval spatial mentalité,’ which refers to a “conception of the relationship between confinement in all its forms (imagined or actual, forced or voluntary, bodily or spiritual) and the promise of eternal liberation through participation in the Christian devotional economy.”  

6 This ‘spatial mentalité’ refers to a common monastic tradition that viewed the outside world, essentially anywhere other than the hermitage or monastery, as a form of prison. Even the physical body of an individual would often be referred to as the prison of the soul. Both the hermit cell and the monastic quarters were therefore perceived as sanctuaries that protected one’s body from the vices of the exterior world while also providing a structured space within which one’s soul could be

---


4 Ibid., 18.


united to God.\textsuperscript{7}

As early as the second century, theological literature has referenced confinement as a fundamental element of asceticism. Tertullian states, “the prison serves the Christian as the desert [served] the prophet...even if the body is confined, even if the flesh is detained everything is open to the spirit.”\textsuperscript{8} Confinement from the world therefore was not considered a deprivation of liberty or necessarily painful; instead, “enclosure, inclusion, separation and the careful circumscribing of real and tangible boundaries worked with – not in opposition to – the liberation of the spirit and broader forms of freedoms.”\textsuperscript{9} Confinement, specifically monastic confinement, was understood as not only an essential instrument for penance and reconciliation, but also as a space for special revelation and a road to transcendence.\textsuperscript{10} Furthermore, during the Middle Ages the “liberation of contemplation” was believed to be accessible only to “those who understood that withdrawal from the world and participation in the coenobitic life could enable the subjective quest for union with God.”\textsuperscript{11} Thus, the metaphor of imprisonment placed medieval monastic life, and therefore forms of confinement, as a key component of the consecrated life.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{11} Cassidy-Welch, “Incarceration and Liberation,” 25.
\end{flushleft}

\textbf{Punishment in Western Monasticism}

Confinement was not employed as a method of punishment in early monasteries. Instead, acts of penance, voluntary or involuntary, were the prescribed disciplinary practice of early Western monasticism.\textsuperscript{12} However, the Christian emphasis on penance and confession are fundamental to the establishment and practice of punitive confinement in the monastery. The statute, initially issued by the rule of St. Basil, requiring monks to frequently practice confession played a pivotal role in the solidification of penitential confinement as it stressed that monks must confess in solitude, removed from their fellow brethren.\textsuperscript{13} Although public penance was the established method for confession up to the seventh century, it was not available to a cleric, as he “could not receive this form of discipline since he had already been ordained by a laying of hands.”\textsuperscript{14} Clergymen, therefore, were commonly confined within monasteries to partake in confession and to receive corrective discipline. Although forms of punitive confinement can be traced back to the monastery as early as the fourth century, confinement as punishment did not become a common disciplinary practice until the thirteenth century when it spread rapidly throughout England, Italy, France, and Spain.\textsuperscript{15}

As cenobitic monasticism burgeoned in the twelfth century, confinement and the monastery developed an

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} Andrew Skotnicki, \textit{Criminal Justice and the Catholic Church}, (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2008), 82.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 85.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 97-98.
\end{flushleft}
united to God.  

As early as the second century, theological literature has referenced confinement as a fundamental element of asceticism. Tertullian states, “the prison serves the Christian as the desert [served] the prophet...even if the body is confined, even if the flesh is detained everything is open to the spirit.” Confinement from the world therefore was not considered a deprivation of liberty or necessarily painful; instead, “enclosure, inclusion, separation and the careful circumscribing of real and tangible boundaries worked with – not in opposition to – the liberation of the spirit and broader forms of freedoms.” Confinement, specifically monastic confinement, was understood as not only an essential instrument for penance and reconciliation, but also as a space for special revelation and a road to transcendence. Furthermore, during the Middle Ages the “liberation of contemplation” was believed to be accessible only to “those who understood that withdrawal from the world and participation in the coenobitic life could enable the subjective quest for union with God.” Thus, the metaphor of imprisonment placed medieval monastic life, and therefore forms of confinement, as a key component of the consecrated life.

---

9 Cassidy-Welch, Religious Imagination, 10.
10 Ibid., 124.
13 Andrew Skotnicki, Criminal Justice and the Catholic Church, (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2008), 82.
14 Ibid., 85.
15 Ibid., 97-98.
intricate and nuanced relationship. Although confinement was a style of life fundamental to the cloister, it also evolved into an ecclesiastical disciplinary practice as monastic orders formed and expanded throughout Europe. As an early disciplinary practice, individual isolation was used to correct erring clergymen and monks, as exclusion from monastic routine was viewed as one of the harshest chastisements. This practice was also employed in hopes of fostering penance and reconciliation both with one’s fellow brethren and with God. Consequently, both the metaphor of imprisonment and the “evolving structure of personal amendment found in early Christian experience” established the link between confinement and spiritual reform, thereby playing a pivotal role in the cultivation and eventual spread of punitive incarceration.

Ecclesiastical concepts of discipline and punishment played an essential role in the development of punitive language that not only permeated the penal system of the medieval period from the fourth century on, but also comprises a large majority of the legal terminology used in today’s Western judiciary system. Whether it was such terms as *carcer* (‘pertaining to prison’), *murus* (‘wall’ or ‘encellment’), or *ergastulum* (‘jail of the cell’), religious precepts employed numerous words that are a vital constituent of punitive language. Words such as these were used in moral and legal precepts to solidify key principles within monastic and, more broadly, ecclesiastical sanctions, proclaiming the proper corrective procedures for transgressions and immoral behavior of monks and clergy. Thus, early monastic language set the precedent for carceral language.

With the rise of cenobitic monasticism, the need for a more intricate disciplinary system arose in an effort to combat erring monks and clergy. Although canon law did not become well organized until the twelfth century, the formation of ecclesiastical law had an intimate relationship with monasticism and its disciplinary tactics. Andrew Skotnicki asserts “the most influential historical development that was to institute the prison as the basic disciplinary apparatus in the church and, by extension, in Western jurisprudence, was the institution of canon law.” One of the first papal letters that conveyed this was a fourth-century letter from Pope Siricius sent to Himerius, bishop of Tarragona. Addressing, among many issues, the transgressions and punishment of monks, this letter is considered an important contribution to canon law and one of the earliest documents to discuss confinement as a form of punishment for erring brethren. The letter specifically considers sexual impropriety, proclaiming that those who err ought to be confined or locked away perpetually as their punishment. Pope Siricius employs the term *ergastulum*, which scholars interpret as ‘jail of the cell’ and is therefore referred to as one of the earliest references to

---

17 Skotnicki, *Criminal Justice*, 74.
intricate and nuanced relationship. Although confinements was a style of life fundamental to the cloister, it also evolved into an ecclesiastical disciplinary practice as monastic orders formed and expanded throughout Europe. As an early disciplinary practice, individual isolation was used to correct erring clergymen and monks, as exclusion from monastic routine was viewed as one of the harshest chastisements. This practice was also employed in hopes of fostering penance and reconciliation both with one’s fellow brethren and with God. Consequently, both the metaphor of imprisonment and the “evolving structure of personal amendment found in early Christian experience” established the link between confinement and spiritual reform, thereby playing a pivotal role in the cultivation and eventual spread of punitive incarceration.

Ecclesiastical concepts of discipline and punishment played an essential role in the development of punitive language that not only permeated the penal system of the medieval period from the fourth century on, but also comprises a large majority of the legal terminology used in today’s Western judiciary system. Whether it was such terms as carcer (‘pertaining to prison’), murus (‘wall’ or ‘encellment’), or ergastulum (‘jail of the cell’), religious precepts employed numerous words that are a vital constituent of punitive language. Words such as these were used in moral and legal precepts to solidify key principles within

monastic and, more broadly, ecclesiastical sanctions, proclaiming the proper corrective procedures for transgressions and immoral behavior of monks and clergy. Thus, early monastic language set the precedent for carceral language.

With the rise of cenobitic monasticism, the need for a more intricate disciplinary system arose in an effort to combat erring monks and clergymen. Although canon law did not become well organized until the twelfth century, the formation of ecclesiastical law had an intimate relationship with monasticism and its disciplinary tactics. Andrew Skotnicki asserts “the most influential historical development that was to institute the prison as the basic disciplinary apparatus in the church and, by extension, in Western jurisprudence, was the institution of canon law.” One of the first papal letters that conveyed this was a fourth-century letter from Pope Siricius sent to Himerius, bishop of Tarragona. Addressing, among many issues, the transgressions and punishment of monks, this letter is considered an important contribution to canon law and one of the earliest documents to discuss confinement as a form of punishment for erring brethren. The letter specifically considers sexual impropriety, proclaiming that those who err ought to be confined or locked away perpetually as their punishment. Pope Siricius employs the term ergastulum, which scholars interpret as ‘jail of the cell’ and is therefore referred to as one of the earliest references to

---

17 Skotnicki, Criminal Justice, 74.
19 Skotnicki, Criminal Justice, 88.
confinement as a punitive instrument. Furthermore, this letter became the first official decretal of canon law and was incorporated into Gratian’s *Decretum* (also known as the *Concordance of Discordant Canons*), a compilation of canon law regarded as the fulcrum of ecclesiastical penology by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 marked an important shift in ecclesiastical penology. In particular, ‘the great council’ of the thirteenth century culminated in the official denouncement of ecclesiastical punishment involving blood sanctions. The prohibition of bloodshed restricted the type of punishments that could be executed and acted as one of the major precedents for the emergence of punitive imprisonment within ecclesiastical jurisdiction. By the thirteenth century, civil penology was proliferating in both power and severity and church officials were expected to discipline erring clergy and monks in equal measure to the laity. Because ecclesiastical punishment rejected any form of discipline that caused the shedding of blood, acts of punishing or coercive penance took on a new role within the confines of Church law, specifically monasticism. Initially monastic confinement began as a voluntary practice, but evolved into a punitive procedure through its perceived outcome of contrition and the reform of the soul.

Dating from the sixth to the fourteenth centuries, *detrusio* (‘a casting away’) was a procedure by which “ecclesiastical and secular lords could cloister non-monks.” *Detrusio* can be traced to the emergence of confinement as a form of punishment within the monastery as well as its extension to civil society. Edward Peters reinforces this idea by noting that the

---

25 Ibid., 21.
27 Johnston, *Forms of Constraint*, 17.
confinement as a punitive instrument.\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore, this letter became the first official decretal of canon law and was incorporated into Gratian’s Decretum (also known as the Concordance of Discordant Canons), a compilation of canon law regarded as the fulcrum of ecclesiastical penology by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{22}

The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 marked an important shift in ecclesiastical penology. In particular, ‘the great council’ of the thirteenth century culminated in the official denouncement of ecclesiastical punishment involving blood sanctions. The prohibition of bloodshed restricted the type of punishments that could be executed and acted as one of the major precedents for the emergence of punitive imprisonment within ecclesiastical jurisdiction. By the thirteenth century, civil penology was proliferating in both power and severity and church officials were expected to discipline erring clergy and monks in equal measure to the laity. Because ecclesiastical punishment rejected any form of discipline that caused the shedding of blood, acts of punishing or coercive penance took on a new role within the confines of Church law, specifically monasticism.\textsuperscript{23} Initially monastic confinement began as a voluntary practice, but evolved into a punitive procedure through its perceived outcome of contrition and the reform of the soul.\textsuperscript{24} Although monasteries have seemingly employed confinement as a disciplin-
concept of *detrusio in monasterium* (‘confinement in a monastery’) could entail “either living as a monk under normal monastic discipline or being held in a monastic prison.”29 The later often referred to heretics, laity, or clerical offenders who had not taken monastic vows, but were confined within the monastery to expiate their sins. Furthermore, Peters states that monasteries were the first organizations to use “confinement for specific periods and occasionally for life for the purpose of moral correction.”30 Paradoxically, monasteries were required to contain prisons and yet civil authority did not start to employ punitive imprisonment before 1250. Guy Geltner contends that the shift during the thirteenth century by which the use of imprisonment in a civil context spread rapidly is often explained as a “delayed adoption of the established ecclesiastical practice, and occasionally as a triumph of a Christian ‘penology’.”31 The ecclesiastical use of imprisonment as a form of punishment for erring monks, clergymen, and occasionally the laity was a pivotal development in western penology as it not only created the link between confinement and punishment, but also between prison and social reform.32 Similar to the practice of penance or confession, *detrusio* offered “sinners a genuine opportunity for spiritual relocation from the abyss of damnation to the threshold of salvation.”33 This illustrates that punitive confinement is both a byproduct of medieval western Christendom and that the ecclesiastical notions of penance and absolution are at the core of medieval penology.

**Ecclesiastical Law**

Canon law permeated all facets of medieval society and canonists believed that they had both the need and duty to monitor the moral behavior of the community as well as recognize and control perceived patterns of deviance and moral transgression.34 Unlike the modern perception that church authority and civil society ought to be heterogeneous, in the Middle Ages there was no solid boundary between ecclesiastical and civil society. There was no division between what the contemporary world perceives as the religious and the secular realms. In fact, the term ‘religion’ was not a common component of medieval language until its appearance in the thirteenth century when it started to be employed as a means for referring to those bound by either monastic or nonmonastic orders.35 There was “no part of Christendom that stood outside of the holistic, sacralized order.”36 Punishment therefore was intrinsically tied to piety, repentance, and atonement.37 As Edward Peters states, “although salvation was a matter of individual virtue, there was no salvation outside the Church, and there was no legitimate

---

30 Ibid., 27.
31 Geltner, “*Detrusio*,” 90.
33 Geltner, “*Detrusio*,” 94.
The Economy of Salvation

The concept of *detrusio in monasterium* ('confinement in a monastery') could entail "either living as a monk under normal monastic discipline or being held in a monastic prison." The later often referred to heretics, laity, or clerical offenders who had not taken monastic vows, but were confined within the monastery to expiate their sins. Furthermore, Peters states that monasteries were the first organizations to use “confinement for specific periods and occasionally for life for the purpose of moral correction.” Paradoxically, monasteries were required to contain prisons and yet civil authority did not start to employ punitive imprisonment before 1250. Guy Geltner contends that the shift during the thirteenth century by which the use of imprisonment in a civil context spread rapidly is often explained as a “delayed adoption of the established ecclesiastical practice, and occasionally as a triumph of a Christian ‘penology’.” The ecclesiastical use of imprisonment as a form of punishment for erring monks, clergymen, and occasionally the laity was a pivotal development in western penology as it not only created the link between confinement and punishment, but also between prison and social reform.

Similar to the practice of penance or confession, *detrusio* offered “sinners a genuine opportunity for spiritual relocation from the abyss of damnation to the threshold of salvation.” This illustrates that punitive confinement is both a byproduct of medieval western Christendom and that the ecclesiastical notions of penance and absolution are at the core of medieval penology.

**Ecclesiastical Law**

Canon law permeated all facets of medieval society and canonists believed that they had both the need and duty to monitor the moral behavior of the community as well as recognize and control perceived patterns of deviance and moral transgression. Unlike the modern perception that church authority and civil society ought to be heterogeneous, in the Middle Ages there was no solid boundary between ecclesiastical and civil society. There was no division between what the contemporary world perceives as the religious and the secular realms. In fact, the term ‘religion’ was not a common component of medieval language until its appearance in the thirteenth century when it started to be employed as a means for referring to those bound by either monastic or nonmonastic orders. There was “no part of Christendom that stood outside of the holistic, sacralized order.” Punishment therefore was intrinsically tied to piety, repentance, and atonement. As Edward Peters states, “although salvation was a matter of individual virtue, there was no salvation outside the Church, and there was no legitimate

---

30 Ibid., 27.
33 Geltner, “Detrusio,” 94.
society that was not Christian.”

Although ecclesiastical law and civil law were distinct legal systems, they had an interdependent relationship through their shared pursuit of creating and maintaining a pious society. Just as the laity could experience the practice of detrusio and be enclosed within a monastery, monks and clergymen could be transferred from either the monastery or church to the authority of civil society. The practice of ‘relaxing persons to the secular arm,’ which became widespread in the thirteenth century, specifically in England, allowed church courts to excommunicate its members so that they had to endure a more severe punishment under civil society. James Brundage explains how relaxing a person to the secular arm enabled civil authorities to “inflict upon the convict the more bloodthirsty measures available in their courts (such as amputation of limbs, branding, beating, and various forms of execution, some of them extremely savage).”

Both the concept of detrusio and the practice of the ‘relaxation to the secular arm’ acted as conduits for the convergence of ecclesiastical and civil jurisprudence. Although canon and civil law were ultimately two separate systems of governance, they conversed with one another, exchanging methodologies and procedural practices.

---

39 Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 119.
40 Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 152-3.

42 Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 140.
44 Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 148.
society that was not Christian." The overall ethos of society was one in which the concepts of iniquity, piety, and the quest for eternity were deeply imbedded within all spheres of society.

Although ecclesiastical law and civil law were distinct legal systems, they had an interdependent relationship through their shared pursuit of creating and maintaining a pious society. Just as the laity could experience the practice of *detrusio* and be enclosed within a monastery, monks and clergymen could be transferred from either the monastery or church to the authority of civil society. The practice of ‘relaxing persons to the secular arm,’ which became widespread in the thirteenth century, specifically in England, allowed church courts to excommunicate its members so that they had to endure a more severe punishment under civil society. James Brundage explains how relaxing a person to the secular arm enabled civil authorities to “inflict upon the convict the more bloodthirsty measures available in their courts (such as amputation of limbs, branding, beating, and various forms of execution, some of them extremely savage).” Both the concept of *detrusio* and the practice of the ‘relaxation to the secular arm’ acted as conduits for the convergence of ecclesiastical and civil jurisprudence. Although canon and civil law were ultimately two separate systems of governance, they conversed with one another, exchanging methodologies and procedural practices.

The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 culminated in the rejection of judicial ordeals and the establishment of the inquisitorial criminal procedure in ecclesiastical courts. The emergence of the inquisitorial procedure was not only a fundamental shift in criminal processes, specifically regarding conviction and sentencing, but also set the precedent for the establishment of the papal inquisition. Before the thirteenth century, the accusatorial court procedure was used extensively to handle criminal sentencing. The accusatory method sought to protect the person accused of a crime and followed the notion ‘innocent until proven guilty.’ Moreover, the accusatorial procedure required accountability on the part of the accuser if he or she had reported a false statement. The accusatorial procedure, with its origin in Roman law, sought to maintain a balance between the accused and the accuser, holding both accountable. Conversely, the inquisitorial process (*per inquisitionem*) “allowed a judge to take action against a suspected offender *ex officio*, without any accusation or denunciation.” In other words, the inquisitorial legal process favored the word of the accuser and sought to take action immediately. The accusatorial criminal procedure was publicized whereas the inquisitorial system became privatized,

---

convoluted, and deliberately planned. According to Brundage, the inquisitorial procedure was a direct result of Pope Innocent III’s effort to eradicate heresy and was a prelude to the establishment of the papal inquisition.

The rise in heresy throughout medieval society was a key impetus for the establishment of the papal inquisition. The inquisition was officially instituted by Pope Gregory IX and emerged in France, Spain, and Italy with the task to persecute and punish perceived heretics. Although the implementation of the papal inquisition emerged officially during the first half of the thirteenth century, it started with the decree Ad abolendam, issued by Pope Lucius III in 1184, which declared that all “heretics and their believers, defenders, and favorers” were to be excommunicated. It was the medieval papal inquisition that reinforced the employment of punitive imprisonment by bringing “this erstwhile clerical punishment into the urban public sphere through the wide-scale immuring of laymen.”

An important “interrogation technique” of the papal inquisition, punitive imprisonment was the inquisitors’ preferred method for combating heresy. Imprisonment was understood as a way to purify and reestablish order within medieval society, specifically within the folds of the Church. Moreover, imprisonment was looked upon as an instrument for arousing confession and disclosure of information in regards to heresy. The inquisitors’ use of the prison as a penal apparatus helped to thrust punitive incarceration into civil jurisprudence as it advanced the implementation of perpetual imprisonment for perceived miscreants.

The emergence of the inquisitorial prison by the mid-thirteenth century was a fundamental development that exemplified the rise in ecclesiastical punishment of the laity. A result of both the appearance of the inquisitorial courts and the rise in heresy, the inquisitorial prison extended the principles encapsulated within monastic penology, promoting its use through the idea of the “welfare of the soul.” Soliciting penitence and spiritual reform, the inquisitorial prison was a mechanism for personal healing and communal resolution. Jean Dunbabin states, “the main intention of ecclesiastical punitive imprisonment, monastic, as well as inquisitorial, was to bring about repentance and reconciliation, a complete spiritual reformation.” An explicit “punitive apparatus,” the establishment of the inquisitorial prison was used as a tool for improving the character of the offender.

Through varying degrees of confinement, reformation of both the mind and the conscience were believed to occur. Although there are some ambiguities regarding

---

45 Merback, The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel, 132.
46 Brundage, Medieval Canon Law, 142.
50 Given, Inquisition and Medieval Society, 53.
51 Johnston, Forms of Constraint, 3.
52 Dunbabin, Captivity and Imprisonment in Medieval Europe, 157.
53 Johnston, Forms of Constraint, 26.
convoluted, and deliberately planned.\textsuperscript{45} According to Brundage, the inquisitorial procedure was a direct result of Pope Innocent III’s effort to eradicate heresy and was a prelude to the establishment of the papal inquisition.\textsuperscript{46}

The rise in heresy throughout medieval society was a key impetus for the establishment of the papal inquisition. The inquisition was officially instituted by Pope Gregory IX and emerged in France, Spain, and Italy with the task to persecute and punish perceived heretics.\textsuperscript{47} Although the implementation of the papal inquisition emerged officially during the first half of the thirteenth century, it started with the decree \textit{Ad abolendam}, issued by Pope Lucius III in 1184, which declared that all “heretics and their believers, defenders, and favorers” were to be excommunicated.\textsuperscript{48} It was the medieval papal inquisition that reinforced the employment of punitive imprisonment by bringing “this erstwhile clerical punishment into the urban public sphere through the wide-scale immuring of laymen.”\textsuperscript{49}

An important “interrogation technique” of the papal inquisition, punitive imprisonment was the inquisitors’ preferred method for combating heresy.\textsuperscript{50} Imprisonment was understood as a way to purify and reestablish order within medieval society, specifically within the folds of the Church. Moreover, imprisonment was looked upon as an instrument for arousing confession and disclosure of information in regards to heresy. The inquisitors’ use of the prison as a penal apparatus helped to thrust punitive incarceration into civil jurisprudence as it advanced the implementation of perpetual imprisonment for perceived miscreants.

The emergence of the inquisitorial prison by the mid-thirteenth century was a fundamental development that exemplified the rise in ecclesiastical punishment of the laity. A result of both the appearance of the inquisitorial courts and the rise in heresy, the inquisitorial prison extended the principles encapsulated within monastic penology, promoting its use through the idea of the “welfare of the soul.”\textsuperscript{51} Soliciting penitence and spiritual reform, the inquisitorial prison was a mechanism for personal healing and communal resolution. Jean Dunbabin states, “the main intention of ecclesiastical punitive imprisonment, monastic, as well as inquisitorial, was to bring about repentance and reconciliation, a complete spiritual reformation.”\textsuperscript{52} An explicit “punitive apparatus,” the establishment of the inquisitorial prison was used as a tool for improving the character of the offender.\textsuperscript{53} Through varying degrees of confinement, reformation of both the mind and the conscience were believed to occur. Although there are some ambiguities regarding

\textsuperscript{45} Merback, \textit{The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel}, 132.
\textsuperscript{46} Brundage, \textit{Medieval Canon Law}, 142.
\textsuperscript{49} Geltner, \textit{The Medieval Prison}, 9.
\textsuperscript{50} Given, \textit{Inquisition and Medieval Society}, 53.
\textsuperscript{51} Johnston, \textit{Forms of Constraint}, 3.
\textsuperscript{52} Dunbabin, \textit{Captivity and Imprisonment in Medieval Europe}, 157.
\textsuperscript{53} Johnston, \textit{Forms of Constraint}, 26.
what life within an inquisitorial prison was actually like, Guy Geltner suggests that inquisitorial confinement “was modeled on the monastic penitential life, including solitude, long fasts, and prayers.” Viewed as an intermediary between monastic and civil discipline, the inquisitorial prison helped to solidify the bond not only between punitive imprisonment and spiritual reformation, but also between ecclesiastical and civil penology.

The Birth of Purgatory

The concept of Purgatory had a paramount role in fostering imprisonment as a form of punishment in medieval society. Since the fourth century, purgation and imprisonment have been key components of the theological imagination. Self-imposed confinement was synonymous with purgatorial enclosure, as both were perceived to provide a means for obtaining spiritual purification. Jacques Le Goff speaks of the long lineage of the concept of purgation and posits that although the idea of purgation has ancient roots, up to the twelfth century the “noun purgatorium did not exist: the Purgatory had not yet been born.” By the twelfth century, Purgatory had become a “distinct space in netherworldy geography” that existed between heaven and hell, a sphere in which one could seek contrition and reconciliation with God. As an intermediary sphere of potential spiritual purification and reformation, Purgatory mirrors the concept of confinement, specifically penitential incarceration. Andrew Skotnicki states that it is not a coincidence “incarceration in purgatory emerged at precisely the same time that the prison was normalized as the means for both expressing social disapproval and encouraging the purification of the soul’s sinful elements.”

Referring to Purgatory as a significant metaphorical and literal space within monastic orders, specifically the Cistercian order, Anne Muller states that the monastery “succeeded in bringing purgatory to earth in the twelfth century.” A central space integrated within the monastery, the cloister was directly connected to Purgatory, offering members both a specific location for purification and direct access to “obtain no less than the certainty of sin-free entrance to heaven immediately following their death.” Muller notes the paradox that these two imagined spaces, earthly paradise and Purgatory, were both situated within the

59 Skotnicki, Criminal Justice, 124.
60 Geltner, The Medieval Prison, 84.
what life within an inquisitorial prison was actually like, Guy Geltner suggests that inquisitorial confinement “was modeled on the monastic penitential life, including solitude, long fasts, and prayers.” Viewed as an intermediary between monastic and civil discipline, the inquisitorial prison helped to solidify the bond not only between punitive imprisonment and spiritual reformation, but also between ecclesiastical and civil penology.

The Birth of Purgatory

The concept of Purgatory had a paramount role in fostering imprisonment as a form of punishment in medieval society. Since the fourth century, purgation and imprisonment have been key components of the theological imagination. Self-imposed confinement was synonymous with purgatorial enclosure, as both were perceived to provide a means for obtaining spiritual purification. Jacques Le Goff speaks of the long lineage of the concept of purgation and posits that although the idea of purgation has ancient roots, up to the twelfth century the “noun purgatorium did not exist: the Purgatory had not yet been born.” By the twelfth century, Purgatory had become a “distinct space in netherworldy geography” that existed between heaven and hell, a sphere in which one could seek contrition and reconciliation with God. As an intermediary sphere of potential spiritual purification and reformation, Purgatory mirrors the concept of confinement, specifically penitential incarceration. Andrew Skotnicki states that it is not a coincidence “incarceration in purgatory emerged at precisely the same time that the prison was normalized as the means for both expressing social disapproval and encouraging the purification of the soul’s sinful elements.”

Imprisonment and the emergence of Purgatory were intimately connected, as the cell became a space of both “personal trial and eschatological triumph.”

Referring to Purgatory as a significant metaphorical and literal space within monastic orders, specifically the Cistercian order, Anne Muller states that the monastery “succeeded in bringing purgatory to earth in the twelfth century.” A central space integrated within the monastery, the cloister was directly connected to Purgatory, offering members both a specific location for purification and direct access to “obtain no less than the certainty of sin-free entrance to heaven immediately following their death.” Muller notes the paradox that these two imagined spaces, earthly paradise and Purgatory, were both situated within the

59 Skotnicki, Criminal Justice, 124.
60 Geltner, The Medieval Prison, 84.
Similar to the cloister situated within the monastery, prison also became a space for spiritual contribution during the thirteenth century. This is exemplified with the rise in martyrological literature and first-hand accounts of the lives of prisoners and their spiritual revelations while incarcerated. The “spatialization of purgatory” was therefore an essential facet of the emergence of punitive imprisonment. Purgatory became the bridge that linked the divide between ecclesiastical and civil disciplinary practices, as Purgatory not only became the intermediary between heaven and hell but also acted as the intermediary between the carceral language employed by ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction. The prison as metaphor emerged and was construed as both “God’s great prison” and the “locus of spiritual purgation.” By the thirteenth century, the relationship between confinement and purgation had come full circle with the emergence of Purgatory as a physical space as well as the extension of punitive imprisonment to the penal system of civil society.

**The Municipal Prison**

The emergence of the municipal prison in Italy between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries illustrates the extension of punitive confinement beyond ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In 1298, confinement as a legitimate method of punishment was officially sanctioned by Pope Boniface VIII in the *Liber Sextus*. This papal proclamation recognized punitive confinement as a legitimate punishment for ecclesiastics and officially extended it to the wider Christian world of civil society. Endorsing the use of punitive imprisonment, Pope Boniface proclaimed that incarceration, whether temporary or perpetual, was an ideal instrument for both executing discipline and evoking penance. Although corporal punishment was the common form of discipline used in civil society, by the late thirteenth century punitive imprisonment became a companion to the various rituals of public punishment that were implemented throughout medieval society.

By approximately 1250, punitive incarceration pervaded civil penology as “scores of city-states, capitals, and rural strongholds began founding such facilities and employing them as punitive institutions for sentenced culprits alongside their traditional role as places of custody.” Before the rise of the municipal prison, civil jurisprudence used the prison as a holding facility for persons awaiting sentencing or the

---

63 Ibid., 168.
64 Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, 201.
confines of the monastery. Similar to the cloister situated within the monastery, prison also became a space for spiritual contribution during the thirteenth century. This is exemplified with the rise in martyrological literature and first-hand accounts of the lives of prisoners and their spiritual revelations while incarcerated. The “spatialization of purgatory” was therefore an essential facet of the emergence of punitive imprisonment. Purgatory became the bridge that linked the divide between ecclesiastical and civil disciplinary practices, as Purgatory not only became the intermediary between heaven and hell but also acted as the intermediary between the carceral language employed by ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction. The prison as metaphor emerged and was construed as both “God’s great prison” and the “locus of spiritual purgation.” By the thirteenth century, the relationship between confinement and purgation had come full circle with the emergence of Purgatory as a physical space as well as the extension of punitive imprisonment to the penal system of civil society.

**The Municipal Prison**

The emergence of the municipal prison in Italy between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries illustrates the extension of punitive confinement beyond ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In 1298, confinement as a legitimate method of punishment was officially sanctioned by Pope Boniface VIII in the *Liber Sextus.* This papal proclamation recognized punitive confinement as a legitimate punishment for ecclesiastics and officially extended it to the wider Christian world of civil society. Endorsing the use of punitive imprisonment, Pope Boniface proclaimed that incarceration, whether temporary or perpetual, was an ideal instrument for both executing discipline and evoking penance. Although corporal punishment was the common form of discipline used in civil society, by the late thirteenth century punitive imprisonment became a companion to the various rituals of public punishment that were implemented throughout medieval society.

By approximately 1250, punitive incarceration pervaded civil penology as “scores of city-states, capitals, and rural strongholds began founding such facilities and employing them as punitive institutions for sentenced culprits alongside their traditional role as places of custody.” Before the rise of the municipal prison, civil jurisprudence used the prison as a holding facility for persons awaiting sentencing or the

---

63 Ibid., 168.
64 Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* 201.
68 *The Catholic Encyclopedia,* s.v. "Prisons." Pope Boniface VIII states, “although it is known that prisons were specially instituted for the custody of criminals, not for their punishment, yet we shall not find fault with you if you commit to prison for the performance of penance, either perpetual or temporally as shall seem best.”
liquidation of debts, not as a form of punishment. In 1303, however, Venetian magistrates “introduced a formal calculus to convert fines into prison sentences, effectively legalizing penal incarceration for almost any offense.” The distinction between imprisonment as an instrument for detention and punitive imprisonment converged with the emergence of the municipal prison.

During the fourteenth century, the municipal prison had become a vital part of medieval society and was commonly located at the heart of the community. The medieval prison differed substantially from its modern counterpart both in its position within society and in its physical structure. Unlike the privatized penitentiary system today, the municipal prison was not removed from society, but functioned as a central facet of urban life. The municipal prison was both centrally and visibly located and was often an appropriated or embedded structure incorporated within an already existing facility. In addition, the municipal prison was not a closed system; instead, it operated as “spatial and temporal extensions of urban life, connecting free society back to itself.” The municipal prison therefore did not directly marginalize its inmates as they had access to the outside world.

Incarceration was a prominent feature of European society by the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and medieval jurisprudence had become an intricate, diverse system that dealt with criminality in more nuanced a manner than is often realized. The municipal prison had a different sense of deviance and criminality than the modern-day viewpoint. Rather than establishing the inmate as a liminal part of the community, the municipal prison did not necessarily change a person’s social standing while incarcerated. Moreover, those within the confines of the medieval prison were often still considered citizens. As a result, the municipal prison was a “place of punishment and detention whose walls operated as breathing membranes, not hermetic seals.”

The birth of the prison therefore is situated within the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries when it evolved into a punitive institution. The emergence of the municipal prison not only demonstrates that prison is not an invention of modern penology, whether that be humanitarian reform or enlightenment thinking, but also that the employment of punitive incarceration by civil society is an extension of Church jurisprudence. Having emerged in ecclesiastical penology and migrated into civil law, punitive imprisonment ultimately is a product of the Middle Ages.

Conclusion
The origins of confinement as punishment began within the early traditions of eremitism and

---

75 Ibid., *The Medieval Prison*, 81.
The Economy of Salvation

liquidation of debts, not as a form of punishment. In 1303, however, Venetian magistrates “introduced a formal calculus to convert fines into prison sentences, effectively legalizing penal incarceration for almost any offense.” The distinction between imprisonment as an instrument for detention and punitive imprisonment converged with the emergence of the municipal prison.

During the fourteenth century, the municipal prison had become a vital part of medieval society and was commonly located at the heart of the community. The medieval prison differed substantially from its modern counterpart both in its position within society and in its physical structure. Unlike the privatized penitentiary system today, the municipal prison was not removed from society, but functioned as a central facet of urban life. The municipal prison was both centrally and visibly located and was often an appropriated or embedded structure incorporated within an already existing facility. In addition, the municipal prison was not a closed system; instead, it operated as “spatial and temporal extensions of urban life, connecting free society back to itself.” The municipal prison therefore did not directly marginalize its inmates as they had access to the outside world.

Conclusion

Incarceration was a prominent feature of European society by the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and medieval jurisprudence had become an intricate, diverse system that dealt with criminality in a more nuanced manner than is often realized. The municipal prison had a different sense of deviance and criminality than the modern-day viewpoint. Rather than establishing the inmate as a liminal part of the community, the municipal prison did not necessarily change a person’s social standing while incarcerated. Moreover, those within the confines of the medieval prison were often still considered citizens. As a result, the municipal prison was a “place of punishment and detention whose walls operated as breathing membranes, not hermetic seals.”

The birth of the prison therefore is situated within the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries when it evolved into a punitive institution. The emergence of the municipal prison not only demonstrates that prison is not an invention of modern penology, whether that be humanitarian reform or enlightenment thinking, but also that the employment of punitive incarceration by civil society is an extension of Church jurisprudence. Having emerged in ecclesiastical penology and migrated into civil law, punitive imprisonment ultimately is a product of the Middle Ages.


Geltner, The Medieval Prison, 47.


Ibid., 81.

Ibid., 83.

Ibid., 4-5.
anchoritism where individual solitude was used as a space in which both the expiation of sins and transcendence could occur. Whether it was the outside world or the confines of one’s physical body that was perceived as the prison, confinement began primarily as an instrument for the development of the soul within religious life. Early forms of monastic living sought confinement as a space of spiritual liberation. Through the confinement of one’s physical body, it was perceived that the soul was given full authority and could ultimately be in communion with God. Thus, early monasticism created the link between imprisonment and spiritual reform. “This supports the contention that criminal justice as we know it in the West is largely a Catholic innovation that began officially in the late thirteenth century but, in point of fact, began when the first penitent was relegated to a specific place for a period of time in order to accomplish the goal of spiritual and behavioral reform.” Not only did the cloistered life solidify the notion of imprisonment as a means for spiritual correction, but also the metaphors associated with it established the connection between confinement and the path to salvation. By the fifth and sixth centuries, cenobitic monasticism had spread throughout the Latin West. As monastic orders multiplied both in number and inhabitants during the twelfth century, the need for a new monastic disciplinary system appeared. Because ecclesiastical law rejected blood sanctions within its jurisdiction, a new disciplinary system emerged that implemented the practice of confining erring monks (for varying amounts of time) as a form of punishment. Evolving out of penitential encellment, punitive imprisonment was integrated into canon law while simultaneously cultivating the Christian ethos of penance, redemption, and reconciliation. As punitive confinement began to infiltrate the monastic disciplinary system, it became a common practice to confine apostate clergymen and even the laity within monastic cells as a form of corrective punishment. With the establishment of the papal inquisition, the employment of punitive incarceration proliferated. This practice acted as a vehicle for the transmission of punitive imprisonment into civil jurisprudence. The birth of Purgatory as a literal space reinforced the use of confinement as an effective means for both punitive action and personal purification. The intimate relationship between confinement and purgation that extends back to the fourth century converged with the formation of the municipal prison. Officially recognized as a legitimate constituent of not only the penal system of the Church but also of civil society in the late thirteenth century, punitive confinement had extended beyond its birthplace in monastic penology to the wider world of civil society.

Lily Oberdorfer transferred to Santa Clara University in Winter 2013 with a major in European History. Lily is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Eta Sigma Phi. After graduating in June 2014, Lily plans to apply to law school as well as to pursue her love for the pastry arts.

---

78 Skotnicki, *Forms of Constraint*, 90.
anchoritism where individual solitude was used as a space in which both the expiation of sins and transcendence could occur. Whether it was the outside world or the confines of one’s physical body that was perceived as the prison, confinement began primarily as an instrument for the development of the soul within religious life. Early forms of monastic living sought confinement as a space of spiritual liberation. Through the confinement of one’s physical body, it was perceived that the soul was given full authority and could ultimately be in communion with God. Thus, early monasticism created the link between imprisonment and spiritual reform. “This supports the contention that criminal justice as we know it in the West is largely a Catholic innovation that began officially in the late thirteenth century but, in point of fact, began when the first penitent was relegated to a specific place for a period of time in order to accomplish the goal of spiritual and behavioral reform.”

Not only did the cloistered life solidify the notion of imprisonment as a means for spiritual correction, but also the metaphors associated with it established the connection between confinement and the path to salvation. By the fifth and sixth centuries, cenobitic monasticism had spread throughout the Latin West. As monastic orders multiplied both in number and inhabitants during the twelfth century, the need for a new monastic disciplinary system appeared. Because ecclesiastical law rejected blood sanctions within its jurisdiction, a new disciplinary system emerged that implemented the practice of confining erring monks (for varying amounts of time) as a form of punishment. Evolving out of penitential encellment, punitive imprisonment was integrated into canon law while simultaneously cultivating the Christian ethos of penance, redemption, and reconciliation. As punitive confinement began to infiltrate the monastic disciplinary system, it became a common practice to confine apostate clergymen and even the laity within monastic cells as a form of corrective punishment. With the establishment of the papal inquisition, the employment of punitive incarceration proliferated. This practice acted as a vehicle for the transmission of punitive imprisonment into civil jurisprudence. The birth of Purgatory as a literal space reinforced the use of confinement as an effective means for both punitive action and personal purification. The intimate relationship between confinement and purgation that extends back to the fourth century converged with the formation of the municipal prison. Officially recognized as a legitimate constituent of not only the penal system of the Church but also of civil society in the late thirteenth century, punitive confinement had extended beyond its birthplace in monastic penology to the wider world of civil society.

Lily Oberdorfer transferred to Santa Clara University in Winter 2013 with a major in European History. Lily is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Eta Sigma Phi. After graduating in June 2014, Lily plans to apply to law school as well as to pursue her love for the pastry arts.

78 Skotnicki, Forms of Constraint, 90.
To Be More French: Vengeance and Virtue in the recasting of people of color in the Post-Revolutionary French Empire

Michaela Ahlstrom

Introduction

France’s influence in its colonies was both indelible and unintentionally reciprocal. The French colonists who occupied new colonial territories during the Atlantic era created new cultures that were an amalgamation of the existing culture and French culture. Initially the French citizens who moved to the colonies were either male bachelors or married men without their families. The only women that Frenchmen had access to were almost always women of color. With French plantation owners and settlers in colonial states, inter-racial mixing became inevitable. According to the people of the patrie, France was the pinnacle of civilization and therefore superior and stronger than its colonies. In the minds of the French people, France was always separate from its colonies. Miscegenation became somewhat acceptable as long as it remained outside of France. Miscegenation in the colonies was more easily justified if the man was white and the woman was colored. However, when the purity of white French women and of the metropole was threatened by miscegenation it was thought to be a socio-political catastrophe. Through métissage came the “problem” of the métis in French society.¹ It was too difficult to contend with a child born as both French and colored because it called into question the very notion of what it meant to be French in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

The “Pearl of the Antilles,” Saint Domingue remains central to examining historical issues regarding race and gender in the French empire. The attention of intellectuals in the 19th Century was drawn to the Haitian Revolution of 1791 as a platform for reconsidering societal boundaries with regards to race. In the years following the Haitian revolution novels and stories of the métis and métissage began to surface that have only recently been considered in historical research.² In my research I have found that these narratives share the common premise of exposing socio-cultural tensions in French colonial societies where racial separatism causes conflict in interper-

¹ For the purposes of this paper I will use the terms miscegenation and métissage to indicate interracial mixing in the context of sexual and or romantic relationships. The terms métis and mulâtre refer to people of mixed race born from parents of different racial origins. The term créole takes on a new form in the French language in that a creole refers specifically to a white person born in the Antilles.

² John Garrigus, “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife: Gender, Virtue, and Haitian Independence, 1763-1802,” Conference essay, Guadalajara, Mexico. Meeting of Latin American Studies Association. 1997, 6. John Garrigus discusses La Mulâtre Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches in his article “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife: Gender, Virtue, and Haitian Independence, 1763-1803.” The works that have been translated into English have also received attention such as Moreau de St Mery’s A Civilization that Perished, Leonora Sansay’s Secret History, Andres Dumas’ Georges and Victor Hugo’s Bug Jargal. The attention to these works is limited. Le Nègre by Balzac has little to no research attached to it.
To Be More French: Vengeance and Virtue in the recasting of people of color in the Post-Revolutionary French Empire

Michaela Ahlstrom

Introduction

France’s influence in its colonies was both indelible and unintentionally reciprocal. The French colonists who occupied new colonial territories during the Atlantic era created new cultures that were an amalgamation of the existing culture and French culture. Initially the French citizens who moved to the colonies were either male bachelors or married men without their families. The only women that Frenchmen had access to were almost always women of color. With French plantation owners and settlers in colonial states, inter-racial mixing became inevitable. According to the people of the patrie, France was the pinnacle of civilization and therefore superior and stronger than its colonies. In the minds of the French people, France was always separate from its colonies. Miscegenation became somewhat acceptable as long as it remained outside of France. Miscegenation in the colonies was more easily justified if the man was white and the woman was colored. However, when the purity of white French women and of the metropole was threatened by miscegenation it was thought to be a socio-political catastrophe. Through métissage came the “problem” of the métis in French society.¹ It was too difficult to contend with a child born as both French and colored because it called into question the very notion of what it meant to be French in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

The “Pearl of the Antilles,” Saint Domingue remains central to examining historical issues regarding race and gender in the French empire. The attention of intellectuals in the 19th Century was drawn to the Haitian Revolution of 1791 as a platform for reconsidering societal boundaries with regards to race. In the years following the Haitian revolution novels and stories of the métis and métissage began to surface that have only recently been considered in historical research.² In my research I have found that these narratives share the common premise of exposing socio-cultural tensions in French colonial societies where racial separatism causes conflict in interper-

¹ For the purposes of this paper I will use the terms miscegenation and métissage to indicate interracial mixing in the context of sexual and or romantic relationships. The terms métis and mulâtre refer to people of mixed race born from parents of different racial origins. The term créole takes on a new form in the French language in that a creole refers specifically to a white person born in the Antilles.

² John Garrigus, “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife: Gender, Virtue, and Haitian Independence, 1763-1802,” Conference essay, Guadalajara, Mexico. Meeting of Latin American Studies Association. 1997, 6. John Garrigus discusses La Mulâtre Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches in his article “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife: Gender, Virtue, and Haitian Independence, 1763-1803.” The works that have been translated into English have also received attention such as Moreau de St Mery’s A Civilization that Perished, Leonora Sansay’s Secret History, Andres Dumas’ Georges and Victor Hugo’s Bug Jargal. The attention to these works is limited. Le Nègre by Balzac has little to no research attached to it.
sonal relationships. John Garrigus comments on the novel *La Mulâtre comme il ya beaucoup de blanches.* Garrigus states that this novel “was part of the post-revolutionary recasting of brown and black women from sycophantic courtesans and vile slaves to virtuous wives and loving mothers.” The work of Garrigus exposes the part that gender played in establishing the racial other, a concept that will also be addressed in this essay. In these narratives the conclusions are tragic, disastrous or heroic; endings that result from racial tensions. Defining people of color in society was of utmost importance to post-revolutionary thinkers because of the upheaval caused by both the French and the Haitian revolutions. The social order of France was turned on its head after the revolution of the 1780s-1790s which meant that social and political order had to be redefined in France and its colonies. The social changes that took place in the metropole were strongly linked to gender roles in the new Republican France. Likewise the changes in the colonies took on both a gendered and a racial dogma for defining status and hierarchy. In the early 19th Century writers began a long process of trying to atone for a legacy of slavery while the system still endured in different forms. These post-revolutionary stories endow their black and mixed race characters with virtue and include the complex issues of interracial love and marriage.

In this essay I will expand upon the work of John Garrigus by broadening the subject matter. Before the revolution the mistreatment of the *gens de couleur* or *métis* population, both male and female, of Saint Domingue and other colonies was justified when colonists defined this group as dishonorable and immoral. Likewise the black slave population while being defined as simplistic and docile occupied their “rightful” roles as slaves. In the early 19th century new post-revolutionary narratives were created that conversely memorialized people of color in the 18th century as either virtuous or vengeful members of society who faced racial divides in the midst of forbidden interracial sexuality and love.

**France and the Old Regime Public Sphere**

A fascinating aspect of the age of revolution is that at the same time that France was experiencing its most radical revolution, its most important colony was also experiencing revolution. It is difficult to say how connected these two events actually are. In 1763 Saint Domingue had acquired a “permanent printing works” and in the 1780s was creating pamphlets, books and newspapers comparable to the works being produced in the metropole. In mid-late 1700s France was slowly forming a public sphere. The public sphere consisted of the way of life for middle and upper class society. There was a general understanding of custom and culture that pertained specifically to acceptably “public” people. The ideals of the French public sphere were translated through the new printing capabilities to Saint Domingue. Central to the creation of the public sphere in Saint Domingue is that colonists modeled...
sonal relationships. John Garrigus comments on the novel *La Mulâtre comme il ya beaucoup de blanches*. Garrigus states that this novel “was part of the post-revolutionary recasting of brown and black women from sycophantic courtesans and vile slaves to virtuous wives and loving mothers.” The work of Garrigus exposes the part that gender played in establishing the racial other, a concept that will also be addressed in this essay. In these narratives the conclusions are tragic, disastrous or heroic; endings that result from racial tensions. Defining people of color in society was of utmost importance to post-revolutionary thinkers because of the upheaval caused by both the French and the Haitian revolutions. The social order of France was turned on its head after the revolution of the 1780s-1790s which meant that social and political order had to be redefined in France and its colonies. The social changes that took place in the metropole were strongly linked to gender roles in the new Republican France. Likewise the changes in the colonies took on both a gendered and a racial dogma for defining status and hierarchy. In the early 19th Century writers began a long process of trying to atone for a legacy of slavery while the system still endured in different forms. These post-revolutionary stories endow their black and mixed race characters with virtue and include the complex issues of interracial love and marriage.

In this essay I will expand upon the work of John Garrigus by broadening the subject matter. Before the revolution the mistreatment of the *gens de couleur* or *métis* population, both male and female, of Saint Domingue and other colonies was justified when colonists defined this group as dishonorable and immoral. Likewise the black slave population while being defined as simplistic and docile occupied their “rightful” roles as slaves. In the early 19th century new post-revolutionary narratives were created that conversely memorialized people of color in the 18th century as either virtuous or vengeful members of society who faced racial divides in the midst of forbidden interracial sexuality and love.

**France and the Old Regime Public Sphere**

A fascinating aspect of the age of revolution is that at the same time that France was experiencing its most radical revolution, its most important colony was also experiencing revolution. It is difficult to say how connected these two events actually are. In 1763 Saint Domingue had acquired a “permanent printing works” and in the 1780s was creating pamphlets, books and newspapers comparable to the works being produced in the metropole. In mid-late 1700s France was slowly forming a public sphere. The public sphere consisted of the way of life for middle and upper class society. There was a general understanding of custom and culture that pertained specifically to acceptably “public” people. The ideals of the French public sphere were translated through the new printing capabilities to Saint Domingue. Central to the creation of the public sphere in Saint Domingue is that colonists modeled

---


4 Ibid, 75.
their version of public discourse off of the “French” public sphere.\(^5\) With the influx of news in the mid 1700s Saint Dominguan planters had a more comprehensive understanding of the happenings in both Saint Domingue and the metropole.

The French “public sphere” in the Old Regime revolved around the monarchy. The public sphere did not emerge in France until the beginnings of the salons, breeding-grounds for Enlightenment thinkers. The salons may have been run by salonniéres, or female salon owners, but they were mostly occupied by men of the bourgeoisie in France.\(^6\) By the 1750s the Enlightenment was well underway and the salon became an ideal space for reason to reign supreme.

**Femininity in the Old Regime Public Sphere**

The formation of the public sphere in France emphasized paranoia surrounding “public” women. The absolutist monarchy had reached the heights of extravagance with Louis XIV. The extravagant culture of the monarchy was maintained until the revolution. The monarchy was strongly associated with femininity in that the supremacy of the king feminized men by forcing them to be submissive to the king.\(^7\) The court emphasized pomp and circumstance, forms of display and theater that were strongly associated with femininity. Women played central roles in advancing men in the court society. Witty women held the ear of the highest officials and men were constantly afraid of being usurped by “ambitious wives.”\(^8\) Women held positions of intimacy with the king or else played public roles in the court nobility. Since the king himself was not easily accessible, the nobility often represented the king as a symbol of his overall intention, character and personality.\(^9\) The public sphere of the absolutist monarchy put power in the hands of women that was perpetuated in subsequent decades with Louis XVI’s weak rule and Marie Antoinette’s public persona as *Madame Déficit*. Eventually noble and common men began to see the “corruption” inherent in a system dominated by women. Women’s leisure activities such as theater and opera were denounced and men who partook in these events were considered effeminate having shirked responsibilities to military and power while contributing to an ever weakening central state.\(^10\) *Philosophes* like Montesquieu argued that woman’s rightful place was in the home.\(^11\) The Republican ideal of the 1790s sided with a masculine public sphere where women were relegated to the private sphere of the home and no longer present in political discourse.


\(^8\) Ibid, 26.

\(^9\) Ibid, 20.

\(^10\) Ibid, 26-27.

\(^11\) Ibid, 27.
their version of public discourse off of the “French” public sphere. \(^5\) With the influx of news in the mid 1700s Saint Dominguan planters had a more comprehensive understanding of the happenings in both Saint Domingue and the metropole.

The French “public sphere” in the Old Regime revolved around the monarchy. The public sphere did not emerge in France until the beginnings of the salons, breeding-grounds for Enlightenment thinkers. The salons may have been run by *salonnières*, or female salon owners, but they were mostly occupied by men of the bourgeoisie in France. \(^6\) By the 1750s the Enlightenment was well underway and the salon became an ideal space for reason to reign supreme.

**Femininity in the Old Regime Public Sphere**

The formation of the public sphere in France emphasized paranoia surrounding “public” women. The absolutist monarchy had reached the heights of extravagance with Louis XIV. The extravagant culture of the monarchy was maintained until the revolution. The monarchy was strongly associated with femininity in that the supremacy of the king feminized men by forcing them to be submissive to the king. \(^7\) The court emphasized pomp and circumstance, forms of display and theater that were strongly associated with femininity. Women played central roles in advancing men in the court society. Witty women held the ear of the highest officials and men were constantly afraid of being usurped by “ambitious wives.” \(^8\) Women held positions of intimacy with the king or else played public roles in the court nobility. Since the king himself was not easily accessible, the nobility often represented the king as a symbol of his overall intention, character and personality. \(^9\) The public sphere of the absolutist monarchy put power in the hands of women that was perpetuated in subsequent decades with Louis XVI’s weak rule and Marie Antoinette’s public persona as *Madame Déficit*. Eventually noble and common men began to see the “corruption” inherent in a system dominated by women. Women’s leisure activities such as theater and opera were denounced and men who partook in these events were considered effeminate having shirked responsibilities to military and power while contributing to an ever weakening central state. \(^10\) *Philosophes* like Montesquieu argued that woman’s rightful place was in the home. \(^11\) The Republican ideal of the 1790s sided with a masculine public sphere where women were relegated to the private sphere of the home and no longer present in political discourse.

---


\(^8\) Ibid, 26.

\(^9\) Ibid, 20.

\(^10\) Ibid, 26-27.

\(^11\) Ibid, 27.
Black in the French Public Sphere?

As the elites in a colony of the great French metropole, Saint Domingue's colonists were eager to appear more French and therefore more civilized.\(^{12}\) France in the 18th Century was shifting away from the effeminate centralized monarchy toward a body of strong republican men. From 1738 to 1776 black people were registered in Paris at a rate of roughly 30 per year.\(^ {13}\) The increase in the presence of black people in the metropole was due to elites bringing slaves into France from the colonies. In 1762 the Admiralty of France set up an ordinance to determine how many blacks there were in France. Sue Peabody asserts that the potential reason for trying to determine the demographic statistics was in an effort to require blacks to return to the colonies.\(^ {14}\) Ultimately, France did not want to have a significant black population. An increase of 30 per year is hardly noteworthy in Europe’s most populous nation. Records also indicate that a number of wealthy gens de couleur were able to study in France. The demographic of Saint Domingue on the other hand in the 1700s was ever changing. A 1648 census of Saint Domingue places the number of white people at 4,411 and the number of black slaves at 3,358. These populations increased until 1779 when the populations were roughly 32,650 whites and 249,098 slaves. The binary of black and white that existed in many of the industrializing nations did not exist in Saint Domingue. There was a large population of free black people who were usually mixed race, gens de couleur or free people of color numbering at about 28,000 by 1791, comparable to the population of whites in the colony.\(^ {15}\)

To be French: Race in Saint Domingue

Given the population of the French public sphere as predominantly white and male, Saint Dominguan colonists questioned the strange position in which the gens de couleur and métis population stood. Could Saint Domingue be truly French with such a large percentage of gens de couleur in the public sphere? In addition women of color played a significant role in Saint Dominguan culture and began to be seen as a legitimate threat by colonists. Could the strong presence of females inhibit Saint Domingue from becoming more French? The irony remains that the republican government in Paris pushed for a masculine un-egalitarian society and that Saint Domingue wanted to mirror this society. The approach of the republic was initially un-egalitarian in that it suppressed the role of women, despite the republican devotion to Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité. Saint Domingue followed the example of the metropole when it came to controlling race and gender in the colony.

The Code Noir was enacted by Louis XIV in 1685. This code set up strict guidelines for policing and care of slaves. The Code focuses on the need for slaves to be moral and Catholic, not protestant. The Code further

\(^{12}\) John D. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father” 138.

\(^{13}\) Sue Peabody, There are No Slaves in France: The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Regime (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 72.

\(^{14}\) Ibid, 72-73.

Black in the French Public Sphere?

As the elites in a colony of the great French metropole, Saint Domingue’s colonists were eager to appear more French and therefore more civilized.12 France in the 18th Century was shifting away from the effeminate centralized monarchy toward a body of strong republican men. From 1738 to 1776 black people were registered in Paris at a rate of roughly 30 per year.13 The increase in the presence of black people in the metropole was due to elites bringing slaves into France from the colonies. In 1762 the Admiralty of France set up an ordinance to determine how many blacks there were in France. Sue Peabody asserts that the potential reason for trying to determine the demographic statistics was in an effort to require blacks to return to the colonies.14 Ultimately, France did not want to have a significant black population. An increase of 30 per year is hardly noteworthy in Europe’s most populous nation. Records also indicate that a number of wealthy gens de couleur were able to study in France. The demographic of Saint Domingue on the other hand in the 1700s was ever changing. A 1648 census of Saint Domingue places the number of white people at 4,411 and the number of black slaves at 3,358. These populations increased until 1779 when the populations were roughly 32,650 whites and 249,098 slaves. The binary of black and white that existed in many of the industrializing nations did not exist in Saint Domingue. There was a large population of free black people who were usually mixed race, gens de couleur or free people of color numbering at about 28,000 by 1791, comparable to the population of whites in the colony.15

To be French: Race in Saint Domingue

Given the population of the French public sphere as predominantly white and male, Saint Dominguan colonists questioned the strange position in which the gens de couleur and métis population stood. Could Saint Domingue be truly French with such a large percentage of gens de couleur in the public sphere? In addition women of color played a significant role in Saint Dominguan culture and began to be seen as a legitimate threat by colonists. Could the strong presence of females inhibit Saint Domingue from becoming more French? The irony remains that the republican government in Paris pushed for a masculine unequalitarian society and that Saint Domingue wanted to mirror this society. The approach of the republic was initially un-equalitarian in that it suppressed the role of women, despite the republican devotion to Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité. Saint Domingue followed the example of the metropole when it came to controlling race and gender in the colony.

The Code Noir was enacted by Louis XIV in 1685. This code set up strict guidelines for policing and care of slaves. The Code focuses on the need for slaves to be moral and Catholic, not protestant. The Code further

14 Ibid, 72-73.
delineated the role of the slave as completely at the mercy of the master. However, the Code also requires that slave masters take care of their slaves. Louis XIV judiciously endorsed the Code Noir’s sentiment that “We desire to settle these issues and inform them [the slaves] that, even though they reside infinitely far from our normal abode, we are always present for them.”

The Code Noir also presented guidelines for manumission that would in future be revised to slow the growth of the free black population in Saint Domingue. The gens de couleur population was slowly formed in Saint Domingue through métissage between slaves and their colonist masters. Métis children were born of plantation owning fathers and slave mothers. Many métis were born into slavery. However, the Code Noir sanctioned the freeing of a woman who married a free man, along with her children. If marriage was not a part of the contract then the children of an enslaved woman would also be slaves.

Historian John D. Garrigus writes extensively about métissage in Saint Domingue. Garrigus points out that the French presence in Saint Domingue throughout the early to mid 1700s saw social status as more important than race. The censuses of Saint Domingue reflected this fact and also reflected the Code Noir’s emphasis on moral fiber. Many of the young planters living in Saint Domingue were either bachelors or left their families at home. Despite French emphasis on morality there was a trend for these wealthy planters to form new households with the women available to them. There was an additional mystique for young men who wanted to experience the new exotic world along with its women. Toward the beginning of the 1700s most of the women available in the colony were slaves who also did not have a say in whether or not they would become the mistresses or the wives of their masters. Themes of marriage and sexuality being necessary for the vigor of French men in the colonies can be found throughout colonial history and even to the end of the 19th Century. The Guide Pratique de l’européen dans l’Afrique occidentale by Dr. Barot from the 1890s also acknowledges the necessity of allowing young men to find pleasure in native women in West Africa. Dr. Barot, like many thinkers before him including D’Eichthal and Urbain in the 1830s and 40s, believed that métissage was a way to bring about peace between otherwise warring races. Garrigus also notes that a 1730 census mentions the Mulâtres libres but not the Mulâtresses libres. Mulatto or mixed race women were considered to be white assuming that they were linked to a white man. If the gens de couleur women could display French standards of literacy, morality and property she would also be considered white.

It is also important to mention that despite the disapproval of Versailles, métissage was not outlawed in

---


17 Ibid.


19 Ibid, 139.

20 Ibid.


22 John D. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father” 139

23 John D. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father” 139.
delineated the role of the slave as completely at the mercy of the master. However, the Code also requires that slave masters take care of their slaves. Louis XIV judiciously endorsed the Code Noir’s sentiment that “We desire to settle these issues and inform them [the slaves] that, even though they reside infinitely far from our normal abode, we are always present for them.”

The Code Noir also presented guidelines for manumission that would in future be revised to slow the growth of the free black population in Saint Domingue. The gens de couleur population was slowly formed in Saint Domingue through métissage between slaves and their colonist masters. Métis children were born of plantation owning fathers and slave mothers. Many métis were born into slavery. However, the Code Noir sanctioned the freeing of a woman who married a free man, along with her children. If marriage was not a part of the contract then the children of an enslaved woman would also be slaves. Historian John D. Garrigus writes extensively about métissage in Saint Domingue. Garrigus points out that the French presence in Saint Domingue throughout the early to mid 1700s saw social status as more important than race. The censuses of Saint Domingue reflected this fact and also reflected the Code Noir’s emphasis on moral fiber. Many of the young planters living in Saint Domingue were either bachelors or left their families at home. Despite French emphasis on morality there was a trend for these wealthy planters to form new households with the women available to them. There was an additional mystique for young men who wanted to experience the new exotic world along with its women. Toward the beginning of the 1700s most of the women available in the colony were slaves who also did not have a say in whether or not they would become the mistresses or the wives of their masters. Themes of marriage and sexuality being necessary for the vigor of French men in the colonies can be found throughout colonial history and even to the end of the 19th Century. The Guide Pratique de l’européen dans l’Afrique occidentale by Dr. Barot from the 1890s also acknowledges the necessity of allowing young men to find pleasure in native women in West Africa. Dr. Barot, like many thinkers before him including D’Eichthal and Urbain in the 1830s and 40s, believed that métissage was a way to bring about peace between otherwise warring races. Garrigus also notes that a 1730 census mentions the Mulâtres libres but not the Mulâtresses libres. Mulatto or mixed race women were considered to be white assuming that they were linked to a white man. If the gens de couleur women could display French standards of literacy, morality and property she would also be considered white. It is also important to mention that despite the disapproval of Versailles, métissage was not outlawed in

17 Ibid.
19 Ibid, 139.
20 Ibid.
22 John D. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father” 139
23 John D. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father” 139.
Saint Domingue. The laws of the metropole did not intervene with regards to plantation owners giving land and money to métis people; these people were simply considered white by the colonial authorities and at this time the monarchy was relatively laissez faire because of confidence in the officials left in charge of Saint Dominguan affairs. As long as the colony was productive the metropole was content with the state of affairs. As a result métis children inherited the wealth of plantation owner fathers.

The gens de couleur was a growing population and improving its wealth throughout the 1700s. In the 1760s Saint Domingue was a well-established sugar colony. The importation of slaves and the population of white colonists put the gens de couleur in an awkward position. The racial binary in France easily upheld social status. White planters did not like the idea of having colored people as rivals for work, especially the petits blancs looking to start a life in Saint Domingue. In 1764 Saint Domingue had a new governor, Charles Comte d’Estaing. This governor was extremely interested in patriotism from the colonists toward the patrie. Political struggles between colonists and the patrie persisted. However, Saint Domingue was forming its own public sphere with more French people coming to make their way in the colony. The fear among colonists and royalists alike was that the white and creole population was losing its love for France. One of the issues noted by David Patrick Geggus was that some people were losing the French language to creole. Patriotism and Frenchness needed to be enforced so the color line started to become emphasized in Saint Domingue. With the same rhetoric that was used in France, colonists claimed that Saint Domingue was dangerously feminized by the gens de couleur population.

**Feminizing the Gens de Couleur**

In studying the history of Haiti in the late 18th century Moreau de Saint Méry is almost always used as a reference for a white perspective on Saint Dominguan society. Moreau de Saint Méry was born in Martinique in 1750 and wrote his anthropological work on the make-up of Saint Domingue in the 1780s. The book was published in the late 1790s after the Haitian Revolution. Moreau’s description of mulatto women is of particular interest. Moreau writes that the creation of the free colored population was due to “the scarcity of women, the customary ways of the Filibusters and the Bucaneers, and the alluring complaisance of the black woman.” Moreau’s description of male gens de couleur is that they are intelligent and have a love of

---

25 Ibid, 140.
26 Ibid, 142.
28 John Garrigus, “Race, Gender and Virtue in Haiti’s Failed Foundational Fiction” 76.
29 Médéric-Louis-Elie Moreau de Saint Méry, A Civilization that Perished: The Last Years of White Colonial Rule in Haiti, A Topographical, Physical, Civil, Political and Historical Description (Philadelphia, Moureau de Saint Mery, 1797-1798) 73.
Saint Domingue. The laws of the metropole did not intervene with regards to plantation owners giving land and money to métis people; these people were simply considered white by the colonial authorities and at this time the monarchy was relatively laissez faire because of confidence in the officials left in charge of Saint Dominguan affairs. As long as the colony was productive the metropole was content with the state of affairs. As a result métis children inherited the wealth of plantation owner fathers.

The gens de couleur was a growing population and improving its wealth throughout the 1700s. In the 1760s Saint Domingue was a well-established sugar colony. The importation of slaves and the population of white colonists put the gens de couleur in an awkward position. The racial binary in France easily upheld social status. White planters did not like the idea of having colored people as rivals for work, especially the petits blancs looking to start a life in Saint Domingue. In 1764 Saint Domingue had a new governor, Charles Comte d’Estaing. This governor was extremely interested in patriotism from the colonists toward the patrie. Political struggles between colonists and the patrie persisted. However, Saint Domingue was forming its own public sphere with more French people coming to make their way in the colony. The fear among colonists and royalists alike was that the white and creole population was losing its love for France. One of the issues noted by David Patrick Geggus was that some people were losing the French language to creole. Patriotism and Frenchness needed to be enforced so the color line started to become emphasized in Saint Domingue. With the same rhetoric that was used in France, colonists claimed that Saint Domingue was dangerously feminized by the gens de couleur population.

**Feminizing the Gens de Couleur**

In studying the history of Haiti in the late 18th century Moreau de Saint Méry is almost always used as a reference for a white perspective on Saint Dominguan society. Moreau de Saint Méry was born in Martinique in 1750 and wrote his anthropological work on the make-up of Saint Domingue in the 1780s. The book was published in the late 1790s after the Haitian Revolution. Moreau’s description of mulatto women is of particular interest. Moreau writes that the creation of the free colored population was due to “the scarcity of women, the customary ways of the Filibusters and the Bucaneers, and the alluring complaisance of the black woman.” Moreau’s description of male gens de couleur is that they are intelligent and have a love of

---


25 Ibid, 140.

26 Ibid, 142.
To Be More French

luxury and laziness. According to Moreau the only master of the mulatto man is pleasure. Moreau spends more time on his description of the *mulâtrese libres* who he identifies primarily as a seducer of white men. Moreau reduces the *mulâtrese* to the level of superficiality whose only pursuit is love. The *mulâtrese* is described even in anatomical detail, that the way she moves is seductive and therefore corruptive. The *mulâtrese* takes a great deal of pleasure in jewels and clothes and is considered extravagant.

The favored lover dresses up his conquest, so that this splendor is the sign of a new loss of virtue...To the taste for multiplying her dresses and her jewels, is added what contributes in a big way to expense, a failure to care for them. This wastefulness leads to disdain for even the most costly things.

Moreau refers to the *mulâtresses* in this section as wasteful, a term used for Marie Antoinette during her reign before her deposition and execution; punishments that were partly due to her extravagance.

The wealth of the *gens de couleur* was brought on by the direct line of inheritance for plantation owners. Upon the death of a patriarch his earnings and land would go to his wife and children. *The gens de couleur* accumulated vast inheritances from previous colonial masters. The *mulâtresses* supposed sexuality and deceit made them powerful in the eyes of the colonials. These thoughts mirror directly the thoughts of republican France. Women had a corrupting influence on men and contributed to a despotic and effeminate monarchy. In Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Émile* the Philosophe discerns that Sophie (a representative for all women) should be passive, weak, pleasing to the eyes, docile and charming. When *Émile* was written in the 1750s the *ancien régime* was still intact along with the effeminate monarchy. In Saint Domingue the similar thought was that mulatto women wielded undue and influential power.

Another aspect of mulatto women that was threatening to the colonist population was their association with Vodoun. The Vodoun goddess Erzulie takes on three different forms. The form that is most relevant to the *mulâtresses* is Erzulie Freda or the *mulatresses blanche*. It is important to remember that the *mulatresses’* skin color ranged from very dark to very light. Erzulie Freda seems contradictory in that she is white, she is in female form and yet encompasses the abilities of man as well. The person of Erzulie Freda then contradicts the binary male and female and endows a woman with supposed masculine traits. Erzulie is also known in Vodoun for forcing men to serve her. This goddess of Haitian tradition is a

---

30 Ibid, 78.
31 Ibid, 81.
32 Ibid, 83-84.
33 Ibid.
37 Ibid, 6-7.
luxury and laziness. According to Moreau the only master of the mulatto man is pleasure. Moreau spends more time on his description of the *mulâtresse* *libres* who he identifies primarily as a seducer of white men. Moreau reduces the *mulâtresse* to the level of superficiality whose only pursuit is love. The *mulâtresse* is described even in anatomical detail, that the way she moves is seductive and therefore corruptive. The *mulâtresse* takes a great deal of pleasure in jewels and clothes and is considered extravagant.

The favored lover dresses up his conquest, so that this splendor is the sign of a new loss of virtue...To the taste for multiplying her dresses and her jewels, is added what contributes in a big way to expense, a failure to care for them. This wastefulness leads to disdain for even the most costly things.

Moreau refers to the *mulâtresses* in this section as wasteful, a term used for Marie Antoinette during her reign before her deposition and execution; punishments that were partly due to her extravagance.

The wealth of the *gens de couleur* was brought on by the direct line of inheritance for plantation owners. Upon the death of a patriarch his earnings and land would go to his wife and children. The *gens de couleur* accumulated vast inheritances from previous colonial masters. The *mulâtresses* supposed sexuality and
deceit made them powerful in the eyes of the colonials. These thoughts mirror directly the thoughts of republican France. Women had a corrupting influence on men and contributed to a despotic and effeminate monarchy. In Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Émile* the Philosophe discerns that Sophie (a representative for all women) should be passive, weak, pleasing to the eyes, docile and charming. When *Émile* was written in the 1750s the ancien régime was still intact along with the effeminate monarchy. In Saint Domingue the similar thought was that mulatto women wielded undue and influential power.

Another aspect of mulatto women that was threatening to the colonist population was their association with Vodoun. The Vodoun goddess Erzulie takes on three different forms. The form that is most relevant to the *mulatresses* is Erzulie Freda or the *mulatresses blanche*. It is important to remember that the *mulatresses*’ skin color ranged from very dark to very light. Erzulie Freda seems contradictory in that she is white, she is in female form and yet encompasses the abilities of man as well. The person of Erzulie Freda then contradicts the binary male and female and endows a woman with supposed masculine traits. Erzulie is also known in Vodoun for forcing men to serve her. This goddess of Haitian tradition is a

---

30 Ibid, 78.
31 Ibid, 81.
32 Ibid, 83-84.
33 Ibid.
37 Ibid, 6-7.
fearsome symbol that runs against the colonists’ suppositions of women’s place. As Joan Dayan states, “Since Erzulie remains the most heavily textualized (and romanticized) of vodoun spirits, her representation tells us much about the risky collaboration of romance and race.”

Overall, in the eyes of white colonials the goddess associated with the mulâtres further categorized them as threatening to French ideals. The goddess also ran counter to the normalcy of Christian faith versus exotic vodoun which separated the mulâtres further from the French ideal.

The gens de couleur threatened the white colonists’ way of life. The gens de couleur were becoming wealthier and pushing out the petits blancs. The problem was perpetuated by powerful mulâtres considered to be seductive and colonists’ perception of mulâtres being endowed with the supernatural powers of Erzulie Freda. According to the colonists the gens de couleur was a group that was increasingly effeminate. John Garrigus writes that, “in the 1770s and 1780s this feminine sexuality, described as ‘un-natural’ in women of mixed ancestry came to symbolize the ‘foreign-ness’ of Saint Domingue’s free population of color.”

The answer of the colonial government to the supposed power of the gens de couleur was to decrease their presence in the public sphere and remove their civic abilities entirely.

Oppressing the Gens de Couleur

David Geggus notes that the alarm that came about with the ever-expanding gens de couleur population propelled colonists to create obstacles to the growth of this population. Population growth might be the main reason why the colonists retaliated, but they justified it with rhetoric that affirmed beliefs in the inherent effeminate, deceptive nature of the gens de couleur or the métis. According to Laurent Dubois, certain thinkers believed that the reason for the shift from relative freedom to fortified racial divides was sex. The formation of the métis population formed racial tensions when the gens de couleur became powerful. Essentially the people responsible for the racial tension in a biologic way were the white plantation owners who utilized their power to gain sexual fulfillment. Further angst grew among the colonists because of the intelligence of the gens de couleur. Many of these affranchis were sent to France for education. The gens de couleur actually were a “civilized” group of people in Saint Domingue. A civilized population of colored people did not fit the goals and desires of the white population. The metropole began to send bureaucrats to the Antilles in 1763 to reinforce boundaries and order in the colonies. Migrants searching for work along with these bureaucrats contributed to a hostile environment for the gens de couleur.

42 John Garrigus, “Race, Gender and Virtue in Haiti’s Failed Foundational Fiction” 75.
43 Laurent Dubois, Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution, 64-65

38 Ibid, 18.
fearsome symbol that runs against the colonists’ suppositions of women’s place. As Joan Dayan states, “Since Erzulie remains the most heavily textualized (and romanticized) of vodoun spirits, her representation tells us much about the risky collaboration of romance and race.” Overall, in the eyes of white colonials the goddess associated with the mulâtreses further categorized them as threatening to French ideals. The goddess also ran counter to the normalcy of Christian faith versus exotic vodoun which separated the mulâtreses further from the French ideal.

The gens de couleur threatened the white colonists’ way of life. The gens de couleur were becoming wealthier and pushing out the petits blancs. The problem was perpetuated by powerful mulâtreses considered to be seductive and colonists’ perception of mulâtreses being endowed with the supernatural powers of Erzulie Freda. According to the colonists the gens de couleur was a group that was increasingly effeminate. John Garrigus writes that, “in the 1770s and 1780s this feminine sexuality, described as ‘un-natural’ in women of mixed ancestry came to symbolize the ‘foreign-ness’ of Saint Domingue’s free population of color.” The answer of the colonial government to the supposed power of the gens de couleur was to by decrease their presence in the public sphere and remove their civic abilities entirely.

Oppressing the Gens de Couleur

David Geggus notes that the alarm that came about with the ever-expanding gens de couleur population propelled colonists to create obstacles to the growth of this population. Population growth might be the main reason why the colonists retaliated, but they justified it with rhetoric that affirmed beliefs in the inherent effeminate, deceptive nature of the gens de couleur or the métis. According to Laurent Dubois, certain thinkers believed that the reason for the shift from relative freedom to fortified racial divides was sex. The formation of the métis population formed racial tensions when the gens de couleur became powerful. Essentially the people responsible for the racial tension in a biologic way were the white plantation owners who utilized their power to gain sexual fulfillment. Further angst grew among the colonists because of the intelligence of the gens de couleur. Many of these affranchis were sent to France for education. The gens de couleur actually were a “civilized” group of people in Saint Domingue. A civilized population of colored people did not fit the goals and desires of the white population. The metropole began to send bureaucrats to the Antilles in 1763 to reinforce boundaries and order in the colonies. Migrants searching for work along with these bureaucrats contributed to a hostile environment for the gens de couleur.

38 Ibid, 18.
42 John Garrigus, “Race, Gender and Virtue in Haiti’s Failed Foundational Fiction” 75.
43 Laurent Dubois, Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution, 64-65
Up to this point colonists and gens de couleur had found use for each other. They may not have always gotten along but there was an understanding that not necessarily skin color and genealogy created rank, but wealth created rank. However, it became apparent to colonists that the racial line needed to be drawn in order to keep slaves in their place. The 1760s was the beginning of intense oppression of the gens de couleur population by white colonists. In the 1770s the colonial government began to crack down on manumission. It had become too common for slaves to be manumitted by masters based upon a buy out or strong relational ties. The manumission crack down beginning in 1770 made it so that in 1785 there were 739 slaves freed and in 1789 there were 256. Discriminatory laws that specifically targeted the gens de couleur came out in the 1760s also. People of mixed race were segregated in the public sphere from the white gentile public sphere. Certain jobs were off limits along with clothes that only white people could wear. In the atmosphere of general hostility and a more defined color line, the gens de couleur were in danger of both harassment and assault. The free people of color were also prohibited from any kind of civic engagement.

Oppression in France

Meanwhile the patrie dealt with its own issues of race. Under the Admiralty Ordinance of 1762 people of color had to register with the police. There were no exceptions to this mandate which meant that both free and enslaved people had to register. Some colonists returned to France with métis children and established a life in France. Jennifer L. Palmer notes that race and class were more closely tied in France because of the black-white binary system that was normative in Eurocentric nations, a system that began to emerge in Saint Domingue in the late 1700s with the rise in the white population. In France métis children posed a threat to the important nuclear family which only grew more important as the century progressed. For métis children who moved to France, it was difficult for them to understand that they were not viewed in the same social class as the white elite and most of the time they were not in the same social class as their own fathers. Métis were ostracized in France and often were unable to marry because of their social status. In the case of Aimé-Benjamin Fleuriau, under the 1763 ordinance his mulâtre children were documented as Fleuriau’s slaves. Fleuriau and his family had to work to fight the distinction which placed the métis in

---

47 Laurent Dubois, Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution, 60.
49 Ibid, 362.
50 Ibid, 360.
51 Ibid, 367.
52 Ibid, 368.
Up to this point colonists and *gens de couleur* had found use for each other. They may not have always gotten along but there was an understanding that not necessarily skin color and geneology created rank, but wealth created rank. However, it became apparent to colonists that the racial line needed to be drawn in order to keep slaves in their place. The 1760s was the beginning of intense oppression of the *gens de couleur* population by white colonists. In the 1770s the colonial government began to crack down on manumission. It had become too common for slaves to be manumitted by masters based upon a buy out or strong relational ties. The manumission crack down beginning in 1770 made it so that in 1785 there were 739 slaves freed and in 1789 there were 256. Discriminatory laws that specifically targeted the *gens de couleur* came out in the 1760s also. People of mixed race were segregated in the public sphere from the white gentile public sphere. Certain jobs were off limits along with clothes that only white people could wear. In the atmosphere of general hostility and a more defined color line, the *gens de couleur* were in danger of both harassment and assault. The free people of color were also prohibited from any kind of civic engagement.

---


---

**Oppression in France**

Meanwhile the *patrie* dealt with its own issues of race. Under the Admiralty Ordinance of 1762 people of color had to register with the police. There were no exceptions to this mandate which meant that both free and enslaved people had to register. Some colonists returned to France with *métis* children and established a life in France. Jennifer L. Palmer notes that race and class were more closely tied in France because of the black-white binary system that was normative in Eurocentric nations, a system that began to emerge in Saint Domingue in the late 1700s with the rise in the white population. In France *métis* children posed a threat to the important nuclear family which only grew more important as the century progressed. For *métis* children who moved to France, it was difficult for them to understand that they were not viewed in the same social class as the white elite and most of the time they were not in the same social class as their own fathers. *Métis* were ostracized in France and often were unable to marry because of their social status. In the case of Aimé-Benjamin Fleuriau, under the 1763 ordinance his *mulâtre* children were documented as Fleuriau’s slaves. Fleuriau and his family had to work to fight the distinction which placed the *métis* in
the category of slave.\(^{53}\) In France at the time, to be white was to be free, to be black in any way was to be a slave. In contrast to the 1685 Code Noir, the 1777 legislation issued by Louis XVI was more about skin color than the social status of slaves in the patrie.\(^{54}\) The abolitionist movement in France was underway at this time as well which caused more back-lash from anti-abolitionists before it effected change. In the 1780s the government saw to it that all people of African descent carried a passport that defined their status in the French Empire. Métissage had never been socially acceptable in the patrie, but at this time it was criminalized in the metropole.\(^{55}\)

**The fight of Gens de Couleur**

The relative power and wealth accumulated for people of color through métissage faced considerable scrutiny in the mid to late 1700s in both France and the colonies. It is important to understand that the gens de couleur did not see themselves in the same way that colonial officials began to imagine them. The gens de couleur were in fact extremely influential in French military efforts to suppress rebellions in the colony and expressed immense loyalty to France. However the divide between the colonists and the gens de couleur grew exponentially. The gens de couleur’s loyalty to the patrie was only strengthened by push and pull factors, namely the push from the plantation owners and the pull from changing perspectives in France. Factions in France had started to openly take up the abolitionist movement. The Société des Amis des Noirs was formed by Condorcet who pushed a platform that was even addressed at the momentous “calling of the Estates General” in Paris in 1789.\(^{56}\) The gens de couleur were finding significant allies in the patrie that simply did not exist in Saint Domingue. The factions in Saint Domingue on the eve of the revolution were the gens de couleur, the grands blancs, the petits blancs, France and the slaves. Despite upstanding courage and citizenship, gens de couleur were criticized and harassed by grands and petits blancs.\(^{57}\) The métis population of Saint Domingue did not initially fight the changes but rather tried to remain upstanding citizens. Their efforts were ignored because of the whites’ determination to categorize all métis as inherently disingenuous.\(^{58}\)

Julien Raimond was an impassioned spokesman for the cause of the free people of color. Raimond was born in Saint Domingue to a métisse mother and a white father.\(^{59}\) Raimond had grown up in Saint Domingue and became a wealthy indigo planter until he moved to France in 1785. Raimond’s work revolved

---

\(^{53}\) Ibid, 371.
\(^{55}\) Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*, 72
\(^{56}\) Ibid, 73.
\(^{58}\) Ibid, 196.
the category of slave.\textsuperscript{53} In France at the time, to be white was to be free, to be black in any way was to be a slave. In contrast to the 1685 Code Noir, the 1777 legislation issued by Louis XVI was more about skin color than the social status of slaves in the patrie.\textsuperscript{54} The abolitionist movement in France was underway at this time as well which caused more back-lash from anti-abolitionists before it effected change. In the 1780s the government saw to it that all people of African descent carried a passport that defined their status in the French Empire. Métissage had never been socially acceptable in the patrie, but at this time it was criminalized in the metropole.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{The fight of Gens de Couleur}

The relative power and wealth accumulated for people of color through métissage faced considerable scrutiny in the mid to late 1700s in both France and the colonies. It is important to understand that the gens de couleur did not see themselves in the same way that colonial officials began to imagine them. The gens de couleur were in fact extremely influential in French military efforts to suppress rebellions in the colony and expressed immense loyalty to France. However the divide between the colonists and the gens de couleur grew exponentially. The gens de couleur’s loyalty to the patrie was only strengthened by push and pull factors, namely the push from the plantation owners and the pull from changing perspectives in France. Factions in France had started to openly take up the abolitionist movement. The Société des Amis des Noirs was formed by Condorcet who pushed a platform that was even addressed at the momentous “calling of the Estates General” in Paris in 1789.\textsuperscript{56} The gens de couleur were finding significant allies in the patrie that simply did not exist in Saint Domingue. The factions in Saint Domingue on the eve of the revolution were the gens de couleur, the grands blancs, the petits blancs, France and the slaves. Despite upstanding courage and citizenship, gens de couleur were criticized and harassed by grands and petits blancs.\textsuperscript{57} The métis population of Saint Domingue did not initially fight the changes but rather tried to remain upstanding citizens. Their efforts were ignored because of the whites’ determination to categorize all métis as inherently disingenuous.\textsuperscript{58}

Julien Raimond was an impassioned spokesman for the cause of the free people of color. Raimond was born in Saint Domingue to a métisse mother and a white father.\textsuperscript{59} Raimond had grown up in Saint Domingue and became a wealthy indigo planter until he moved to France in 1785. Raimond’s work revolved

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, 371.
\textsuperscript{55} Laurent Dubois, \textit{Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution}, 72
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, 73.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, 196.
around protecting the name of the *gens de couleur* who were vilified by the colonists. Raimond argued that many white planters cared for the women who bore them children regardless of race. Raimond notes that in relations between colonists and *métis* before the 1760s “there was no dishonor in knowing them, spending time with them, living with them, forming relationships with their daughters; and men of color were commissioned as officers in the militia.” Raimond recognized that the *gens de couleur* saw in the white population what the white population believed of the *gens de couleur*, that the opposing group did not possess virtue.

The quotation from Julien Raimond brings up the complicated issue of interracial relationships during the 1780 and 1790s.

**Changing Narratives**

Given the deeply embedded notions of racial difference in pre-revolutionary French and Saint Dominguan society, it is noteworthy that new narratives began to surface that contradicted these popular images of the black and the *métis*, especially because they were produced in the decades directly following the French Revolution and the pivotal Haitian revolution in Saint Domingue. Saint Dominguan society had maintained relative stability until the mid-18th Century when the tremors of revolution began. The factions in Saint Domingue became more divided and more bitter as 1791 drew nearer. The narratives of the early 19th Century regarding colonial society show how interracial sexuality played out in a racialized world. These narratives use real contextual circumstances of interracial love and sexuality to provide a place and time to re-evaluate the images of the docile noble savage and the immoral *gens de couleur* that had been practically canonized by colonists in the years preceding the revolution.

By the year 1838 the Western world was nearing the end of a trajectory toward emancipation. The early 19th Century was marked by steadily growing abolitionist fervor. The thoughts presented by scholars Urbain and D’Eichthal fall under the belief that the mulatto was situated in the best position to bring about relative peace. However, this was assuming that the “gendered” condition of the racial “other” remained. Under gendered categories the white masculine race could keep the black effeminate race in a submissive position post-emancipation. This was necessary because of the presumed social unrest that would occur post-emancipation. As Naomi Andrews notes in her article on D’Eichthal and Urbain’s letters, the mulatto shifted from a “destructive” character in colonial society to a “salvific” character. If the white and black binary could become flexible then the mulatto would be able to bridge the gap between white and black; the mulatto was after-all both white and black. It is in the context of the post-revolution, pre-emancipation era that the narratives of the African and

---

60 Ibid, 79.
61 Ibid, 80.
62 Ibid, 81.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid, 244.
around protecting the name of the *gens de couleur* who were vilified by the colonists. Raimond argued that many white planters cared for the women who bore them children regardless of race.\(^60\) Raimond notes that in relations between colonists and *métis* before the 1760s "there was no dishonor in knowing them, spending time with them, living with them, forming relationships with their daughters; and men of color were commissioned as officers in the militia."\(^61\) Raimond recognized that the *gens de couleur* saw in the white population what the white population believed of the *gens de couleur*, that the opposing group did not possess virtue.\(^62\) The quotation from Julien Raimond brings up the complicated issue of interracial relationships during the 1780 and 1790s.

**Changing Narratives**

Given the deeply embedded notions of racial difference in pre-revolutionary French and Saint Dominguan society, it is noteworthy that new narratives began to surface that contradicted these popular images of the black and the *métis*, especially because they were produced in the decades directly following the French Revolution and the pivotal Haitian revolution in Saint Domingue. Saint Dominguan society had maintained relative stability until the mid-18\(^{th}\) Century when the tremors of revolution began. The factions in Saint Domingue became more divided and more bitter as 1791 drew nearer. The narratives of the early 19\(^{th}\) Century regarding colonial society show how interracial sexuality played out in a racialized world. These narratives use real contextual circumstances of interracial love and sexuality to provide a place and time to re-evaluate the images of the docile noble savage and the immoral *gens de couleur* that had been practically canonized by colonists in the years preceding the revolution.

By the year 1838 the Western world was nearing the end of a trajectory toward emancipation.\(^63\) The early 19\(^{th}\) Century was marked by steadily growing abolitionist fervor. The thoughts presented by scholars Urbain and D'Eichthal fall under the belief that the mulatto was situated in the best position to bring about relative peace. However, this was assuming that the "gendered" condition of the racial "other" remained.\(^64\) Under gendered categories the white masculine race could keep the black effeminate race in a submissive position post-emancipation. This was necessary because of the presumed social unrest that would occur post-emancipation. As Naomi Andrews notes in her article on D'Eichthal and Urbain's letters, the mulatto shifted from a "destructive" character in colonial society to a "salvific" character.\(^65\) If the white and black binary could become flexible then the mulatto would be able to bridge the gap between white and black; the mulatto was after-all both white and black. It is in the context of the post-revolution, pre-emancipation era that the narratives of the African and

---

60 Ibid, 79.
61 Ibid, 80.
62 Ibid, 81.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid, 244.
the Mulatto began to take on new forms, appropriating old legacies in conjunction with new definitions.

Similar to Moreau de Saint Méry, a white woman, Leonora Sansay wrote a memoir of her time in Haiti, published in 1803. Sansay describes the mulatto women in “Secret History” as rivals to the white ladies who she calls “creole,” and she describes the mulâtresses as devious in their pursuits to be seductive:

Many of them are extremely beautiful; and being destined from their birth to a life of pleasure, they are taught to heighten the power of their charms by all the aids of art, and to express in every look and gesture all the refinements of voluptuousness. It may be said of them, that their very feet speak.⁶⁶ "Ibid."

The important difference to note in Sansay’s writing is that her memoirs were written after the revolution and she described the mulâtresses as faithful to their lovers and virtuous while creole women are corrupt. Moreau did not mention the temperament of the mulâtresses before the revolution but stresses their corruptive sexuality. This is a prime example of the changing ideas about the people of color in Saint Domingue, a slow progression of change that began directly after the revolution and in the very year that Saint Domingue became Haiti and declared its independence.

---

⁶⁶ Leonora Sansay, Secret History (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1808) 95.
⁶⁷ Ibid.

---

La Mulâtre Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches, 1803

The novel produced in 1803 by an anonymous author, La Mâlatre Comme il ya Beaucoup de Blanches is a prime example of the changing perspective on the role of the gens de couleur in colonial society. In this case the characters are a mulâtresses libre and a white creole, a much more “acceptable” pair. This title roughly translates as The Female Mulatto like many other White Women, hinting at an essential “oneness” between white and black women. The story is set in pre-revolutionary Saint Domingue in the 1770s. The plot revolves around the seduction of a young femme de couleur, Mimi and a créole white planter, Sylvain.⁶⁸ Contrary to the racial stereotype of white purity and mixed race impurity, it is Mimi who is both moral and virtuous. As noted by John Garrigus in his article “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife” Moreau de Saint Méry made a point of noting the flaws of the créole. Moreau was of the opinion that Saint Domingue itself was becoming corrupt and that the créole was adding to the corruption by being controlled by baser passions, the character of Sylvain fits this description of the corrupt créole; Mimi is completely contrary to the popular image promoted by Moreau of mulâtresses as licentious and corrupting. Women of color often became the mistresses of plantation owners, not always wives. Sylvain makes it clear that he does not want their love to be public but he does want to be with her. Mimi is a woman with a French education which adds rationality to her overall persona. Addi-

---

⁶⁸ Anonyme, La Mulatre Comme il y a Beaucoup De Blanches (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2007) Originally published 1803. Xii
the Mulatto began to take on new forms, appropriating old legacies in conjunction with new definitions.

Similar to Moreau de Saint Méry, a white woman, Leonora Sansay wrote a memoir of her time in Haiti, published in 1803. Sansay describes the mulatto women in “Secret History” as rivals to the white ladies who she calls “creole,” and she describes the mulâtresses as devious in their pursuits to be seductive:

Many of them are extremely beautiful; and being destined from their birth to a life of pleasure, they are taught to heighten the power of their charms by all the aids of art, and to express in every look and gesture all the refinements of voluptuousness. It may be said of them, that their very feet speak.66 67

The important difference to note in Sansay’s writing is that her memoirs were written after the revolution and she described the mulâtresses as faithful to their lovers and virtuous while creole women are corrupt. Moreau did not mention the temperament of the mulâtresses before the revolution but stresses their corruptive sexuality. This is a prime example of the changing ideas about the people of color in Saint Domingue, a slow progression of change that began directly after the revolution and in the very year that Saint Domingue became Haiti and declared its independence.

66 Leonora Sansay, Secret History (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1808) 95.

67 Ibid.

La Mulâtresse Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches, 1803

The novel produced in 1803 by an anonymous author, La Mulâtresse Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches is a prime example of the changing perspective on the role of the gens de couleur in colonial society. In this case the characters are a mulâtresse libre and a white creole, a much more “acceptable” pair. This title roughly translates as The Female Mulatto like many other White Women, hinting at an essential “oneness” between white and black women. The story is set in pre-revolutionary Saint Domingue in the 1770s. The plot revolves around the seduction of a young femme de couleur, Mimi and a créole white planter, Sylvain.68 Contrary to the racial stereotype of white purity and mixed race impurity, it is Mimi who is both moral and virtuous. As noted by John Garrigus in his article “Tropical Temptress to Republican Wife” Moreau de Saint Méry made a point of noting the flaws of the créole. Moreau was of the opinion that Saint Domingue itself was becoming corrupt and that the créole was adding to the corruption by being controlled by baser passions, the character of Sylvain fits this description of the corrupt créole; Mimi is completely contrary to the popular image promoted by Moreau of mulâtresses as licentious and corrupting. Women of color often became the mistresses of plantation owners, not always wives. Sylvain makes it clear that he does not want their love to be public but he does want to be with her. Mimi is a woman with a French education which adds rationality to her overall persona. Addi-

68 Anonyme, La Mulatre Comme il y a Beaucoup De Blanches (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2007) Originally published 1803. Xii
tionally, Mimi is the character who adopts the most patriotism. According to Mimi Saint Domingue is “Un Pays ou la vertu semble un problème insoluble.” The author endowed Mimi with the same virtue that was claimed by French revolutionaries for French women. Mimi looks upon Saint Domingue as a whole as a dissolute society. Meanwhile Sylvain uses pretty speeches to try and get her to acquiesce to his improper proposals. For most of the novel the two characters communicate through letters. Sylvain begins the correspondence on March 18th 1773 and sends the last letter on May 9th 1775. Toward the end of their correspondence Sylvain’s passion for Mimi causes him to go to her in the night and sneak in to her private rooms. Mimi’s loss of virtue that night causes her to commit suicide, devastated by the shame of losing her honorable status and pure soul. Sylvain is tortured over his responsibility for her death and says,

Pouvoir invincible de la vertu! Il est donc plus fort que tous les sentiments... que celui de l'amour même ! Il était réservé à Mimi de me l'apprendre, de me faire sentir les tourments qu'un seul moment de faiblesse peut causer à une âme pure. C'est moi qui la tua, moi dont la séduction a creuse l'abîme qui me la dérobe...

The invincible power of virtue! It is but the strongest of all the intentions... like that of my love! It was reserved to Mimi to teach me how

the torments of a single moment of weakness is able to cause a single pure soul. It is I who killed her, I whose seduction hollowed out the abyss that I unveiled.

For Sylvain virtue is an impossible goal. Sylvain is deeply remorseful for taking the purity of Mimi’s soul by keeping her quiet and subsequently opening a “hollow abyss” which could be seen as his sorrow. Ultimately, Sylvain realizes that Mimi’s virtue was powerful and very important to her and that he could never achieve what she had achieved and he had also robbed her of that virtue. Sylvain also ends up killing himself in utter despair. The plot alone highlights the significant difference in characteristics that the author gives to the mulâtresses and the créole. The author deconstructs all of the stereotypes against the métis by making the métis character noble and female. The title La Mulâtre is also an interesting choice of words in that the La makes the title feminine and the Mulâtre makes the title masculine. The gender of the main character Mimi is cancelled out in the title as if the author does not see her gender as important to her character. La Mulâtre Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches, published in 1804, is one of the first narratives published after the revolutions in both France and Saint Domingue that reevaluates the common stereotypes of gens de couleur.

Le Nègre and Le Nègre et la Créole ou Memoires d'Eulalie, 1820s

The narratives that are primarily devoted to the theme of vengeance and unrequited love revolve around people of color who are not métis. In these two
tionally, Mimi is the character who adopts the most patriotism. According to Mimi Saint Domingue is “Un Pays ou la vertu semble un problème insoluble.” The author endowed Mimi with the same virtue that was claimed by French revolutionaries for French women. Mimi looks upon Saint Domingue as a whole as a dissolute society. Meanwhile Sylvain uses pretty speeches to try and get her to acquiesce to his improper proposals. For most of the novel the two characters communicate through letters. Sylvain begins the correspondence on March 18th 1773 and sends the last letter on May 9th 1775. Toward the end of their correspondence Sylvain’s passion for Mimi causes him to go to her in the night and sneak in to her private rooms. Mimi’s loss of virtue that night causes her to commit suicide, devastated by the shame of losing her honorable status and pure soul. Sylvain is tortured over his responsibility for her death and says,

**Pouvoir invincible de la vertu! Il est donc plus fort que tous les sentiments... que celui de l’amour même ! Il était réservé à Mimi de me l’apprendre, de me faire sentir les tourments qu’un seul moment de faiblesses peut causer à une âme pure. C’est moi qui la tua, moi dont la séduction a creuse l’abime qui me la dérobe...**

The invincible power of virtue! It is but the strongest of all the intentions... like that of my love! It was reserved to Mimi to teach me how

For Sylvain virtue is an impossible goal. Sylvain is deeply remorseful for taking the purity of Mimi’s soul by keeping her quiet and subsequently opening a “hollow abyss” which could be seen as his sorrow. Ultimately, Sylvain realizes that Mimi’s virtue was powerful and very important to her and that he could never achieve what she had achieved and he had also robbed her of that virtue. Sylvain also ends up killing himself in utter despair. The plot alone highlights the significant difference in characteristics that the author gives to the mulâtres and the créole. The author deconstructs all of the stereotypes against the métis by making the métis character noble and female. The title *La Mulâtre* is also an interesting choice of words in that the *La* makes the title feminine and the *Mulâtre* makes the title masculine. The gender of the main character Mimi is cancelled out in the title as if the author does not see her gender as important to her character. *La Mulâtre Comme il y a Beaucoup de Blanches*, published in 1804, is one of the first narratives published after the revolutions in both France and Saint Domingue that reevaluates the common stereotypes of gens de couleur.

**Le Négre and Le Négre et la Créole ou Memoires d’Eulalie, 1820s**

The narratives that are primarily devoted to the theme of vengeance and unrequited love revolve around people of color who are not métis. In these two
novels the topic of exploration is métissage and the results of suppressed and unrequited love when the primary obstacle is skin color. This category is relevant because the positions of the black characters in relation to the white characters highlight the tension between race and love. The narratives that came out in the 1820s that fall under this description are Le Nègre by Honoré de Balzac and Le Nègre et la Creole ou Mémoires d’Eulalie by Gabrielle de Paban (pseudonym for Honoré de Balzac). These narratives have been hidden for many years from historic research. Honoré de Balzac was a realist French author who wrote during the 19th century about French life. In the 1820s Balzac was living in Paris and developed the plot of Le Nègre and Le Mulâtre in a matter of two years. As a connoisseur of French social life and a commentator on nuanced events Balzac found interest in the dilemmas regarding race relations. Le Nègre and Le Mulâtre are not well known works by Balzac. Balzac wrote both of these stories under different pseudonyms. According to the biographer of Balzac, E.J. Oliver, “it is this breadth in his record of life, this depth in his relation of women and men to society in all its aspects, that also distinguishes him from later novelists.”

Le Nègre, produced in 1822, is a manuscript for a theatrical performance. Balzac wrote this play at the age of 23 in Paris. In three short acts Balzac sets the main characters M. de Gerval a banker, Emilie his wife, M. de Manfred the Marquis de St. Yves and Georges the black steward of M. de Gerval in Paris. The plot begins with Georges lamenting his position which keeps him from the woman he loves, Emilie. Georges does not explain his feelings as sad but rather angry when he proclaims,

\[O \text{ son sourire et son divin accent ont mis le comble a ma rage...depuis deux ans je souffre, depuis deux and je veille ainsi, me consumant en vains efforts pour étouffer ce feu qui brule.}\]

Oh her smile and her divine accent brings me to the limit of my rage... for two years I suffer, for two years I stay awake like this, I am consumed by vain efforts to snuff out the fire that burns.

This description of Georges as impassioned and angry is also followed by an anguished determination to remain silent; after all his love is for the wife of his employer M. Gerval. Georges is unable to remain silent for long, and eventually he gives in and tells Emilie of his love for her. Emilie responds with disgust. Georges seeks vengeance for Emilie’s reproach and for his inability to receive the love he desires because of his social class and skin color. Georges wins the respect of M. de Gerval and tells him that Mme. de Gerval has been sneaking away to Sevres and possibly having an affair while M. de Gerval is away. While Georges’ actions are hardly virtuous they are full of vengeance. Vengeance is a word that Georges uses

---

73 Ibid, 1.
novels the topic of exploration is métissage and the results of suppressed and unrequited love when the primary obstacle is skin color. This category is relevant because the positions of the black characters in relation to the white characters highlight the tension between race and love. The narratives that came out in the 1820s that fall under this description are *Le Nègre* by Honoré de Balzac and *Le Negre et la Creole ou Memoires d’Eulalie* by Gabrielle de Paban (pseudonym for Honoré de Balzac). These narratives have been hidden for many years from historic research. Honoré de Balzac was a realist French author who wrote during the 19th century about French life. In the 1820s Balzac was living in Paris and developed the plot of *Le Nègre* and *Le Mulâtre* in a matter of two years. As a connoisseur of French social life and a commentator on nuanced events Balzac found interest in the dilemmas regarding race relations. *Le Nègre* and *Le Mulâtre* are not well known works by Balzac. Balzac wrote both of these stories under different pseudonyms. According to the biographer of Balzac, E.J. Oliver, “it is this breadth in his record of life, this depth in his relation of women and men to society in all its aspects, that also distinguishes him from later novelists.”

*Le Nègre*, produced in 1822, is a manuscript for a theatrical performance. Balzac wrote this play at the age of 23 in Paris. In three short acts Balzac sets the main characters M. de Gerval a banker, Emilie his wife, M. de Manfred the Marquis de St. Yves and Georges the black steward of M. de Gerval in Paris. The plot begins with Georges lamenting his position which keeps him from the woman he loves, Emilie. Georges does not explain his feelings as sad but rather angry when he proclaims,

\[O \text{ son sourire et son divin accent ont mis le comble à ma rage... depuis deux ans je souffre, depuis deux and je veille ainsi, me consomant en vains efforts pour étouffer ce feu qui brule.}\]

Oh her smile and her divine accent brings me to the limit of my rage... for two years I suffer, for two years I stay awake like this, I am consumed by vain efforts to snuff out the fire that burns.

This description of Georges as impassioned and angry is also followed by an anguished determination to remain silent; after all his love is for the wife of his employer M. Gerval. Georges is unable to remain silent for long, and eventually he gives in and tells Emilie of his love for her. Emilie responds with disgust. Georges seeks vengeance for Emilie’s reproach and for his inability to receive the love he desires because of his social class and skin color. Georges wins the respect of M. de Gerval and tells him that Mme. de Gerval has been sneaking away to Sevres and possibly having an affair while M. de Gerval is away. While Georges’ actions are hardly virtuous they are full of vengeance. *Vengeance* is a word that Georges uses

---

73 Ibid, 1.
75 Ibid, 16.
76 Ibid, 32.
over and over again throughout the novel. When Georges is speaking, his line is prefaced with the title “Georges” however when Gerval realizes that Georges had deceived him his name becomes “Le Nègre.” The word noir translates in English to black while the word nègre in English translates to the word negro. The meaning behind the word nègre is deep and disturbing in the same way that negro is highly derogatory in American parlance. This interesting shift in name designation can be interpreted as a devastating slight on Georges and thus on all people of color for being deceitful. However, it could also be a deeper, ironic message. In calling Georges Le Nègre at the end of the novel, Balzac highlights the idea that race is connected to certain nefarious actions. Rather than simply being “the deceiver” Georges becomes le Nègre. However, Georges’ vengeance seems like a small consequence to atone for a legacy of French oppression of people of color. Additionally Georges’ anger stems from a passionate anger regarding his inability to be with a white woman whom he loves. Gerval’s trust in Georges is evident in his line, “Ah laisse-moi t-embrasser!... de tels devoeums ne sortent que des coueurs africains.”

This line is also directly linked to the stereotype of the “Noble Savage African” who is endlessly devoted to his master. Georges does not say much about what he thinks and feels throughout the play except at the beginning with his soliloquy about Emilie. It is evident that the actor would bring Georges’ frustrations into his physical performance rather than verbal performance. This story also examines the fact that it was much more acceptable for a woman of color to be with a white man in the colonies or (God forbid) France than for a black man to be with a white woman in the colonies or France.

Another novel that treats an unrequited love story between a man of color and a white woman is Le Nègre et la Créole ou Memoirs d’Eulalie. In this novel produced in 1825, Eulalie is a créole white young girl rescued from Saint Domingue during the revolution. Her rescuer is Maky, her nanny who takes Eulalie, along with her son Zambo to Benin, Africa. Although Eulalie grows up amongst the people of Benin, Eulalie was born into a créole white society with strict racial barriers, especially between white women and African men. Zambo confesses his love for Eulalie which she turns down, unable to accept the possibility of métissage. Despite the goodness and nobleness of Maky and her family for raising the white créole Eulalie, the racial line is still drawn.

**Bug Jargal, 1826**

Victor Hugo is best known for his profound work *Les Miserables*. However, Hugo wrote many other works including the little known *Bug Jargal* published in 1826. *Bug Jargal* is set in Saint Domingue both before and during the massive insurrection of 1791. This story opens with Captain D’Auverney telling a group of comrades about his time in Saint Domingue. Leopold D’Auverney arrives in Saint Domingue just before his twentieth birthday and just after the “disasterous decree of 15 May 1791, whereby the national assembly of France granted the free men of

---

over and over again throughout the novel. When Georges is speaking, his line is prefaced with the title “Georges” however when Gerval realizes that Georges had deceived him his name becomes “Le Négre.” The word noir translates in English to black while the word nègre in English translates to the word negro. The meaning behind the word nègre is deep and disturbing in the same way that negro is highly derogatory in American parlance. This interesting shift in name designation can be interpreted as a devastating slight on Georges and thus on all people of color for being deceitful. However, it could also be a deeper, ironic message. In calling Georges Le Négre at the end of the novel, Balzac highlights the idea that race is connected to certain nefarious actions. Rather than simply being “the deceiver” Georges becomes le Négre. However, Georges’ vengeance seems like a small consequence to atone for a legacy of French oppression of people of color. Additionally Georges’ anger stems from a passionate anger regarding his inability to be with a white woman whom he loves. Gerval’s trust in Georges is evident in his line, “Ah laisse-moi t’embrasser!... de tels devouements ne sortent que des coueurs africains.” This line is also directly linked to the stereotype of the “Noble Savage African” who is endlessly devoted to his master. Georges does not say much about what he thinks and feels throughout the play except at the beginning with his soliloquy about Emilie. It is evident that the actor would bring Georges’ frustrations into his physical performance rather than verbal performance. This story also examines the fact that it was much more acceptable for a woman of color to be with a white man in the colonies or (God forbid) France than for a black man to be with a white woman in the colonies or France.

Another novel that treats an unrequited love story between a man of color and a white woman is Le Négre et la Créole ou Memoirs d’Eulalie. In this novel produced in 1825, Eulalie is a créole white young girl rescued from Saint Domingue during the revolution. Her rescuer is Maky, her nanny who takes Eulalie, along with her son Zambo to Benin, Africa. Although Eulalie grows up amongst the people of Benin, Eulalie was born into a créole white society with strict racial barriers, especially between white women and African men. Zambo confesses his love for Eulalie which she turns down, unable to accept the possibility of métissage. Despite the goodness and nobleness of Maky and her family for raising the white créole Eulalie, the racial line is still drawn.

**Bug Jargal, 1826**

Victor Hugo is best known for his profound work Les Miserables. However, Hugo wrote many other works including the little known Bug Jargal published in 1826. Bug Jargal is set in Saint Domingue both before and during the massive insurrection of 1791. This story opens with Captain D’Auvrney telling a group of comrades about his time in Saint Domingue. Leopold D’Auvrney arrives in Saint Domingue just before his twentieth birthday and just after the “disastrous decree of 15 May 1791, whereby the national assembly of France granted the free men of

---

77 Ibid, 92.

colour the same political rights as the whites.”

The novel proceeds to explain that the decree caused unrest in the colony amongst the white colonists and the slaves; foreshadowing of the revolution to come. D’Auverney’s principle cause for entering the colony of Saint Domingue was to meet his fiancé Marie, the niece of D’Auverney’s uncle. The story begins with the tense circumstances of an unrequited love. Marie has had recent visits from an unknown man who serenades her while hidden behind the bushes. Marie tells D’Auverney and her uncle of these strange encounters, causing both men to make plans to find him out. D’Auverney has a brief encounter with the man and finds that he must be a plantation slave. D’Auverney is both touched by the “generosity in the sentiment that had persuaded my unknown rival to spare me” but also finds that “every bone in my body rejected the revolting supposition that I had a slave for a rival.” D’Auverney finds that a slave also saved the life of Marie from the jaws of a crocodile. This same slave is arrested for nobly stopping the plantation master from striking a sleeping slave with a whip. The slave named Pierrot, imprisoned for his insubordination is released upon Marie’s request. D’Auverney sees to it that Pierrot is released and is impressed by his kindness and virtuosity.

The plot turns on August 22nd 1791 when the slaves of the Northern Plain begin their revolt. D’Auverney’s uncle is killed and Marie is carried off by Pierrot. D’Auverney assumes that Pierrot has stolen her for his own pleasure and chooses to find him and Marie. In the midst of the insurgency D’Auverney joins a defensive outpost, is captured and faces the wrath of the ruthless insurrection leader Jean Biassou. It is only the noble Pierrot, now called Bug Jargal the legendary insurgent leader who can rescue D’Auverney. Bug Jargal arrives at the camp of Biassou to save D’Auverney. Biassou makes a deal with D’Auverney that he may leave for a few hours but must return. Pierrot selflessly brings D’Auverney to Marie, saddened by his inability to be with her but desiring to make her happy by reuniting her with her fiancé. Bug Jargal leaves the two alone in the forrest where Marie falls asleep. D’Auverney sneaks away and returns to Biassou to die, however is once again saved by Bug Jargal who then rushes off to save ten more insurgents who have been captured by the whites. D’Auverney arrives at the Colonists’ camp just as Bug Jargal is being executed.

The story of Bug Jargal endows the legendary slave insurgent chief with the most virtuous and noble characteristics. The character of Pierrot (Bug Jargal) is self-sacrificing, strong, and honorable while the slave master is sinister and cruel. Despite his love for Marie, Pierrot does not choose to selfishly take her for himself. In this later novel the chief protagonist is developed into a character who is seen by the narrator as remarkable. Indeed, Pierrot is remarkable based upon the standards set for people of color in the years preceding the revolution. The character of Pierrot universally de-constructs the popular image of the African slave as docile and the person of color as depraved. Likewise the character of Biassou is en-
The novel proceeds to explain that the decree caused unrest in the colony amongst the white colonists and the slaves; foreshadowing of the revolution to come. D’Auverney’s principle cause for entering the colony of Saint Domingue was to meet his fiancé Marie, the niece of D’Auverney’s uncle. The story begins with the tense circumstances of an unrequited love. Marie has had recent visits from an unknown man who serenades her while hidden behind the bushes. Marie tells D’Auverney and her uncle of these strange encounters, causing both men to make plans to find him out. D’Auverney has a brief encounter with the man and finds that he must be a plantation slave. D’Auverney is both touched by the “generosity in the sentiment that had persuaded my unknown rival to spare me” but also finds that “every bone in my body rejected the revolting supposition that I had a slave for a rival.”

D’Auverney finds that a slave also saved the life of Marie from the jaws of a crocodile. This same slave is arrested for nobly stopping the plantation master from striking a sleeping slave with a whip. The slave named Pierrot, imprisoned for his insubordination is released upon Marie’s request. D’Auverney sees to it that Pierrot is released and is impressed by his kindness and virtuosity.

The plot turns on August 22nd 1791 when the slaves of the Northern Plain begin their revolt. D’Auverney’s uncle is killed and Marie is carried off by Pierrot. D’Auverney assumes that Pierrot has stolen her for his own pleasure and chooses to find him and Marie. In the midst of the insurgency D’Auverney joins a defensive outpost, is captured and faces the wrath of the ruthless insurrection leader Jean Biassou. It is only the noble Pierrot, now called Bug Jargal the legendary insurgent leader who can rescue D’Auverney. Bug Jargal arrives at the camp of Biassou to save D’Auverney. Biassou makes a deal with D’Auverney that he may leave for a few hours but must return. Pierrot selflessly brings D’Auverney to Marie, saddened by his inability to be with her but desiring to make her happy by reuniting her with her fiancé. Bug Jargal leaves the two alone in the forest where Marie falls asleep. D’Auverney sneaks away and returns to Biassou to die, however is once again saved by Bug Jargal who then rushes off to save ten more insurgents who have been captured by the whites. D’Auverney arrives at the Colonists’ camp just as Bug Jargal is being executed.

The story of Bug Jargal endows the legendary slave insurgent chief with the most virtuous and noble characteristics. The character of Pierrot (Bug Jargal) is self-sacrificing, strong, and honorable while the slave master is sinister and cruel. Despite his love for Marie, Pierrot does not choose to selfishly take her for himself. In this later novel the chief protagonist is developed into a character who is seen by the narrator as remarkable. Indeed, Pierrot is remarkable based upon the standards set for people of color in the years preceding the revolution. The character of Pierrot universally de-constructs the popular image of the African slave as docile and the person of color as depraved. Likewise the character of Biassou is en-

80 Ibid, 73.
81 Ibid,81.
dowed with a vengeful spirit. While Biassou’s character
is sinister and formidable, he does not come across as
blameworthy or wrong in his pursuit for freedom from
the white masters’ dictates.

**Le Mulatre, 1937**

In 1837 Victor Séjour wrote his short story *Le
Mulâtre* or The Mulatto. As a son of a *gens de couleur*
from Saint Domingue Séjour’s connection to the colony
and its past was strong. Of all of the accounts ad-
dressed in this essay Séjour’s *Le Mulâtre* is the most
chilling. The story is set in Saint Domingue before the
revolution. This story addresses the issues of
métissage on the deepest level, the virtue of a *gens de
couleur*, and his ultimate vengeance for the wrongs
done to him. Métissage lays the foundation for this
entire story. Alfred the young white planter is at an
auction for women from Africa. Alfred buys a Senega-
lese women named Laïsa. As was customary for the
beginnings of a *gens de couleur* bloodline Alfred takes
Laïsa as his mistress. Laïsa’s son, Georges, was born
a slave. Laïsa and Georges were sent to a desolate hut
on Alfred’s property when the slave master tired of
Laïsa’s company. Georges’ upbringing shows him to be
an extremely loyal boy yet passionate. Georges honors
his mother’s dying wish that he only open the pouch
with his father’s portrait in it when he turns 25.
Georges continues to work under Alfred becoming
close to him and unaware of their relation to one
another. Georges is recognized as one of Alfred’s most
loyal servants and is described as “handsome and
vigorous.”82 Georges even defends Alfred from the
threat of murder, saves the life of his master and is
wounded in the process. Georges’ loyalty to his master
is not rewarded when Georges’ wife Zelia is solicited by
Alfred. Zelia fights Alfred off until he falls and hits his
head. The punishment for Zelia is death. Despite
Georges’ loyalty and service to Alfred, he refuses the
pleas of Georges and makes sure that the “woman, for
having been too virtuous, died the kind of death meted
out to the vilest criminal.”83 Georges’ vengeance takes
him three years because Georges’ rage cannot be
tamed by anything but a death as terrible as the
unjust death of Zelia. The final scene in this short
story culminates in the birth of Alfred’s son, followed
by Georges poisoning Alfred’s wife and forcing Alfred to
watch her die. Alfred’s pleas are ignored as Georges
decapitates him. Only then does George realize Alfred
is his father. Georges then shoots himself and dies
beside his father.

Séjour’s story shows that the nature of the mulatto
is to be virtuous. George proves that he is indeed a
virtuous character until he is crossed by his white
master, at which point his vengeance cannot be
quelled without bloodshed. Additionally, Laïsa and
Zelia are characters of virtue forced into positions of
immorality by the white master. The argument that is
being made in “The Mulatto” is that the white man is

---

83 Ibid, 16.
dowed with a vengeful spirit. While Biassou’s character is sinister and formidable, he does not come across as blameworthy or wrong in his pursuit for freedom from the white masters’ dictates.

**Le Mulatre, 1937**

In 1837 Victor Séjour wrote his short story *Le Mulâtre* or The Mulatto. As a son of a *gens de couleur* from Saint Domingue Séjour’s connection to the colony and its past was strong. Of all of the accounts addressed in this essay Séjour’s *Le Mulâtre* is the most chilling. The story is set in Saint Domingue before the revolution. This story addresses the issues of *métissage* on the deepest level, the virtue of a *gens de couleur*, and his ultimate vengeance for the wrongs done to him. *Métissage* lays the foundation for this entire story. Alfred the young white planter is at an auction for women from Africa. Alfred buys a Senegalese women named Laïsa. As was customary for the beginnings of a *gens de couleur* bloodline Alfred takes Laïsa as his mistress. Laïsa’s son, Georges, was born a slave. Laïsa and Georges were sent to a desolate hut on Alfred’s property when the slave master tired of Laïsa’s company. Georges’ upbringing shows him to be an extremely loyal boy yet passionate. Georges honors his mother’s dying wish that he only open the pouch with his father’s portrait in it when he turns 25. Georges continues to work under Alfred becoming close to him and unaware of their relation to one another. Georges is recognized as one of Alfred’s most loyal servants and is described as “handsome and vigorous.”

Georges even defends Alfred from the threat of murder, saves the life of his master and is wounded in the process. Georges’ loyalty to his master is not rewarded when Georges’ wife Zelia is solicited by Alfred. Zelia fights Alfred off until he falls and hits his head. The punishment for Zelia is death. Despite Georges’ loyalty and service to Alfred, he refuses the pleas of Georges and makes sure that the “woman, for having been too virtuous, died the kind of death meted out to the vilest criminal.” Georges’ vengeance takes him three years because Georges’ rage cannot be tamed by anything but a death as terrible as the unjust death of Zelia. The final scene in this short story culminates in the birth of Alfred’s son, followed by Georges poisoning Alfred’s wife and forcing Alfred to watch her die. Alfred’s pleas are ignored as Georges decapitates him. Only then does George realize Alfred is his father. Georges then shoots himself and dies beside his father.

Séjour’s story shows that the nature of the mulatto is to be virtuous. George proves that he is indeed a virtuous character until he is crossed by his white master, at which point his vengeance cannot be quelled without bloodshed. Additionally, Laïsa and Zelia are characters of virtue forced into positions of immorality by the white master. The argument that is being made in “The Mulatto” is that the white man is

---


83 Ibid, 16.
the un-virtuous character. Séjour memorializes the mulatto as a man who is justified in his acts of vengeance. The unspeakable crime committed against him and his wife warrants retaliation. Séjour’s depiction of Georges at the end portrays him as half crazed. The reactions of Georges are entirely brought on by the acts of Alfred. Séjour highlights the hypocrisy inherent in a system where the white man calls the métis immoral and effeminate when in actual fact the complacent and immoral character is the white master. The métis are also the “products” of the white man as much as they are the children of black women. Alfred’s character and actions mirror the character and actions of the créole Sylvain in la Mulâtre Comme il y a Beacoup de Blanches. Sylvain and Alfred occupy the position of the lustful and degenerate character whose appetites brings on the death of all the characters. In contrast to the narratives of the pre-revolutionary years, debauchery is not an attribute of the métis.

Georges, 1843
In 1843 Alexandre Dumas, a mixed race Frenchman, wrote the novel Georges. In the usual Dumas fashion this novel is a story of adventure, intrigue and vengeance. However at the core of this story is racial tension. This novel is set on Ile de France which becomes British Mauritius in the middle of the plot. While this novel is not set directly in Saint Domingue it is set in a very similar colony and deals directly with the treatment of the gens de couleur society. Georges Munier is the son of a wealthy mulatto plantation owner. The story begins with the humiliation of Georges’ father by the wealthy white Malmédie family. Despite their relative wealth, the status of the Muniers is diminished because of their genealogy. Dumas places Georges in the unique position of being a mulatto with very light skin. The father of Georges, Pierre Munier is described as “slightly stooped, not by age, but by consciousness of his inferior position. His frizzy hair and his coppery skin marked him out immediately as a mulatto, one of those unfortunate colonial beings who cannot be forgiven for their color no matter how much success or wealth… they might attain.”

Georges is extremely angry by the way that his father is treated by the Malmédies and the way that Pierre shrinks back rather than fights. Georges goes to France where he works to perfect himself in every possible way. Georges becomes an intelligent, fit and attractive young man so that when he returns to Mauritius he draws considerable attention to himself. Georges has a goal of forever changing the discrimination that is rampant in Mauritius. However, Georges also faces the obstacle of being in love with Sara Malmédie a white woman. When the Malmédies refuse to give Sara in marriage to Georges, his anger grows. Georges ends up leading an insurrection against the white elites. The insurrection ends up failing and Georges is condemned to death. However, in true Dumas fashion Georges is rescued by his father and his brother Jacques who has become a slave-trading pirate. Georges and Sara end up sailing off with Pierre and Jacques to safer lands.

The character of Georges is endowed with the traits of a hero. Dumas shows that the character and the strength of Georges are learned and that his nature is

the un-virtuous character. Séjour memorializes the mulatto as a man who is justified in his acts of vengeance. The unspeakable crime committed against him and his wife warrants retaliation. Séjour’s depiction of Georges at the end portrays him as half crazed. The reactions of Georges are entirely brought on by the acts of Alfred. Séjour highlights the hypocrisy inherent in a system where the white man calls the métis immoral and effeminate when in actual fact the complacent and immoral character is the white master. The métis are also the “products” of the white man as much as they are the children of black women. Alfred’s character and actions mirror the character and actions of the créole Sylvain in *la Mulâtre Comme il y a Beacoup de Blanches*. Sylvain and Alfred occupy the position of the lustful and degenerate character whose appetites brings on the death of all the characters. In contrast to the narratives of the pre-revolutionary years, debauchery is not an attribute of the métis.

**Georges, 1843**

In 1843 Alexandre Dumas, a mixed race Frenchman, wrote the novel *Georges*. In the usual Dumas fashion this novel is a story of adventure, intrigue and vengeance. However at the core of this story is racial tension. This novel is set on Île de France which becomes British Mauritius in the middle of the plot. While this novel is not set directly in Saint Domingue it is set in a very similar colony and deals directly with the treatment of the gens de couleur society. Georges Munier is the son of a wealthy mulatto plantation owner. The story begins with the humiliation of Georges’ father by the wealthy white Malmédie family. Despite their relative wealth, the status of the Muniers is diminished because of their genealogy. Dumas places Georges in the unique position of being a mulatto with very light skin. The father of Georges, Pierre Munier is described as “slightly stooped, not by age, but by consciousness of his inferior position. His frizzy hair and his coppery skin marked him out immediately as a mulatto, one of those unfortunate colonial beings who cannot be forgiven for their color no matter how much success or wealth... they might attain.” Georges is extremely angry by the way that his father is treated by the Malmédies and the way that Pierre shrinks back rather than fights. Georges goes to France where he works to perfect himself in every possible way. Georges becomes an intelligent, fit and attractive young man so that when he returns to Mauritius he draws considerable attention to himself. Georges has a goal of forever changing the discrimination that is rampant in Mauritius. However, Georges also faces the obstacle of being in love with Sara Malmédie a white woman. When the Malmédies refuse to give Sara in marriage to Georges, his anger grows. Georges ends up leading an insurrection against the white elites. The insurrection ends up failing and Georges is condemned to death. However, in true Dumas fashion Georges is rescued by his father and his brother Jacques who has become a slave-trading pirate. Georges and Sara end up sailing off with Pierre and Jacques to safer lands.

The character of Georges is endowed with the traits of a hero. Dumas shows that the character and the strength of Georges are learned and that his nature is

---

not unchangeably immoral. This novel pushes many of the boundaries of racial lines in that it suggests that a white woman would accept a mulâtre as a husband. In all of the previous novels and stories the racial tensions within love affairs end in tragedy. In the 1840s Dumas leaves his readers with the thought that perhaps these characters will live happily despite completely different family lineage.

Conclusion

The age of Revolution was a time of immense change in society. In France the overturning of the monarchy and the strict redefinition of gender enforced drastic changes in the public and private sphere. Likewise as Saint Domingue attempted to become more French it adopted French discourse on the position of women and also endowed its citizenry with either masculine or feminine characteristics. The revolutions brought on a whole new wave of thought that forced colonists and French people alike to re-evaluate the position of people of color. The 1820s was a time of great importance for the métis population in that it made room for a virtuous and heroic population. As the century continued and emancipation became probable the narratives regarding race, gender and métissage grew more and more daring. However, despite this re-casting of the gens de couleur and black population, racial categorization still marked French discourse. Professor Dina Sherzer notes that France “is a country which has constructed its identity on the concept of universality, and yet particularism is thriving.”

Echoes of the French colonial legacy can be heard in the modern French public sphere. Evidence of existing racial tension can be found in day to day news regarding French immigration and issues with the vast and decrepit Banlieue of Paris, filled with people of color. Additionally with the French presence in Algiers and the reliance on colonials in WWII France’s ‘colored’ population due to immigration is immense and therefore the métis population has grown exponentially. To be métis in France is still complex because of the binary ideology that has deep roots in the nation. Similar to the situation in the United States the remnants of race discrimination still exist in social and political structures and even individual xenophobia. Surveying the history of the changing roles of the black and métis populations along with the changing role of métissage in the colonies is invaluable to understanding and re-evaluating what it means to be French today.

Michaela Ahlstrom graduated from Santa Clara University with honors in 2014. Ahlstrom has been an active member of the history department as a member of the Phi Alpha Theta chapter and Student Research assistant for the department. Ahlstrom earned her degree in history with a minor in political science in June of this academic year. Ahlstrom is honored to have been asked to edit Historical Perspectives and to be able to work with the talented faculty and staff of the Santa Clara University History department. Ahlstrom intends to attend graduate school after a gap year. Ahlstrom will spend the summer on a short-term mission in Haiti, working for Equal Rights Advocates and working for the SCU history department.

not unchangeably immoral. This novel pushes many of the boundaries of racial lines in that it suggests that a white woman would accept a *mulâtre* as a husband. In all of the previous novels and stories the racial tensions within love affairs end in tragedy. In the 1840s Dumas leaves his readers with the thought that perhaps these characters will live happily despite completely different family lineage.

**Conclusion**

The age of Revolution was a time of immense change in society. In France the overturning of the monarchy and the strict redefinition of gender enforced drastic changes in the public and private sphere. Likewise as Saint Domingue attempted to become more French it adopted French discourse on the position of women and also endowed its citizenry with either masculine or feminine characteristics. The revolutions brought on a whole new wave of thought that forced colonists and French people alike to re-evaluate the position of people of color. The 1820s was a time of great importance for the *métis* population in that it made room for a virtuous and heroic population. As the century continued and emancipation became probable the narratives regarding race, gender and *métissage* grew more and more daring. However, despite this re-casting of the *gens de couleur* and black population, racial categorization still marked French discourse. Professor Dina Sherzer notes that France “is a country which has constructed its identity on the concept of universality, and yet particularism is thriving.”

Echoes of the French colonial legacy can be heard in the modern French public sphere. Evidence of existing racial tension can be found in day to day news regarding French immigration and issues with the vast and decrepit *Banlieue* of Paris, filled with people of color. Additionally with the French presence in Algiers and the reliance on colonials in WWII France’s ‘colored’ population due to immigration is immense and therefore the *métis* population has grown exponentially. To be *metis* in France is still complex because of the binary ideology that has deep roots in the nation. Similar to the situation in the United States the remnants of race discrimination still exist in social and political structures and even individual xenophobia. Surveying the history of the changing roles of the black and *métis* populations along with the changing role of *métissage* in the colonies is invaluable to understanding and re-evaluating what it means to be French today.

Michaela Ahlstrom graduated from Santa Clara University with honors in 2014. Ahlstrom has been an active member of the history department as a member of the Phi Alpha Theta chapter and Student Research assistant for the department. Ahlstrom earned her degree in history with a minor in political science in June of this academic year. Ahlstrom is honored to have been asked to edit Historical Perspectives and to be able to work with the talented faculty and staff of the Santa Clara University History department. Ahlstrom intends to attend graduate school after a gap year. Ahlstrom will spend the summer on a short-term mission in Haiti, working for Equal Rights Advocates and working for the SCU history department.

---

Strategic Silences and Sexual Morality: Gender, Sex Education, and the Impartiality of the Royal Commission Report on Venereal Disease

Kori Lennon

World War I dawned at the end of the Edwardian Period’s “Age of Anxiety,” an atmosphere swirling with the fears of imperial decline. Venereal disease, the “hideous scourge,” “terrible peril,” or “secret plague,” lurked as a constant threat to the nation’s manpower, laying waste to “the best manhood of the nation” and endangering the future of the British race.¹ In 1913, under pressure from activists, medical groups, and the press, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases. By 1916, the Commission had produced the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, which unequivocally stated that “action should be taken without delay” to improve government monitoring, treatment, and education.² Much scholarship characterizes the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease as intentionally neutral and mundane, avoiding the contentious debates concerning compulsory treatment, prophylaxis and sex education. Contrary to this purportedly scientific, neutral characterization, the Royal Commission Report is heavily influenced by the beliefs of its members and possesses a distinct ideological identity, directing policy with strategic silences, promoting a public health campaign based in moral purity and reinforcing traditional notions of femininity, family, and sexuality.

Prior research concerning WWI venereal disease has centered around three main themes: gendered discourse, the compulsion/voluntarism debate and the prophylaxis debate. Venereal disease is vital to the formation of imperial British identity, as Phillipa Levine argues in her examination of the regulation of prostitution and venereal disease in the British colonies. The gendered discourse on sexual and racial difference is a central theme in venereal disease policy, utilized to distinguish the superior British citizen from a native, promiscuous and diseased other.³ The Royal Commission Report is grounded in the concern for racial superiority, but makes a marked departure from past venereal disease policy, which centered on the regulation of prostitution. With a domestic, civilian focus, the Royal Commission Report is influenced by the phenomena of “khaki fever,” and the public concern for the national ignorance in matters of venereal disease, sexual health, and moral education. Khaki fever, as articulated by Angela Woolacott, located “gender and morality as central concerns of debate and regulation,” a theme reflected in the Royal Commission Report and its outgrowth, the National Council for

² Doan, "Sex Education and the Great War Soldier," 647.
Strategic Silences and Sexual Morality: Gender, Sex Education, and the Impartiality of the Royal Commission Report on Venereal Disease

Kori Lennon

World War I dawned at the end of the Edwardian Period’s “Age of Anxiety,” an atmosphere swirling with the fears of imperial decline. Venereal disease, the “hideous scourge,” “terrible peril,” or “secret plague,” lurked as a constant threat to the nation’s manpower, laying waste to “the best manhood of the nation” and endangering the future of the British race. In 1913, under pressure from activists, medical groups, and the press, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases. By 1916, the Commission had produced the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, which unequivocally stated that “action should be taken without delay” to improve government monitoring, treatment, and education.

Much scholarship characterizes the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease as intentionally neutral and mundane, avoiding the contentious debates concerning compulsory treatment, prophylaxis and sex education. Contrary to this purportedly scientific, neutral characterization, the Royal Commission Report is heavily influenced by the beliefs of its members and possesses a distinct ideological identity, directing policy with strategic silences, promoting a public health campaign based in moral purity and reinforcing traditional notions of femininity, family, and sexuality.

Prior research concerning WWI venereal disease has centered around three main themes: gendered discourse, the compulsion/voluntarism debate and the prophylaxis debate. Venereal disease is vital to the formation of imperial British identity, as Phillipa Levine argues in her examination of the regulation of prostitution and venereal disease in the British colonies. The gendered discourse on sexual and racial difference is a central theme in venereal disease policy, utilized to distinguish the superior British citizen from a native, promiscuous and diseased other. The Royal Commission Report is grounded in the concern for racial superiority, but makes a marked departure from past venereal disease policy, which centered on the regulation of prostitution. With a domestic, civilian focus, the Royal Commission Report is influenced by the phenomena of “khaki fever,” and the public concern for the national ignorance in matters of venereal disease, sexual health, and moral education. Khaki fever, as articulated by Angela Woolacott, located “gender and morality as central concerns of debate and regulation,” a theme reflected in the Royal Commission Report and its outgrowth, the National Council for Public Education.

---

2 Doan, “Sex Education and the Great War Soldier,” 647.
trend, important limits of voluntarism, outlined by Pamela Cox, suggest that Britain’s move from the coercive Contagious Diseases Act to a voluntary system of VD treatment during the First World War was “dependent on the fact that certain categories of people continued to be subject to unquestioned non-voluntary treatments – old-style sources of contagion (soldiers and sexually transgressive women) and newly styled victims (babies and children).”

Emerging from the trend toward voluntarism was a concern for treatment and a developing debate surrounding prophylaxis, which Bridget A. Towers indicates developed more significantly during the inter-war period. The Royal Commission’s specific approach to venereal disease, with its strategic silences and endorsement of the anti-prophylactic NCCVD, reflects traditional social beliefs that identified prophylaxis as a catalyst for immorality and created the conditions for the heated prophylaxis debate that developed in the 1920s. The Royal Commission Report is characterized by Lesley Hall as an endeavor that “epitomized British compromise, with its strengths and weaknesses,” producing a system that “worked well in getting treatment to the afflicted.”

The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease, 1913-1916

The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease was appointed in 1913, in response to increasing agitation...
Combatting Venereal Disease (NCCVD).\textsuperscript{4}

Much of the historical debate concerning compulsory and voluntary policy centers on the efficacy of their application in the military. As Harrison argues, groups like the NCCVD, an educational body, worked in concert with coercive military measures like regulations 40D and 35C, which authorized the government to imprison women who infected soldiers with venereal disease.\textsuperscript{5} Edward Beardsley challenges this perspective, arguing that the NCCVD’s educational approach, promoting early treatment rather than preventative prophylaxis, “was not working” in the military context, and coercive regulations served as the tipping point toward efficacy.\textsuperscript{6} Despite smaller disagreements concerning military policy, Hall, Davidson, and Evans have shown “that state measures to enforce treatment during the operation of the CD Acts and during the two world wars were “atypical” episodes in a longer social history of VD marked by a clear turn to voluntarism,” a trend that is evident in the Royal Commission’s disapproval of coercive tactics.\textsuperscript{7} Despite this trend, important limits of voluntarism, outlined by Pamela Cox, suggest that Britain’s move from the coercive Contagious Diseases Act to a voluntary system of VD treatment during the First World War was “dependent on the fact that certain categories of people continued to be subject to unquestioned non-voluntary treatments – old-style sources of contagion (soldiers and sexually transgressive women) and newly styled victims (babies and children).”\textsuperscript{8} Emerging from the trend toward voluntarism was a concern for treatment and a developing debate surrounding prophylaxis, which Bridget A. Towers indicates developed more significantly during the inter-war period. The Royal Commission’s specific approach to venereal disease, with its strategic silences and endorsement of the anti-prophylactic NCCVD, reflects traditional social beliefs that identified prophylaxis as a catalyst for immorality and created the conditions for the heated prophylaxis debate that developed in the 1920s. The Royal Commission Report is characterized by Lesley Hall as an endeavor that “epitomized British compromise, with its strengths and weaknesses,” producing a system that “worked well in getting treatment to the afflicted.”\textsuperscript{9}

\textbf{The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease, 1913-1916}

The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease was appointed in 1913, in response to increasing agitation for the enforcement of VD treatment.


\textsuperscript{8} Cox, “Compulsion, Voluntarism, and Venereal Disease,” 115.

\textsuperscript{9} Hall, Lesley A., \textit{Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880.} (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 318.
and press coverage that raised public awareness of the “great scourge” of venereal disease. With rampant fears about the decline of the British race and reports exposing the lack of physical fitness among its military recruits, venereal disease was positioned to become an issue of paramount importance to the nation. The 1910 introduction of Salvarsan, an arsenic-based drug used to treat syphilis, likely helped to jump-start the new wave of political concern for venereal disease. Echoing public sentiment, the 1913 International Congress of Medicine had also passed “strong resolutions” in favor of an inquiry into the prevalence of venereal disease, and shortly thereafter, when Parliament met, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Chaired by Lord Sydenham, better known as Sir George Clarke, the Commission was “well composed, not merely of officials and doctors, but of experienced men and women in various fields.” Lord Sydenham, an aging Edwardian who firmly believed in the British Empire and deeply feared the possibility of its decline, was a military man heralded by the London Times as having “had the most varied experience in the service of Empire,” having served in the colonial Army and in various administrative positions. Other men on the commission included prominent lawyers, civil servants, religious figures, and scientists, many who had held commission positions before and whose backgrounds were in the scientific and medical fields.

Among Lord Sydenham’s fellow Commission members were, however, three women: Dr. Mary Dacomb Scharlieb, Louise Creighton, and Elizabeth Miriam Burgwin. Mary Scharlieb was an influential doctor who believed firmly in the moral and scientific education of women and their children. She would go on to become a guiding figure in the early publications of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease. Louise Creighton was the widowed wife of the Bishop of London and an active member of the church. She was, for a time, the president of the National Union of Women Workers, a “non-political organization of middle-class women dedicated to improving the lives of working women,” and remained active in rescue work for the remainder of her life. Elizabeth Miriam Burgwin was a leading figure in the British education system. She was the London School Board’s first superintendent of schools and an enthusiastic member of the National Union of Elementary Teachers, while also cherishing her role on the National League for Opposing Women’s Suffrage. Burgwin opposed sex education in elementary schools, placing the burden on parents to raise their offspring “in a healthy manner.”

The influence of Sydenham and his fellow commissioners on the Final Report was significant, imbuing conclusions with traditional concerns of Britain’s moral integrity, racial preservation, and family values.

The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases met
and press coverage that raised public awareness of the "great scourge" of venereal disease. With rampant fears about the decline of the British race and reports exposing the lack of physical fitness among its military recruits, venereal disease was positioned to become an issue of paramount importance to the nation. The 1910 introduction of Salvarsan, an arsenic-based drug used to treat syphilis, likely helped to jump-start the new wave of political concern for venereal disease. Echoing public sentiment, the 1913 International Congress of Medicine had also passed "strong resolutions" in favor of an inquiry into the prevalence of venereal disease, and shortly thereafter, when Parliament met, the Prime Minister announced the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Chaired by Lord Sydenham, better known as Sir George Clarke, the Commission was "well composed, not merely of officials and doctors, but of experienced men and women in various fields." Lord Sydenham, an aging Edwardian who firmly believed in the British Empire and deeply feared the possibility of its decline, was a military man heralded by the London Times as having "had the most varied experience in the service of Empire," having served in the colonial Army and in various administrative positions. Other men on the commission included prominent lawyers, civil servants, religious figures, and scientists, many who had held commission positions before and whose backgrounds were in the scientific and medical fields.

Among Lord Sydenham's fellow Commission members were, however, three women: Dr. Mary Dacomb Scharlieb, Louise Creighton, and Elizabeth Miriam Burgwin. Mary Scharlieb was an influential doctor who believed firmly in the moral and scientific education of women and their children. She would go on to become a guiding figure in the early publications of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease. Louise Creighton was the widowed wife of the Bishop of London and an active member of the church. She was, for a time, the president of the National Union of Women Workers, a "non-political organization of middle-class women dedicated to improving the lives of working women," and remained active in rescue work for the remainder of her life. Elizabeth Miriam Burgwin was a leading figure in the British education system. She was the London School Board's first superintendent of schools and an enthusiastic member of the National Union of Elementary Teachers, while also cherishing her role on the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage. Burgwin opposed sex education in elementary schools, placing the burden on parents to raise their offspring "in a healthy manner."

The influence of Sydenham and his fellow commissioners on the Final Report was significant, imbuing conclusions with traditional concerns of Britain's moral integrity, racial preservation, and family values.

The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases met

10 Ibid., 316.
11 Ibid.
for three years, hearing copious amounts of testimony concerning the prevalence of “the terrible peril to our race,” including information about disease rates, existing provisions for prevention, treatment methods and possible solutions.\textsuperscript{15} Most shocking to the public were the high rates of infection described by the Commission’s report. Accurate estimates of infection proved to be unobtainable, due in large part to a “lack of adequate records” and “tendency to concealment;” however, the report famously estimated that in the cities, at least 10 percent of the population had syphilis and a significantly higher proportion was likely to have gonorrhea.\textsuperscript{16} Syphilis was characterized as a “town disease,” occurring at much higher rates in urban areas, and was found to be more prevalent among males than females.\textsuperscript{17} Information concerning infection rates was represented with remarkable neutrality, and contemporary commentators lauded the report for crediting differences in disease rates to “differences in social condition,” which did “not represent any ascending grade in virtue or sexual abstinence.”\textsuperscript{18} The intentional neutrality of the Royal Commission Report reflects the cultural fixation on the degeneration of the British race, in which sexually transmitted disease is characterized as “one of the greatest public evils – a chief cause of premature death, of untold suffering, of racial degeneration, of blindness, of deafness, of ugliness, of everything that is hateful.”\textsuperscript{19}

The report examined every aspect of the government’s response, including all past legislation concerning venereal disease, and recommended a host of radical changes.\textsuperscript{20} Shockingly high rates of venereal disease in the military and in the general public were complemented by the assertion that British medical practitioners failed to appreciate the significance of venereal disease and were largely unfamiliar with methods of diagnosis and treatment, including the Wasserman test and Salvarsan.\textsuperscript{21} The report “insisted that measures should be taken to render the best modern treatment, which should be free to all, readily available for the whole community, in such a way that those affected will have no hesitation in taking advantage of the facilities thus offered.”\textsuperscript{22} Complementing the increased access to treatment was an emphasis on the development of a public health education campaign, targeted at both doctors and the public as a whole, “on the sexual relations in regard to conduct” and on the nature of venereal disease.\textsuperscript{23}

Maude Royden, a leading feminist figure, described the Report as “swift enough and sweeping enough to be called without reserve, a revolution.”\textsuperscript{24} Royden wrote that the Royal Commission Report “allows the discus-

\textsuperscript{15} Hall, Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880, 316.
\textsuperscript{17} Final Report of the Commissioners, 18.
\textsuperscript{18} Ellis, Essays in War Time, 131.
\textsuperscript{19} “Venereal Disease: A Royal Commission: Early Announcement of its Appointment,” Times, Oct 6, 1913.
\textsuperscript{20} Final Report of the Commissioners, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{21} Final Report of the Commissioners, 59.
\textsuperscript{22} Ellis, Essays in War Time, 134.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 136.
Strategic Silences and Sexual Morality 69

for three years, hearing copious amounts of testimony concerning the prevalence of “the terrible peril to our race,” including information about disease rates, existing provisions for prevention, treatment methods and possible solutions.\footnote{15} Most shocking to the public were the high rates of infection described by the Commission’s report. Accurate estimates of infection proved to be unobtainable, due in large part to a “lack of adequate records” and “tendency to concealment;” however, the report famously estimated that in the cities, at least 10 percent of the population had syphilis and a significantly higher proportion was likely to have gonorrhea.\footnote{16} Syphilis was characterized as a “town disease,” occurring at much higher rates in urban areas, and was found to be more prevalent among males than females.\footnote{17} Information concerning infection rates was represented with remarkable neutrality, and contemporary commentators lauded the report for crediting differences in disease rates to “differences in social condition,” which did “not represent any ascending grade in virtue or sexual abstinence.”\footnote{18} The intentional neutrality of the Royal Commission Report reflects the cultural fixation on the degeneration of the British race, in which sexually transmitted disease is characterized as “one of the greatest public evils – a chief cause of premature death, of untold suffering, of racial degeneration, of blindness, of deafness, of ugliness, of everything that is hateful.”\footnote{19}

The report examined every aspect of the government’s response, including all past legislation concerning venereal disease, and recommended a host of radical changes.\footnote{20} Shockingly high rates of venereal disease in the military and in the general public were complemented by the assertion that British medical practitioners failed to appreciate the significance of venereal disease and were largely unfamiliar with methods of diagnosis and treatment, including the Wasserman test and Salvarsan.\footnote{21} The report “insisted that measures should be taken to render the best modern treatment, which should be free to all, readily available for the whole community, in such a way that those affected will have no hesitation in taking advantage of the facilities thus offered.”\footnote{22} Complementing the increased access to treatment was an emphasis on the development of a public health education campaign, targeted at both doctors and the public as a whole, “on the sexual relations in regard to conduct” and on the nature of venereal disease.\footnote{23}

Maude Royden, a leading feminist figure, described the Report as “swift enough and sweeping enough to be called without reserve, a revolution.”\footnote{24} Royden wrote that the Royal Commission Report “allows the discus-
sion of so great a scourge not only among experts but among the laity, which permits women as well as men to sit on a Commission of enquiry, and has opened to those who would spread knowledge, not only the public platform, but the press.”

In its reporting of the Commission appointees, the Times asserted that, despite the fact that “open discussion of [venereal disease] must touch and may offend the sensibilities of men and women in all classes of the community, in lay no less than professional circles,” there is “no reason why it should be shirked any longer.”

Thus in its very existence and structure, the Royal Commission provided a challenge to a series of norms that characterized public action, reason and medicine as exclusively masculine and therefore superior. It framed venereal disease as a democratic concern, alleviating, to some extent, the stigma and ignorance surrounding the issue.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the report is the section of general conclusions, which summarize the recommendations of the three-year commission and espouse a particular set of beliefs concerning the treatment of venereal disease and the purpose of public health education. The general conclusions and many subsequent publications involving members of the committee attempt “to make clear the grave and far-reaching effects of venereal disease on the individual and on the race,” reflecting the conservative concern for physical and national decline that characterized the Edwardian Period and the experience of committee members like Lord Sydenham. The conclusion points back to the pages of evidence that the negative effects of venereal disease “cannot be too seriously regarded,” because “they result in a heavy loss, not only of actual but of potential population, of productive power and of expenditure actually entailed.” The idea of population as power, specifically industrial manpower, is explicitly referred to, appealing to the shifting understandings of warfare. In the time leading up to the First World War, as Cox argues, “the governed body was being imagined in new ways, not the least as a national resource to be maximized.”

The Report reflects this shift, which Kathryn Ellis noted was “connected to a shift in corporeal governance, in which public policies of different kinds were motivated to secure physical efficiency, usually through measure to protect existing and future labor power.”

The emergence of total war, and the realization that the battle was one of attrition, placed victory less in the hands of individual soldiers and more in the power of the nation’s populace. By pointing to an “already declining” birthrate, and the “diminution of the best manhood of the nation, due to the losses of the war” the Commission raises the threat of a decline in population and the “number of efficient workers” in order to position public health as “a matter of para-
sion of so great a scourge not only among experts but among the laity, which permits women as well as men to sit on a Commission of enquiry, and has opened to those who would spread knowledge, not only the public platform, but the press.\textsuperscript{25} In its reporting of the Commission appointees, the \textit{Times} asserted that, despite the fact that “open discussion of [venereal disease] must touch and may offend the sensibilities of men and women in all classes of the community, in lay no less than professional circles,” there is “no reason why it should be shirked any longer.”\textsuperscript{26} Thus in its very existence and structure, the Royal Commission provided a challenge to a series of norms that characterized public action, reason and medicine as exclusively masculine and therefore superior. It framed venereal disease as a democratic concern, alleviating, to some extent, the stigma and ignorance surrounding the issue.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the report is the section of general conclusions, which summarize the recommendations of the three-year commission and espouse a particular set of beliefs concerning the treatment of venereal disease and the purpose of public health education. The general conclusions and many subsequent publications involving members of the committee attempt “to make clear the grave and far-reaching effects of venereal disease on the individual and on the race,” reflecting the conservative concern for physical and national decline that characterized the Edwardian Period and the experience of committee members like Lord Sydenham.\textsuperscript{27} The conclusion points back to the pages of evidence that the negative effects of venereal disease “cannot be too seriously regarded,” because “they result in a heavy loss, not only of actual but of potential population, of productive power and of expenditure actually entailed.”\textsuperscript{28} The idea of population as power, specifically industrial manpower, is explicitly referred to, appealing to the shifting understandings of warfare. In the time leading up to the First World War, as Cox argues, “the governed body was being imagined in new ways, not the least as a national resource to be maximized.”\textsuperscript{29} The Report reflects this shift, which Kathryn Ellis noted was “connected to a shift in corporeal governance, in which public policies of different kinds were motivated to secure physical efficiency, usually through measure to protect existing and future labor power.”\textsuperscript{30}

The emergence of total war, and the realization that the battle was one of attrition, placed victory less in the hands of individual soldiers and more in the power of the nation’s populace. By pointing to an “already declining” birthrate, and the “diminution of the best manhood of the nation, due to the losses of the war” the Commission raises the threat of a decline in population and the “number of efficient workers” in order to position public health as “a matter of para-

\textsuperscript{26} “Venereal Disease: A Royal Commission: Early Announcement of its Appointment,” \textit{The London Times}, Oct 6, 1913.
\textsuperscript{27} Final Report of the Commissioners, 65.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Cox, “Compulsion, Voluntarism, and Venereal Disease,” 98.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
mount national importance." The Commission consequently situates its findings as vital to the success of the war and to the success of the nation in the future world of industrial warfare. Having expressed a serious concern that their recommendations will not receive “the immediate attention their national importance demands,” because “all public activities are preoccupied in fulfilling the manifold needs of war,” the Commission appeals implicitly to notions of the populace and warfare to ensure its relevance.

The conclusion goes on to reference the “special character of these diseases and the moral stigma attaching to them” as barriers to accurate estimates of prevalence and effective distribution of treatment. Having identified, through significant medical evidence, that “early and efficient treatment” could allow venereal diseases to be “brought under control and reduced within narrow limits,” it argues that removing the social stigma is of utmost importance in the battle against venereal disease. The second part of the battle involves the creation of patient-friendly government infrastructure, in which “adequate facilities for the best modern treatment” are available in contexts that allow the afflicted to maintain confidentiality and their reputation, while still receiving treatment. Rapid and effective treatment is depicted as a necessity for the health of the nation.

The tone of the report is largely directed at “the old and barbarous idea that persons suffering from ‘disgraceful diseases’ should be punished rather than relieved,” an idea that was “enshrined in the by-laws of some of our great hospitals, as well as in the hearts of their subscribers.” Treatment is no longer characterized as the alleviation of well-deserved symptoms, God’s visitation on the immoral, as it was once depicted. The report appears to position itself as neutral and scientific, prioritizing treatment over moral commentary, and deriding the moral condescension of the past. In keeping with its purported moral neutrality, the conclusion asserts that “the terms of our reference have precluded consideration of the moral aspects of the questions with which we have dealt;” however, it goes on to make appeals to all the existing social reform movements and moralizers in society. Commissioners are described as “deeply sensible of the need and importance of appeals to conscience and honor which are made by religious bodies and associations formed for this purpose,” and offers evidence of “the terrible effects of venereal disease on innocent children and other persons who have no vicious tendencies” in order to support this work.

The conclusion goes on to say that “evidence tends to show that the communication of disease is frequently due to indulgence in intoxicants, and there is no doubt that the growth of temperance among the population would help to bring about the amelioration of the very serious conditions which our inquiry has revealed.” Similarly, “overcrowded and insanitary
mount national importance.” The Commission consequently situates its findings as vital to the success of the war and to the success of the nation in the future world of industrial warfare. Having expressed a serious concern that their recommendations will not receive “the immediate attention their national importance demands,” because “all public activities are preoccupied in fulfilling the manifold needs of war,” the Commission appeals implicitly to notions of the populace and warfare to ensure its relevance.

The conclusion goes on to reference the “special character of these diseases and the moral stigma attaching to them” as barriers to accurate estimates of prevalence and effective distribution of treatment.

Having identified, through significant medical evidence, that “early and efficient treatment” could allow venereal diseases to be “brought under control and reduced within narrow limits,” it argues that removing the social stigma is of utmost importance in the battle against venereal disease. The second part of the battle involves the creation of patient-friendly government infrastructure, in which “adequate facilities for the best modern treatment” are available in contexts that allow the afflicted to maintain confidentiality and their reputation, while still receiving treatment. Rapid and effective treatment is depicted as a necessity for the health of the nation.

The tone of the report is largely directed at “the old and barbarous idea that persons suffering from ‘disgraceful diseases’ should be punished rather than relieved,” an idea that was “enshrined in the by-laws of some of our great hospitals, as well as in the hearts of their subscribers.” Treatment is no longer characterized as the alleviation of well-deserved symptoms, God’s visitation on the immoral, as it was once depicted. The report appears to position itself as neutral and scientific, prioritizing treatment over moral commentary, and deriding the moral condescension of the past. In keeping with its purported moral neutrality, the conclusion asserts that “the terms of our reference have precluded consideration of the moral aspects of the questions with which we have dealt;” however, it goes on to make appeals to all the existing social reform movements and moralizers in society. Commissioners are described as “deeply sensible of the need and importance of appeals to conscience and honor which are made by religious bodies and associations formed for this purpose,” and offers evidence of “the terrible effects of venereal disease on innocent children and other persons who have no vicious tendencies” in order to support this work.

The conclusion goes on to say that “evidence tends to show that the communication of disease is frequently due to indulgence in intoxicants, and there is no doubt that the growth of temperance among the population would help to bring about the amelioration of the very serious conditions which our inquiry has revealed.” Similarly, “overcrowded and insanitary

---

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
dwellings” are cited as contributing factors in the spread of disease, along with “improvement in the moral standard and social conditions.”\(^{39}\) The report panders shamelessly to the variety of interest groups participating in the effort of lifting up the poor, deranged and diseased from their pitiful moral condition. It is difficult to avoid connecting the language of social rescue and moral education with the women on the commission, who dedicated their lives to such endeavors and undoubtedly influenced the direction of the discussion.

Perhaps the most important indication that the RCVD report is not neutral is evident in the promotion of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease, a private organization created in 1914 with the explicit purpose of implementing the educational measures of the Royal Commission Report. Pointing to the need for “continuous and consistent efforts to keep the complex question of combatting venereal disease before the public mind,” the commission expressed hope that “the National Council established with this object will become a permanent and authoritative body, well capable of spreading knowledge and giving advice... and that it will be recognized as such by Government.”\(^{40}\) With several members of the Commission also serving as founding members of the NCCVD, including Dr. Mary Scharlieb, this comment is particularly telling of the influence exercised by committee members on the ideological identity of the Royal Commission Report. The NCCVD was quickly recognized by government and established as the primary body for promoting public health education, to the exclusion of other groups promoting different perspectives, particularly on prophylaxis.

While the Royal Commission Report did make use of well-positioned wording to explicitly promote a particular moral perspective on public health education, it similarly utilized silences to exclude certain techniques, topics and issues from the public discussion of venereal disease. Havelock Ellis described the conclusions of the final Report as being “conceived the most practical and broad-minded spirit,” emerging from a consensus that allowed the final report to be “signed by all members,” with “any difference of opinion being confined to minor points (which it is unnecessary to touch on here) and to two members only.”\(^{41}\) While the commission itself heard a wide variety of opinions and considered contentious debates concerning certain issues, the final work avoided selecting a specific side. The committee decided to “leave over for later consideration the question of notifying venereal disease as other infectious diseases are notified,” which prompted a public letter-writing campaign led by a series of prominent women, particularly feminist social purists, who still credited prostitutes with the spread of VD.\(^{42}\)

While avoidance of notification was utilized to maintain neutrality and relevance amid contentious public debates, the commission’s silence surrounding prophylaxis is decidedly partial. Despite its mission “to consider all means of prevention and treatment... from a strictly practical standpoint,” the Commission’s

\(^{39}\) Ibid.
\(^{40}\) Ibid.
\(^{41}\) Ellis, *Essays in War Time*, 133.
\(^{42}\) Ibid., 133.
dwellings” are cited as contributing factors in the spread of disease, along with “improvement in the moral standard and social conditions.” The report panders shamelessly to the variety of interest groups participating in the effort of lifting up the poor, de-ranged and diseased from their pitiful moral condition. It is difficult to avoid connecting the language of social rescue and moral education with the women on the commission, who dedicated their lives to such endeavors and undoubtedly influenced the direction of the discussion.

Perhaps the most important indication that the RCVD report is not neutral is evident in the promotion of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease, a private organization created in 1914 with the explicit purpose of implementing the educational measures of the Royal Commission Report. Pointing to the need for “continuous and consistent efforts to keep the complex question of combatting venereal disease before the public mind,” the commission expressed hope that “the National Council established with this object will become a permanent and authoritative body, well capable of spreading knowledge and giving advice... and that it will be recognized as such by Government.” With several members of the Commission also serving as founding members of the NCCVD, this comment is particularly telling of the influence exercised by committee members on the ideological identity of the Royal Commission Report. The NCCVD was quickly recognized by government and established as the primary body for promoting public health education, to the exclusion of other groups promoting different perspectives, particularly on prophylaxis.

While the Royal Commission Report did make use of well-positioned wording to explicitly promote a particular moral perspective on public health education, it similarly utilized silences to exclude certain techniques, topics and issues from the public discussion of venereal disease. Havelock Ellis described the conclusions of the final Report as being “conceived the most practical and broad-minded spirit,” emerging from a consensus that allowed the final report to be “signed by all members,” with “any difference of opinion being confined to minor points (which it is unnecessary to touch on here) and to two members only.” While the commission itself heard a wide variety of opinions and considered contentious debates concerning certain issues, the final work avoided selecting a specific side. The committee decided to “leave over for later consideration the question of notifying venereal disease as other infectious diseases are notified,” which prompted a public letter-writing campaign led by a series of prominent women, particularly feminist social purists, who still credited prostitutes with the spread of VD.

While avoidance of notification was utilized to maintain neutrality and relevance amid contentious public debates, the commission’s silence surrounding prophylaxis is decidedly partial. Despite its mission “to consider all means of prevention and treatment... from a strictly practical standpoint,” the Commission’s

---

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., 133.

Ibid., 133.
report makes virtually no mention of Metchnikoff’s work on disinfection.\footnote{Tomkins, S. M. “Palmitate or permanganate: the venereal prophylaxis debate in Britain, 1916-1926.” \textit{Medical history} 37, no. 4 (1993), 385.} In 1906, Metchnikoff had demonstrated that infection could be arrested by the application of calomel ointment immediately after exposure, and disinfection was consequently shown to “be highly effective against syphilis.”\footnote{Ibid., 384.} While Sir Frederick Mott, the most distinguished medical member of the committee, had wished to include chemical prophylaxis in the report, he bowed to “the interest of securing a unanimous report.”\footnote{Ibid., 385.} A contemporary observer remarked that the commission’s silence “…was purposive, and attributable either to fear... of a presumed hostility of ‘Public Opinion,’ or to the prevailing disapproval of the spread of knowledge concerning the direct prevention of venereal infections by medical means.”\footnote{Ibid., 386.} While the need for post-infection treatment was beyond question, this author reflects the general belief that preventative prophylaxis would contribute to increased immorality, a perspective the NCCVD would later embrace.

The Royal Commission, comprised of many prominent doctors, also expressed a strong desire to quell quackery in the medical field, recommending the criminalization of treatment for venereal disease proffered by any non-medical professional. Sir Arthur Newsholme, a commissioner and prominent public health figure, led the commission in recommending that advertisements for venereal disease cures be made illegal.\footnote{Eyler, John M. \textit{Sir Arthur Newsholme and state medicine, 1885-1935}. (London: Cambridge University Press, 2002).} In the eyes of the Commission, the self-administration of preventative prophylaxis and disinfection measures not only encouraged immorality, it also threatened the primacy of the medical professional in the battle against venereal disease. This sentiment, the continual work of Arthur Newsholme and the avid support of the NCCVD led to the passing of the Venereal Diseases Act of 1917, which banned VD advertisements across the nation, and in districts where the Royal Commission had recommended public clinics be made available, banned treatment administered by the medically unqualified.\footnote{Ibid.} With its strategic silences, the Royal Commission Report denied certain treatments and topics the legitimacy of official sanction, while also inhibiting their access to the public discussion generated by the report. Preventative prophylaxis was excluded in part because of its public stigma, and in avoiding the topic entirely, the Royal Commission Report ensured the stigma would not change. The Royal Commission and its members also used their authority to define legitimate and illegitimate treatments, assigning legitimacy only to the medical profession and to clinics established through the commission’s recommendations. In its role as a gatekeeper, regulating the direction of venereal disease treatment and public health education policy, the silences and endorsements of the RCR serve as important, if subtle, indicators of social purity and the medical profession as influences on its ideological identity.
report makes virtually no mention of Metchnikoff's work on disinfection.\textsuperscript{43} In 1906, Metchnikoff had demonstrated that infection could be arrested by the application of calomel ointment immediately after exposure, and disinfection was consequently shown to "be highly effective against syphilis."\textsuperscript{44} While Sir Frederick Mott, the most distinguished medical member of the committee, had wished to include chemical prophylaxis in the report, he bowed to "the interest of securing a unanimous report."\textsuperscript{45} A contemporary observer remarked that the commission's silence "...was purposive, and attributable either to fear... of a presumed hostility of 'Public Opinion,' or to the prevailing disapproval of the spread of knowledge concerning the direct prevention of venereal infections by medical means."\textsuperscript{46} While the need for post-infection treatment was beyond question, this author reflects the general belief that preventative prophylaxis would contribute to increased immorality, a perspective the NCCVD would later embrace.

The Royal Commission, comprised of many prominent doctors, also expressed a strong desire to quell quackery in the medical field, recommending the criminalization of treatment for venereal disease proffered by any non-medical professional. Sir Arthur Newsholme, a commissioner and prominent public health figure, led the commission in recommending that advertisements for venereal disease cures be made illegal.\textsuperscript{47} In the eyes of the Commission, the self-administration of preventative prophylaxis and disinfection measures not only encouraged immorality, it also threatened the primacy of the medical professional in the battle against venereal disease. This sentiment, the continual work of Arthur Newsholme and the avid support of the NCCVD led to the passing of the Venereal Diseases Act of 1917, which banned VD advertisements across the nation, and in districts where the Royal Commission had recommended public clinics be made available, banned treatment administered by the medically unqualified.\textsuperscript{48} With its strategic silences, the Royal Commission Report denied certain treatments and topics the legitimacy of official sanction, while also inhibiting their access to the public discussion generated by the report. Preventative prophylaxis was excluded in part because of its public stigma, and in avoiding the topic entirely, the Royal Commission Report ensured the stigma would not change. The Royal Commission and its members also used their authority to define legitimate and illegitimate treatments, assigning legitimacy only to the medical profession and to clinics established through the commission's recommendations. In its role as a gatekeeper, regulating the direction of venereal disease treatment and public health education policy, the silences and endorsements of the RCR serve as important, if subtle, indicators of social purity and the medical profession as influences on its ideological identity.

\textsuperscript{43} Tomkins, S. M. "Palmitate or permanganate: the venereal prophylaxis debate in Britain, 1916-1926." \textit{Medical history} 37, no. 4 (1993), 385.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 384.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 385.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 386.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
In its discussion of sexual health education, the report’s bias becomes decidedly less subtle. It is described in the press as being “impressed with the need for some clear and systematic instruction in physiology;” however, hesitation was met “in deciding whom, at what age, and in what matter the instruction should be given.” While silencing the topic of physiological education, the Commission thoroughly approved of moral education, emphasizing the fact that “the public should have fuller knowledge of the grave evils” of venereal disease, the spread of which was due to the publics’ “want of control, ignorance, and inexperience.”

In order to stamp out venereal diseases, the report insisted, “it will be necessary not only to provide the medical means of combating them, but to raise the moral standards and practice of the community as a whole.”

The Report suggests “closer co-operation between religious bodies, the teaching and medical professions, and education authorities,” who would be charged with the implementation of an educational program addressing “the urgent need for more careful instruction in regard to self-control generally.” In this recommendation, the Report emphasized “moral conduct as bearing upon sexual relations,” and asserted that sexual health instruction “should be based upon moral principles and spiritual considerations, and should by no means be concentrated on the physical consequences of immoral conduct.”

Public and secondary schools, training colleges, and voluntary associations like the Boy Scouts are assigned much of the burden for moralized sexual health education, but the Report makes sure to hold parents accountable for the “duty of warning and guidance which they should be willing to discharge.” The Report goes on to discuss literature used to facilitate sexual health instruction and raises concerns about medically and morally unsound materials before declaring that “no such publications should be countenanced by education authorities unless issued with the imprimatur of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease.”

The official course of public health education concerning sexually transmitted disease is consequently limited to a strictly moralized perspective, with educational materials emerging from a single, government-sanctioned private organization. The Royal Commission Report ties its explicit support for moral education to recommendations for the provision of free and accessible treatment, which makes it “all the more necessary that the young should be taught that to lead a chaste life is the only certain way to avoid infection.” In this discussion, the Royal Commission Report expresses a very moralistic notion of sexual health education and explicitly endorses the NCCVD, suggesting a far more comprehensive, symbiotic relationship between the two groups, with significantly greater crossover than ever discussed before.

---

50 Final Report of the Commissioners, 60.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
In its discussion of sexual health education, the report’s bias becomes decidedly less subtle. It is described in the press as being “impressed with the need for some clear and systematic instruction in physiology;” however, hesitation was met “in deciding whom, at what age, and in what matter the instruction should be given.”\(^{49}\) While silencing the topic of physiological education, the Commission thoroughly approved of moral education, emphasizing the fact that “the public should have fuller knowledge of the grave evils” of venereal disease, the spread of which was due to the publics’ “want of control, ignorance, and inexperience.”\(^{50}\) In order to stamp out venereal diseases, the report insisted, “it will be necessary not only to provide the medical means of combating them, but to raise the moral standards and practice of the community as a whole.”\(^{51}\)

The Report suggests “closer co-operation between religious bodies, the teaching and medical professions, and education authorities,” who would be charged with the implementation of an educational program addressing “the urgent need for more careful instruction in regard to self-control generally.”\(^{52}\) In this recommendation, the Report emphasized “moral conduct as bearing upon sexual relations,” and asserted that sexual health instruction “should be based upon moral principles and spiritual considerations, and should by no means be concentrated on the physical consequences of immoral conduct.”\(^{53}\) Public and secondary schools, training colleges, and voluntary associations like the Boy Scouts are assigned much of the burden for moralized sexual health education, but the Report makes sure to hold parents accountable for the “duty of warning and guidance which they should be willing to discharge.”\(^{54}\) The Report goes on to discuss literature used to facilitate sexual health instruction and raises concerns about medically and morally unsound materials before declaring that “no such publications should be countenanced by education authorities unless issued with the imprimatur of the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease.”\(^{55}\)

The official course of public health education concerning sexually transmitted disease is consequently limited to a strictly moralized perspective, with educational materials emerging from a single, government-sanctioned private organization. The Royal Commission Report ties its explicit support for moral education to recommendations for the provision of free and accessible treatment, which makes it “all the more necessary that the young should be taught that to lead a chaste life is the only certain way to avoid infection.”\(^{56}\) In this discussion, the Royal Commission Report expresses a very moralistic notion of sexual health education and explicitly endorses the NCCVD, suggesting a far more comprehensive, symbiotic relationship between the two groups, with significantly greater crossover than ever discussed before.

\(^{50}\) Final Report of the Commissioners, 60.
\(^{51}\) Ibid.
\(^{52}\) Ibid.
\(^{53}\) Ibid.
\(^{54}\) Ibid.
\(^{55}\) Final Report of the Commissioners, 61.
\(^{56}\) Ibid.
The National Council For Combatting Venereal Disease

The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease developed a plan for prevention that was “anchored on a policy of widespread education and propaganda,” and in 1914, before the Commission’s Final Report was even issued, the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease was created to fulfill this need. Founded as a “direct outgrowth” of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease and composed largely of its members, the NCCVD was “expressly tailored to fit the pattern of the “independent society” that was recommended in the final report. It seized a first-rate opportunity for organizational development and government financing and envisioned its role as “giving effect to the policies recommended in the Report and acting as an independent society capable of stimulating the powers that be.” In an announcement in the Times in May of 1918, the NCCVD announced itself as “a representative body recognized by the government” and was in fact receiving government subsidies to “undertake the education about the diseases and their prevention, an enterprise recognized as a necessity.” Through a series of deputations to the Ministry of Health, the very young NCCVD managed to ensure that “they would receive not only financial backing, but also governmental endorsement for their policy,” in effect providing a “blank cheque of support.”

While the Royal Commission Report made attempts at neutrality, the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease would adopt a staunchly moral approach to implementation of public health education and venereal disease prevention. The goal of NCCVD propaganda was “made clear in its very name:” A “founding member recalled that “prevention” had originally been intended for the council’s title, but was changed to “combatting” explicitly to “avoid suggesting that [medical] means should be taken to prevent infection.” The NCCVD endorsed the immediate medical treatment of venereal disease, calling it prophylaxis, but not preventative or self-administered prophylaxis, for fear it would promote immoral behavior. In this regard, the NCCVD reflected what it saw as a moral and political consensus. By 1919, a letter to the editor of the Times begged the NCCVD, in its propaganda, to lay more stress on “local cleanliness immediately after exposure to the risk of infection,” a prophylactic method that the writer insists “should not be confused with treatment,” and “does not absolve the person from seeking medical advice at the earliest moment.” The NCCVD remained staunchly against preventative prophylaxis and any form of treatment

---

58 Hall, Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880, 317.
60 Ibid, 78.
62 Hall, Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880, 316.
64 Tomkins, “Palmitate or Permanganate,” 386.
66 “Venereal Disease: Precautionary Methods: To the Editor of the Times,” The Times, Oct 6, 1919.
The National Council For Combatting Venereal Disease

The Royal Commission on Venereal Disease developed a plan for prevention that was “anchored on a policy of widespread education and propaganda,” and in 1914, before the Commission’s Final Report was even issued, the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease was created to fulfill this need. Founded as a “direct outgrowth” of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease and composed largely of its members, the NCCVD was “expressly tailored to fit the pattern of the “independent society” that was recommended in the final report. It seized a first-rate opportunity for organizational development and government financing and envisioned its role as “giving effect to the policies recommended in the Report and acting as an independent society capable of stimulating the powers that be.” In an announcement in the Times in May of 1918, the NCCVD announced itself as “a representative body recognized by the government” and was in fact receiving government subsidies to “undertake the education about the diseases and their prevention, an enterprise recognized as a necessity.” Through a series of deputations to

58 Hall, Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880, 317.
60 Ibid, 78.
62 Hall, Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880, 316.

the Ministry of Health, the very young NCCVD managed to ensure that “they would receive not only financial backing, but also governmental endorsement for their policy,” in effect providing a “blank cheque of support.”

While the Royal Commission Report made attempts at neutrality, the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease would adopt a staunchly moral approach to implementation of public health education and venereal disease prevention. The goal of NCCVD propaganda was “made clear in its very name:” A “founding member recalled that “prevention” had originally been intended for the council’s title, but was changed to “combatting” explicitly to “avoid suggesting that [medical] means should be taken to prevent infection.” The NCCVD endorsed the immediate medical treatment of venereal disease, calling it prophylaxis, but not preventative or self-administered prophylaxis, for fear it would promote immoral behavior. In this regard, the NCCVD reflected what it saw as a moral and political consensus. By 1919, a letter to the editor of the Times begged the NCCVD, in its propaganda, to lay more stress on “local cleanliness immediately after exposure to the risk of infection,” a prophylactic method that the writer insists “should not be confused with treatment,” and “does not absolve the person from seeking medical advice at the earliest moment.” The NCCVD remained staunchly against preventative prophylaxis and any form of treatment

64 Tomkins, “Palmitate or Permanganate,” 386.
66 “Venereal Disease: Precautionary Methods: To the Editor of the Times,” The Times, Oct 6, 1919.
not administered by a medical professional. As a result, the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease would splinter off from the NCCVD regarding the issue of preventative prophylaxis, but the NCCVD remained in the “prime position as the only organization in the field approved by the Ministry of Health,” with a particular monopoly during the war.

In keeping with its focus on early treatment and moral education, the NCCVD developed an implementation program that included leaflets, lectures, posters, newspaper advertisements promoting early treatment and free diagnosis clinics. The military relied heavily on lectures organized by the NCCVD, which drew attention to “the medical consequences of promiscuity, but within a strongly moral framework.”

An advertisement in the *Times* that asks “Will you help stamp it out?” lists lectures given to “over a million and a half soldiers… showing how easily these diseases are contracted; how heavy are the penalties, how dangerous the delay.” For most of the war’s duration, the NCCVD focused its work on the civilian population, which would likely experience an increase in disease rates after demobilization.

Council propaganda on the home front emphasized “abstention from exposure to infection as the only certain safeguard… continence is to be encouraged by every means and on every ground, both social and hygienic.” The public health education campaign outlined by the NCCVD focused on the message that “parents, schoolmasters, and schoolmistresses could do much to eradicate venereal disease by pointing out to the young people the dangers of deviating from the path of moral rectitude.” While the physical harm done by venereal disease was seen as important, the NCCVD’s sexual education program, targeted in large part at mothers and their children, would be “based upon moral and spiritual considerations, and would by no means be concentrated on the physical consequences of immoral conduct.”

Dr. Mary Scharlieb, a member of Royal Commission and a founding member of the NNCVD, emerges as one of its most prominent authors. Producing at least 6 publications for the NCCVD, and several more on the topics of sex, gender, and venereal disease, Mary Scharlieb is an undeniable force behind the Royal Commission Report and its extension into the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease. As the President of the Ladies Council on the National Council for Public Morals, Scharlieb published “The Hidden Scourge” in 1916, primarily to educate women about venereal disease. In the piece she criticizes the measures like the Contagious Diseases Acts as “having the pernicious effect of intending to make wrong-doing

---

67 Hall, *Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880*, 316.
69 Harrison, “The British Army and the problem of venereal disease in France and Egypt during the First World War,” 139.
71 Tomkins, “Palmitate or Permanganate,” 386.
72 “Fight Against Venereal Diseases: Education Bill as A Weapon.” *The Times*, June 18, 1918.
not administered by a medical professional. As a result, the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease would splinter off from the NCCVD regarding the issue of preventative prophylaxis, but the NCCVD remained in the “prime position as the only organization in the field approved by the Ministry of Health,” with a particular monopoly during the war.  

In keeping with its focus on early treatment and moral education, the NCCVD developed an implementation program that included leaflets, lectures, posters, newspaper advertisements promoting early treatment and free diagnosis clinics. The military relied heavily on lectures organized by the NCCVD, which drew attention to “the medical consequences of promiscuity, but within a strongly moral framework.” An advertisement in the *Times* that asks “Will you help stamp it out?” lists lectures given to “over a million and a half soldiers... showing how easily these diseases are contracted; how heavy are the penalties, how dangerous the delay.” For most of the war’s duration, the NCCVD focused its work on the civilian population, which would likely experience an increase in disease rates after demobilization. 

Council propaganda on the home front emphasized “abstention from exposure to infection as the only certain safeguard... continence is to be encouraged by every means and on every ground, both social and hygienic.” The public health education campaign outlined by the NCCVD focused on the message that “parents, schoolmasters, and schoolmistresses could do much to eradicate venereal disease by pointing out to the young people the dangers of deviating from the path of moral rectitude.” While the physical harm done by venereal disease was seen as important, the NCCVD’s sexual education program, targeted in large part at mothers and their children, would be “based upon moral and spiritual considerations, and would by no means be concentrated on the physical consequences of immoral conduct.”

Dr. Mary Scharlieb, a member of Royal Commission and a founding member of the NNCDV, emerges as one of its most prominent authors. Producing at least 6 publications for the NCCVD, and several more on the topics of sex, gender, and venereal disease, Mary Scharlieb is an undeniable force behind the Royal Commission Report and its extension into the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease. As the President of the Ladies Council on the National Council for Public Morals, Scharlieb published “The Hidden Scourge” in 1916, primarily to educate women about venereal disease. In the piece she criticizes the measures like the Contagious Diseases Acts as “having the pernicious effect of intending to make wrong-doing...

---

67 Hall, *Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880*, 316.
69 Harrison, “The British Army and the problem of venereal disease in France and Egypt during the First World War,” 139.
71 Tomkins, “Palmitate or Permanganate,” 386.
72 “Fight Against Venereal Diseases: Education Bill as A Weapon.” *The Times*, June 18, 1918.
safe, to enslave women, and to dupe men.”  

Scharlieb points to the “wave of patriotic feeling and general excitement that passed like a flame over the land during the first months of the war,” causing young women and men to be “too often swept off their feet by unrestrained emotion,” leading to “much wrongdoing.”  

She insists that sufferers should not be condemned for their “mistaken ideas of morality,” because “the entire community is at risk.”  

Scharlieb appeals to the argument that social stigma prevents people from receiving much needed treatment for venereal disease.  

In her discussion of “mistaken ideas of morality,” Scharlieb implies the need for moral education, which she views as a foundational component of any sexual or public health education program.  

Scharlieb emphasizes the importance of a gendered, maternal role in the fight against venereal disease with “What Mothers Must Tell Their Children,” a piece intended to help mothers discuss sexual health with their offspring. Scharlieb wrote extensively on the maternal role in sexual education, arguing that mothers “ought to be able in reverent and careful language to explain to [children], as they are able to bear it, the great mystery of the transmission of life.”  

Scharlieb’s discussions of “moral education” and “sexual physiology” are inseparable, and she insists that “ignorance is not innocence.”  

For her, “the question is not whether children shall know or shall not know these things, but the question really is in what way shall they know them.”  

A powerfully moralized, family-based sexual education emerges in Scharlieb’s writings, both before, during, and after the Royal Commission took place, informing the recommendations and actively shaping the mission of the organization (the NCCVD) that was officially sanctioned to implement them.  

In “England’s Girls and England’s Future,” Scharlieb speaks directly to young women about the danger of venereal disease, insisting that “through one act of folly, once you ‘go wrong with a man,’ you may be infected with disease.”  

She recognizes that “the heaviest share of trouble falls on the girl” but also warns young women to “remember also that girls may lead boys wrong; and that it is cruel to excite in them feelings and desires that cannot be gratified without

---

76 Dombrowski, *Women and War in the Twentieth Century,* 57.  
77 Dombrowski, *Women and War in the Twentieth Century,* 57.
safe, to enslave women, and to dupe men.” Scharlieb points to the “wave of patriotic feeling and general excitement that passed like a flame over the land during the first months of the war,” causing young women and men to be “too often swept off their feet by unrestrained emotion,” leading to “much wrong-doing.” She insists that sufferers should not be condemned for their “mistaken ideas of morality,” because “the entire community is at risk.”

Scharlieb appeals to the argument that social stigma prevents people from receiving much needed treatment for venereal disease. In her discussion of “mistaken ideas of morality,” Scharlieb implies the need for moral education, which she views as a foundational component of any sexual or public health education program.

Scharlieb emphasizes the importance of a gendered, maternal role in the fight against venereal disease with “What Mothers Must Tell Their Children,” a piece intended to help mothers discuss sexual health with their offspring. Scharlieb wrote extensively on the maternal role in sexual education, arguing that mothers “ought to be able in reverent and careful language to explain to [children], as they are able to bear it, the great mystery of the transmission of life.” Scharlieb’s discussions of “moral education” and “sexual physiology” are inseparable, and she insists that “ignorance is not innocence.” For her, “the question is not whether children shall know or shall not know these things, but the question really is in what way shall they know them.”

A powerfully moralized, family-based sexual education emerges in Scharlieb’s writings, both before, during, and after the Royal Commission took place, informing the recommendations and actively shaping the mission of the organization (the NCCVD) that was officially sanctioned to implement them.

In “England’s Girls and England’s Future,” Scharlieb speaks directly to young women about the danger of venereal disease, insisting that “through one act of folly, once you ‘go wrong with a man,’ you may be infected with disease.” She recognizes that “the heaviest share of trouble falls on the girl” but also warns young women to “remember also that girls may lead boys wrong; and that it is cruel to excite in them feelings and desires that cannot be gratified without

---

74 Dombrowski, Nicole A., ed. Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with or without Consent. (London: Routledge, 2004) 57
76 Dombrowski, Women and War in the Twentieth Century, 57.
77 Dombrowski, Women and War in the Twentieth Century, 57.
injury to their bodies and minds." Young women must avoid the tendency to “grow too fast and lose their heads” in order to avoid a “danger not only for [themselves], but for others.” In rhetoric typical of the war period, which featured propaganda depicting Belgian babies skewered on German bayonets, Scharlieb insists girls must remain moral and sexually pure “for the sake of the homes of England and the little helpless babies who have never done any wrong.” The imagery of the English home and its innocent occupants is reminiscent of the propaganda deployed in the battle against Germany, which Nicoletta Gullace argued was “used to market an evocative, sentimental, and deeply gendered version of the conflict to an international and domestic sphere.” Just as battle propaganda utilized the deeply gendered image of protecting innocent women and children, Scharlieb’s writings deploy the gendered home in the war against venereal disease and sexual immorality.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease was a revolutionary document, bringing the discussion of the venereal disease to the public sphere with an unprecedented level of frankness and practicality. Its scientific approach framed venereal disease as a public problem, closely tied to fears of racial degeneration and the decline of the empire, and attempted to remove the social stigma associated with infection. By recommending free and confidential treatment centers, consequently implemented by local health boards across the nation, the Report drastically altered the ability of a patient to obtain friendly, accessible medical care from an authorized physician. The scientific neutrality of the report was heralded in contemporary public discourse, and scholars since refer to the report mainly as a piece of humdrum, statistical reporting; however, as this paper has discussed, The Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease is anything but neutral and humdrum. In its use of a strategic silence on the topic of prophylaxis, the Royal Commission affirms the medical profession and the official provision of treatment, while excluding preventative prophylaxis from the official discourse surrounding venereal disease. By avoiding discussion of physiological sex education and endorsing the moral education provided by the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease, the report ensured the official public health campaign for venereal disease prevention would focus primarily on concerns for the moral purity of the public. Finally, the Royal Commission reaffirmed traditional notions of gender, in its support for the NCCVD’s moral education, which almost exclusively targeted young women and emphasized traditional notions of sexual purity, gendered innocence and motherhood.

Kori Lennon is a senior History and Women and Gender Studies major, with minors in Political Science and Philosophy. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, and has a particular interest in the intersection of disease and gender in history. After graduation, Kori will begin her career in higher education as a Resident Director at Montana State University.
injury to their bodies and minds." Young women must avoid the tendency to "grow too fast and lose their heads" in order to avoid a "danger not only for [themselves], but for others." In rhetoric typical of the war period, which featured propaganda depicting Belgian babies skewered on German bayonets, Scharlieb insists girls must remain moral and sexually pure "for the sake of the homes of England and the little helpless babies who have never done any wrong." The imagery of the English home and its innocent occupants is reminiscent of the propaganda deployed in the battle against Germany, which Nicoletta Gullace argued was "used to market an evocative, sentimental, and deeply gendered version of the conflict to an international and domestic sphere." Just as battle propaganda utilized the deeply gendered image of protecting innocent women and children, Scharlieb's writings deploy the gendered home in the war against venereal disease and sexual immorality.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease was a revolutionary document, bringing the discussion of the venereal disease to the public sphere with an unprecedented level of frankness and practicality. Its scientific approach framed venereal disease as a public problem, closely tied to fears of racial degeneration and the decline of the empire, and attempted to remove the social stigma associated with infection. By recommending free and confidential treatment centers, consequently implemented by local health boards across the nation, the Report drastically altered the ability of a patient to obtain friendly, accessible medical care from an authorized physician. The scientific neutrality of the report was heralded in contemporary public discourse, and scholars since refer to the report mainly as a piece of humdrum, statistical reporting; however, as this paper has discussed, The Final Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease is anything but neutral and humdrum. In its use of a strategic silence on the topic of prophylaxis, the Royal Commission affirms the medical profession and the official provision of treatment, while excluding preventative prophylaxis from the official discourse surrounding venereal disease. By avoiding discussion of physiological sex education and endorsing the moral education provided by the National Council for Combatting Venereal Disease, the report ensured the official public health campaign for venereal disease prevention would focus primarily on concerns for the moral purity of the public. Finally, the Royal Commission reaffirmed traditional notions of gender, in its support for the NCCVD's moral education, which almost exclusively targeted young women and emphasized traditional notions of sexual purity, gendered innocence and motherhood.

Kori Lennon is a senior History and Women and Gender Studies major, with minors in Political Science and Philosophy. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, and has a particular interest in the intersection of disease and gender in history. After graduation, Kori will begin her career in higher education as a Resident Director at Montana State University.

---

82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Gullace, Nicoletta. The blood of our sons: men, women, and the renegotiation of British citizenship during the Great War. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
Fashion, Feminine Identity, and Japan’s Interwar Period

Shelby Wright

Introduction

The turn of the twentieth century ushered in a global push for modernization, leading to drastic cultural and social changes in many countries. Japan, after years of adapting and recreating itself in order to fit this drive for westernization began to take its place as an imperial power near the opening of the twentieth century. The significant changes it underwent in such a short span of time created new dynamics that Japanese society had to integrate within this new framework. One of these, in particular, was the normalizing of western culture and dress into a vastly different society with intricate gender roles.

The introduction of new fashion added additional pressure on Japanese society, resulting in two presentations of women—that of the modern girl and that of the traditional woman. Each had their own symbols and significance, but the main superficial dividing factor was how each woman dressed. Numerous forms of media attempted to use their portrayal to set an overarching identity for women, however, the modern girl was the most prominent figure and the subject of paradoxical representations. This paper attempts to create a broad societal picture of her controversial image in art, women’s magazines, advertisements, and literature during the interwar period while comparing it against the portrait of the new traditional woman and literature written by women. The overarching image of the modern girl represented both a fear of the West and an ideal projected onto a particular gender.

Before 1853, Japan had existed almost completely isolated from foreign nations because of its surrounding natural ocean barrier. However, as countries began industrializing and building empires for themselves during the early nineteenth century, Japan’s isolation transformed from a major protective force which kept them out of conflict to one that left them open to rapidly expanding Western colonization. Though Japan appeared to be blocked off from the rest of the world, government officials were not blind to major events that hinted at potential Western appearances at their shores.

Japan’s turning point arrived in 1853 with the appearance of Commodore Matthew Perry and his Black Ships. The American Commodore informed the Japanese government that the United States was interested in establishing a treaty with them, though if they refused when he returned the next year, he was under orders to use force to open up Japan’s ports. The transition from closed- to open-door policy was a turning point for Japanese rule, as it started an intensive modernization process beginning with the Meiji Restoration. Among changes during its modernization was the switch from traditional Japanese clothing to Western clothing within the upper-class elite.

The active decision to promote Western fashion would eventually trickle down into all classes of Japanese society and this link between clothing and western culture would play an important role for women in the upper and middle classes during Japan’s interwar period. Japanese women encountered changing societal norms and concepts of female
Fashion, Feminine Identity, and Japan’s Interwar Period

Shelby Wright

Introduction

The turn of the twentieth century ushered in a global push for modernization, leading to drastic cultural and social changes in many countries. Japan, after years of adapting and recreating itself in order to fit this drive for westernization began to take its place as an imperial power near the opening of the twentieth century. The significant changes it underwent in such a short span of time created new dynamics that Japanese society had to integrate within this new framework. One of these, in particular, was the normalizing of western culture and dress into a vastly different society with intricate gender roles.

The introduction of new fashion added additional pressure on Japanese society, resulting in two presentations of women—that of the modern girl and that of the traditional woman. Each had their own symbols and significance, but the main superficial dividing factor was how each woman dressed. Numerous forms of media attempted to use their portrayal to set an overarching identity for women, however, the modern girl was the most prominent figure and the subject of paradoxical representations. This paper attempts to create a broad societal picture of her controversial image in art, women’s magazines, advertisements, and literature during the interwar period while comparing it against the portrait of the new traditional woman and literature written by women. The overarching image of the modern girl represented both a fear of the West and an ideal projected onto a particular gender.

Before 1853, Japan had existed almost completely isolated from foreign nations because of its surrounding natural ocean barrier. However, as countries began industrializing and building empires for themselves during the early nineteenth century, Japan’s isolation transformed from a major protective force which kept them out of conflict to one that left them open to rapidly expanding Western colonization. Though Japan appeared to be blocked off from the rest of the world, government officials were not blind to major events that hinted at potential Western appearances at their shores.

Japan’s turning point arrived in 1853 with the appearance of Commodore Matthew Perry and his Black Ships. The American Commodore informed the Japanese government that the United States was interested in establishing a treaty with them, though if they refused when he returned the next year, he was under orders to use force to open up Japan’s ports. The transition from closed- to open-door policy was a turning point for Japanese rule, as it started an intensive modernization process beginning with the Meiji Restoration. Among changes during its modernization was the switch from traditional Japanese clothing to Western clothing within the upper-class elite.

The active decision to promote Western fashion would eventually trickle down into all classes of Japanese society and this link between clothing and western culture would play an important role for women in the upper and middle classes during Japan’s interwar period. Japanese women encountered changing societal norms and concepts of female
Fashion, Feminine Identity

identity throughout the Meiji period and into the interwar era and this evolution was strongly associated with the wearing of Western fashions. Following the 1923 Kanto Earthquake and the heavy promotion of western clothing for women over the traditional kimono, a term was developed for these flapper-esque, independent women. “Modern Girl” or moga was the title that became synonymous with a specific lifestyle and appearance taken on by young women during the interwar period.

In order to achieve an in-depth look into these historical problems, a number of both primary and secondary sources have been assembled that focus on the moga and Western fashion in interwar Japan. “The Modern Girl as Militant” by Miriam Silverberg, 1 Turning Pages: Reading and Writing Women’s Magazines in Interwar Japan by Sarah Frederick, 2 and Taishô Chic: Japanese Modernity, Nostalgia, and Deco by Kendall Brown and Sharon Minichiello 3 were three of the most influential sources.

Each of the authors of their respective works takes a different collection of media representing the modern girl, and analyzes it within its historical and social context to create an overall picture of the moga and how she was perceived at the time.

---

2 Sarah Frederick, Turning pages reading and writing women’s magazines in interwar Japan. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006).

Miriam Silverberg considers the moga to be an image of what the ideal Western woman would be and contends that though she was portrayed as “apolitical,” the modern girl was a political figure used by the media to depict the West as undermining traditional Japanese society. Silverberg creates this image through the use of women’s magazine articles, novels, and writings of a number of Japanese feminists.

Sarah Frederick does not directly examine the modern girl, though she recreates one of the many important media outlets in which she was debated, discussed, and portrayed to the public. Her main focus is the creation of women’s magazines and how they influenced and were influenced by society during the interwar period, and this includes a number of male and female scholars examining a woman’s changing identity and role in society.

Kendall Brown and Sharon Minichiello’s catalog contains a wide variety of primary sources in the form of art pieces produced during this time period. The introduction essay and examination of interwar pieces through an artistic lens was vital in assembling the more visual side of the media and offered quotes from newspapers and magazines written by artists.

Outside of these secondary sources, there are a number of primary sources, ranging from primary written documents, literature, and translated accounts of people who lived during the interwar period, to images originating from the Taishô Era. Some of these sources include To Live and to Write, a collection of stories by Japanese women writers during the interwar period; The Brittle Decade, which contains a number of images originating from around the 1930s; and Bad Girls of Japan, a collection of short essays, one of
identity throughout the Meiji period and into the interwar era and this evolution was strongly associated with the wearing of Western fashions. Following the 1923 Kanto Earthquake and the heavy promotion of western clothing for women over the traditional kimono, a term was developed for these flapper-esque, independent women. “Modern Girl” or moga was the title that became synonymous with a specific lifestyle and appearance taken on by young women during the interwar period.

In order to achieve an in-depth look into these historical problems, a number of both primary and secondary sources have been assembled that focus on the moga and Western fashion in interwar Japan. “The Modern Girl as Militant” by Miriam Silverberg, 1 Turning Pages: Reading and Writing Women’s Magazines in Interwar Japan by Sarah Frederick, 2 and Taishô Chic: Japanese Modernity, Nostalgia, and Deco by Kendall Brown and Sharon Minichiello 3 were three of the most influential sources.

Each of the authors of their respective works takes a different collection of media representing the modern girl, and analyzes it within its historical and social context to create an overall picture of the moga and how she was perceived at the time.

Miriam Silverberg considers the moga to be an image of what the ideal Western woman would be and contends that though she was portrayed as “apolitical,” the modern girl was a political figure used by the media to depict the West as undermining traditional Japanese society. Silverberg creates this image through the use of women’s magazine articles, novels, and writings of a number of Japanese feminists.

Sarah Frederick does not directly examine the modern girl, though she recreates one of the many important media outlets in which she was debated, discussed, and portrayed to the public. Her main focus is the creation of women's magazines and how they influenced and were influenced by society during the interwar period, and this includes a number of male and female scholars examining a woman’s changing identity and role in society.

Kendall Brown and Sharon Minichiello’s catalog contains a wide variety of primary sources in the form of art pieces produced during this time period. The introduction essay and examination of interwar pieces through an artistic lens was vital in assembling the more visual side of the media and offered quotes from newspapers and magazines written by artists.

Outside of these secondary sources, there are a number of primary sources, ranging from primary written documents, literature, and translated accounts of people who lived during the interwar period, to images originating from the Taishô Era. Some of these sources include To Live and to Write, a collection of stories by Japanese women writers during the interwar period; The Brittle Decade, which contains a number of images originating from around the 1930s; and Bad Girls of Japan, a collection of short essays, one of

---

2 Sarah Frederick, Turning pages reading and writing women’s magazines in interwar Japan. (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006).
which pertains to the subversion of the *moga* image.

With the primary and secondary sources that have been collected, the conclusion appears to be a contradictory acceptance of Western fashion during the interwar period. The Japanese media presented the image of the fashionable and scandalous *moga* in her western attire, but at the same time, there was notable backlash against the Modern Girl because she was presented as a potential threat to the stability of society. With the additional layer that the Western fashion she wore she reflected a polished and modernized woman, the *moga*'s various forms expressed the contradicting and paradoxical female identity Japanese society was creating.

**History of the Kimono**

The kimono, and the stereotypical image of the kimono-clad woman, evolved over Japan's development into a global power. During the Edo period, starting in the early 17th century, the *kosode*, a traditional top that had changed into the prototypical ankle-length kimono around the 14th century, had not only become adapted into women's fashion, but also became typical menswear as well. Wider access to money through the rise of the merchant class and foreign cloth from China also contributed to a number of alterations in color, design, and texture from the original styles adopted during the previous Muromachi era (1333-1600). Sleeve length and *obi* (sash) width, in particular, underwent a variety of changes and denoted developments in Japanese clothing that were not directly tied to functionality, but a created public identity.⁴

*Kosode* fashion became such an important aspect of everyday life that sumptuary regulations were promulgated concerning ornateness for clothing based on social class. Samurai, who sat at the top of system, were allowed a wide berth of lavishness, while merchants and commoners had heavy restrictions placed on the clothing they wore. However, a person's position on the social ladder did not prevent those who had money from spending large sums to buy the most elaborate *kosode*.

The concept of “kimono” did not become a Japanese term until the Meiji period (1868-1912).⁵ A specific distinction for clothing had no need to be defined previously, because even though there were a number of different styles and clothing worn, all of them were within the spectrum of Japanese culture. As Japan opened its gates to Westerners, an awakening occurred among the Japanese public: it was necessary to define their national identity against foreign cultures. This was most recognizable with the appearance of Western clothing – the *kosode* had little similarity to the foreigners' dress. Although there were a number of nuances within the Japanese clothing like sleeve length, cuts, color, and robe height which displayed societal markers publicly, the minute distinctions made it difficult to accurately translate without context.⁶ The solution was to create an umbrella term, “kimono,” which, although it simply meant

---

⁵ Ibid, 59.
⁶ Ibid, 62.
which pertains to the subversion of the *moga* image.

With the primary and secondary sources that have been collected, the conclusion appears to be a contradictory acceptance of Western fashion during the interwar period. The Japanese media presented the image of the fashionable and scandalous *moga* in her western attire, but at the same time, there was notable backlash against the Modern Girl because she was presented as a potential threat to the stability of society. With the additional layer that the Western fashion she wore reflected a polished and modernized woman, the *moga*’s various forms expressed the contradicting and paradoxical female identity Japanese society was creating.

**History of the Kimono**

The kimono, and the stereotypical image of the kimono-clad woman, evolved over Japan’s development into a global power. During the Edo period, starting in the early 17th century, the *kosode*, a traditional top that had changed into the prototypical ankle-length kimono around the 14th century, had not only become adapted into women’s fashion, but also became typical menswear as well. Wider access to money through the rise of the merchant class and foreign cloth from China also contributed to a number of alterations in color, design, and texture from the original styles adopted during the previous Muromachi era (1333-1600). Sleeve length and *obi* (sash) width, in particular, underwent a variety of changes and denoted developments in Japanese clothing that were not directly tied to functionality, but a created public identity.4

*Kosode* fashion became such an important aspect of everyday life that sumptuary regulations were promulgated concerning ornateness for clothing based on social class. Samurai, who sat at the top of system, were allowed a wide berth of lavishness, while merchants and commoners had heavy restrictions placed on the clothing they wore. However, a person’s position on the social ladder did not prevent those who had money from spending large sums to buy the most elaborate *kosode*.

The concept of “kimono” did not become a Japanese term until the Meiji period (1868-1912).5 A specific distinction for clothing had no need to be defined previously, because even though there were a number of different styles and clothing worn, all of them were within the spectrum of Japanese culture. As Japan opened its gates to Westerners, an awakening occurred among the Japanese public: it was necessary to define their national identity against foreign cultures. This was most recognizable with the appearance of Western clothing – the *kosode* had little similarity to the foreigners’ dress. Although there were a number of nuances within the Japanese clothing like sleeve length, cuts, color, and robe height which displayed societal markers publicly, the minute distinctions made it difficult to accurately translate without context.6 The solution was to create an umbrella term, “kimono,” which, although it simply meant

---

5 Ibid, 59.
6 Ibid, 62.
“object of wear,” globally linked Japanese outfits to those worn by the urban upper class. At the same time, Western clothing began to appear with increasing frequency during the Meiji era. The reason for its entrance into the public and media was linked to the political situation Japan faced during the late nineteenth century. After Japan was coerced into opening its boundaries, the nation entered into a number of unfavorable trade treaties with Western powers. The disadvantageous situation, the damaging Opium Wars between Britain and China, and Japan’s weak military showing made the new Meiji government hyper-sensitive to the precarious position where colonization and extortion by western powers appeared to be realistic dangers. Modernization of Japan’s entire society and culture became the most available and productive method to protect the nation. If world powers, like Britain, France, and the United States saw Japan as an equivalent in Western terms, their country would not only avoid subjugation, but might be able to take a place among subjugating nations.

One of the first steps Japan took in outwardly presenting a modernizing society in 1872 was to publicly clothe the Meiji Emperor in Western military dress. These images, including photos and paintings in later years, were intentionally shown abroad to foreign nations to differentiate the modern Japan from the nation that they had been in 1868. The government’s move to shape the Meiji Emperor as a beacon of Western modernity through dress soon spread to the upper society and from there trickled down to the other classes. This movement was initially targeted at men, though eventually the Empress, officials’ wives, and working women began to dress in Western styles. The stark difference between the encouraged modernization of men’s and women’s clothing was tied to the concept of the “ideal Meiji woman” who “served as a ‘repository of the past’,” [and stood] for tradition.

In a society rife with rapidly changing values and appearances, women dressed in their traditional kimono were a reminder of Japan’s culture before Western contact and a protection against forgetting what it meant to be “truly Japanese” within a modernizing society. The “repository” role for women would ultimately contribute to the formation and acceptance of the modern girl image and influence how women who did show their modernity through dress and activity were viewed during the interwar period.

1912 ushered in a new ruler to replace the Meiji Emperor as a symbol for the start of a new century. The Taishō Emperor ruled Japan through 1926, witnessing the postwar boom of the middle class. This newly developed “leisure class” made it possible for more men and women to access affordable Western clothing at increasing speeds.

**The Moga Enters**

In 1924 the term *moga* was introduced to the general public through an article written by Kitazawa Shuuuchi for the women’s magazine *Josei.* Kitazawa

---

7 Ibid, 63.
8 Silverberg, 264.
“object of wear,” globally linked Japanese outfits to those worn by the urban upper class.⁷

At the same time, Western clothing began to appear with increasing frequency during the Meiji era. The reason for its entrance into the public and media was linked to the political situation Japan faced during the late nineteenth century. After Japan was coerced into opening its boundaries, the nation entered into a number of unfavorable trade treaties with Western powers. The disadvantageous situation, the damaging Opium Wars between Britain and China, and Japan’s weak military showing made the new Meiji government hyper-sensitive to the precarious position where colonization and extortion by western powers appeared to be realistic dangers. Modernization of Japan’s entire society and culture became the most available and productive method to protect the nation. If world powers, like Britain, France, and the United States saw Japan as an equivalent in Western terms, their country would not only avoid subjugation, but might be able to take a place among subjugating nations.

One of the first steps Japan took in outwardly presenting a modernizing society in 1872 was to publicly clothe the Meiji Emperor in Western military dress. These images, including photos and paintings in later years, were intentionally shown abroad to foreign nations to differentiate the modern Japan from the nation that they had been in 1868. The government’s move to shape the Meiji Emperor as a beacon of Western modernity through dress soon spread to the upper society and from there trickled down to the other classes. This movement was initially targeted at men, though eventually the Empress, officials’ wives, and working women began to dress in Western styles. The stark difference between the encouraged modernization of men’s and women’s clothing was tied to the concept of the “ideal Meiji woman” who “served as a ‘repository of the past,’” [and stood] for tradition."⁸

In a society rife with rapidly changing values and appearances, women dressed in their traditional kimono were a reminder of Japan’s culture before Western contact and a protection against forgetting what it meant to be “truly Japanese” within a modernizing society. The “repository” role for women would ultimately contribute to the formation and acceptance of the modern girl image and influence how women who did show their modernity through dress and activity were viewed during the interwar period.

1912 ushered in a new ruler to replace the Meiji Emperor as a symbol for the start of a new century. The Taisho Emperor ruled Japan through 1926, witnessing the postwar boom of the middle class. This newly developed “leisure class” made it possible for more men and women to access affordable Western clothing at increasing speeds.

The Moga Enters

In 1924 the term moga was introduced to the general public through an article written by Kitazawa Shuuuchi for the women’s magazine Josei.⁹ Kitazawa

---

⁷ Ibid, 63.
⁸ Silverberg, 264.
described the modern girl as both a figure unconnected to politics and a self-independent being standing on equal footing with men through her embracing of a modern image and “newfound animation.” The moga image, though not acknowledged verbally by the author, was subconsciously linked with the nouveau riche and middle class that had risen during the First World War as, unlike most other people during this time, they had considerable money to spend on newer fashions and leisure activities.

The original presentation of the moga in Kitazawa’s article did not entirely fit the later perceptions and definitions of the modern girl, because though it implied a self-confident woman breaking away from traditional roles, it did not present her as a sexual being. This aspect was expanded in with Nii Itaru’s definition and coining of the term modan gaaru or modern girl, in his article, “Contours of the Modern Girl,” published in 1925. Similar to Kitazawa’s description of the moga, Nii explained that the modern girl was animated and exuded freedom, but with an additional note that she had a flirtatious and palpably erotic personality.

These images of an active, mobile, and sexual modern girl were enhanced by the styles of Western clothing making their way into the Japanese mainstream. The “newfound animation” emphasized by both Shuuichi and Nii found its manifestation in the rising appeal of sports and, therefore, outfits that focused on ease of movement. Clothing associated with this type of image were “flowing fabrics [that] enveloped the extremely stylized female figure... jerseys and knits, wide-legged pants, fringed dance dresses, long chains or strings of pearls,” and bathing suits. Even books on fashion like the 1927 Bijingaku (The Study of Beautiful Women) had chapters on the link between sports and beauty. Not only did a focus on the revealing and skin tight clothing add a layer of sexuality to the woman’s figure, but the concept of a well-shaped physique underneath the thin layers of cloth brought forth an erotic image not previously presented by the traditional image of a woman clad in a kimono (fig. 1).

Leisure activities also played into the image of the erotic and fashionable modern girl with the rise of dance halls, night clubs, and cafes. The same flapper-esque clothing found in sportswear made its appearances in the moga on the dance floor. The women dressed in 1920s-style dresses and skirts were either taxi dancers who, if paid enough, would dance with a male partner, or women going to a night club together with men “intent on hearing the latest jazz tunes, showing off their dance steps, and displaying their fashionable clothes.”

Cafes, on the other hand, were everyday places where men and women socialized outside the home and could potentially hook up with one another. They were considered one of the ideal job locations for the working moga as they were places most associated with modernity, fashion, and the discussion of new

---

10 Silverberg, 241.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid, 113.
14 Brown, 20.
described the modern girl as both a figure unconnected to politics and a self-independent being standing on equal footing with men through her embracing of a modern image and “newfound animation.” The *moga* image, though not acknowledged verbally by the author, was subconsciously linked with the nouveau riche and middle class that had risen during the First World War as, unlike most other people during this time, they had considerable money to spend on newer fashions and leisure activities.

The original presentation of the *moga* in Kitazawa’s article did not entirely fit the later perceptions and definitions of the modern girl, because though it implied a self-confident woman breaking away from traditional roles, it did not present her as a sexual being. This aspect was expanded in with Nii Itaru’s definition and coining of the term *modan gaaru* or modern girl, in his article, “Contours of the Modern Girl,” published in 1925. Similar to Kitazawa’s description of the *moga*, Nii explained that the modern girl was animated and exuded freedom, but with an additional note that she had a flirtatious and palpably erotic personality.

These images of an active, mobile, and sexual modern girl were enhanced by the styles of Western clothing making their way into the Japanese mainstream. The “newfound animation” emphasized by both Shuuichi and Nii found its manifestation in the rising appeal of sports and, therefore, outfits that focused on ease of movement. Clothing associated with this type of image were “flowing fabrics [that] enveloped the extremely stylized female figure...jerseys and knits, wide-legged pants, fringed dance dresses, long chains or strings of pearls,” and bathing suits. Even books on fashion like the 1927 *Bijingaku* (*The Study of Beautiful Women*) had chapters on the link between sports and beauty. Not only did a focus on the revealing and skin tight clothing add a layer of sexuality to the woman’s figure, but the concept of a well-shaped physique underneath the thin layers of cloth brought forth an erotic image not previously presented by the traditional image of a woman clad in a kimono (fig. 1).

Leisure activities also played into the image of the erotic and fashionable modern girl with the rise of dance halls, night clubs, and cafes. The same flapper-esque clothing found in sportswear made its appearances in the *moga* on the dance floor. The women dressed in 1920s-style dresses and skirts were either taxi dancers who, if paid enough, would dance with a male partner, or women going to a night club together with men “intent on hearing the latest jazz tunes, showing off their dance steps, and displaying their fashionable clothes.”

Cafes, on the other hand, were everyday places where men and women socialized outside the home and could potentially hook up with one another. They were considered one of the ideal job locations for the working *moga* as they were places most associated with modernity, fashion, and the discussion of new

10 Silverberg, 241.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid, 113.
14 Brown, 20.
Western ideas. The 1932 article, “The Younger Generation,” made note of the cafe culture by describing the women working there as “waitresses who hold themselves ready to sit down at the table or on laps and eat and drink and laugh and talk inanely about anything from ages to literature and social theories with all the customers.” Night clubs and cafes factored into the Western aspect of the modern girl, but, at the same time, each activity also played up the idea of thinly veiled promiscuity.

In comparison, the image of the traditional, kimono clad “good wife, wise mother” and protector of the Japanese culture was also being pushed by those who found the moga to be a dangerous addition to Japanese society. Those who supported the traditional image of women often focused on the balance of Western and Japanese ideals, though more so on the latter. This hybridization of the female figure was typically created by mixing the traditional Japanese kimono with a new Westernized hairstyle (fig. 2). Many of the articles for newspapers and journals supporting this point were written by Japanese artists who were believed by the more conservative community to have a greater understanding of feminine ideals based on their work with the female body.

Those who disagreed with the created image of the modern women focused on the importance of the kimono, noting that women “when dressed in Japanese costume, must behave according to Japanese custom of modesty and quiet, and it is wrong for them to imitate American movie actresses.” In this sense the kimono and therefore the kimono clad woman, was an extension of Meiji ideals in a modern context. Such women, it was believed, would remain mostly outside of the Western sphere in relations to new cultural and political changes, but would be included in modernization when it came to beauty or a more hidden form of sexuality.

The Modern Girl in Interwar Art

Images of the moga and the traditional woman created during this time period were seen in a variety of popular media including art, literature, and journal articles. Popular culture created the identity of the modern girl and the traditional woman and perpetuated these identities throughout the interwar period through fictional and manipulative representations.

Yamamura Kouka’s woodblock print New Carleton Dancers, Shanghai, created in 1924, is a standard representation of the moga concept, though it appears more restrained in comparison to later depictions of the modern girl (fig. 3). The scene presented by the artist is a famous dance hall or a night club in Shanghai, and two women sit behind a table in the foreground watching four pairs of dancers in the background. All the figures present are dressed in a modern fashion, though it is particularly noticeable on the

---


16 Brown, 21.

Western ideas. The 1932 article, “The Younger Generation,” made note of the cafe culture by describing the women working there as “waitresses who hold themselves ready to sit down at the table or on laps and eat and drink and laugh and talk inanely about anything from ages to literature and social theories with all the customers.” Night clubs and cafes factored into the Western aspect of the modern girl, but, at the same time, each activity also played up the idea of thinly veiled promiscuity.

In comparison, the image of the traditional, kimono clad “good wife, wise mother” and protector of the Japanese culture was also being pushed by those who found the moga to be a dangerous addition to Japanese society. Those who supported the traditional image of women often focused on the balance of Western and Japanese ideals, though more so on the latter. This hybridization of the female figure was typically created by mixing the traditional Japanese kimono with a new Westernized hairstyle (fig. 2). Many of the articles for newspapers and journals supporting this point were written by Japanese artists who were believed by the more conservative community to have a greater understanding of feminine ideals based on their work with the female body.

Those who disagreed with the created image of the modern women focused on the importance of the kimono, noting that women “when dressed in Japanese costume, must behave according to Japanese custom of modesty and quiet, and it is wrong for them to imitate American movie actresses.” In this sense the kimono and therefore the kimono clad woman, was an extension of Meiji ideals in a modern context. Such women, it was believed, would remain mostly outside of the Western sphere in relations to new cultural and political changes, but would be included in modernization when it came to beauty or a more hidden form of sexuality.

The Modern Girl in Interwar Art

Images of the moga and the traditional woman created during this time period were seen in a variety of popular media including art, literature, and journal articles. Popular culture created the identity of the modern girl and the traditional woman and perpetuated these identities throughout the interwar period through fictional and manipulative representations.

Yamamura Kouka’s woodblock print New Carleton Dancers, Shanghai, created in 1924, is a standard representation of the moga concept, though it appears more restrained in comparison to later depictions of the modern girl (fig. 3). The scene presented by the artist is a famous dance hall or a night club in Shanghai, and two women sit behind a table in the foreground watching four pairs of dancers in the background. All the figures present are dressed in a modern fashion, though it is particularly noticeable on the

---


16 Brown, 21.

women sitting at the table.

The woman on the left is the more risqué and Western looking of the two, with a backless western dress, bobbed haircut, and exaggerated makeup around the eyes and on the lips. Yamamura draws particular attention to this figure’s sexual appeal by emphasizing the curve of her bare back with a light line that continues on to draw attention to her unadorned and uncovered pale neck. Furthermore, the bright red of her lips, her jacket, and the hat on the woman sitting next to her makes the pair stand out in almost a gaudy, extravagant fashion, even though they are not the primary focus of the woodblock. The modern girl on the right has her face turned away from the view, giving her a sense of “anonymity that underscores the fierce physicality of the scene” compared to the dancers behind them.¹⁸

Though the shapes of the dancers behind them suggest frenzied movement, what stands out most is the female figures participating in the wild dancing. Unlike the somewhat bulky appearance of the kimono which completely hides the feminine body, these women have their arms bare and dresses tapered at the waist, suggesting a curvy figure with little left to the imagination. The men’s hands placed on women’s hips also create a very intimate image that appears to be acceptable in this new environment.

The “Western” space of 1924 Shanghai with modern participants is brought together with the two empty looking martini glasses sitting on the table, hinting at pleasure and relaxation through nontraditional and risqué means. In comparison to later prints and paintings of this era, the sexual nature of the moga in New Carleton Dancers, Shanghai is relatively tame; however, when it was released to the public, Yamamura’s publisher refused to print this woodblock.¹⁹ The refusal to do so appears to hint at the relative newness of the moga and Japan’s wariness at spreading such an image.

In comparison, the 1932 painting Midsummer Harbor by Yamada Kisaku shows a much more risqué image of a moga outside of the dance hall (fig. 4). The modern girl in this picture is sitting on the railing of a Western-styled porch overlooking a small town with the ocean in the distance. She is turned away from the viewer, possibly looking towards the sea or at something off to the left. Unlike Yamamura’s woodblock, this image is stationary with the only implied movement being the flags and the small veil encircling the woman’s hat blowing slightly in the sea breeze. Though this seems to suggest there is less of the moga element, the actual figure itself in tandem with a closer examination of the scene offers a different perspective.

The woman seems to be overlooking a harbor from an unknown location, but the table to the left with what appears to be a cup of coffee as well as the bright pink and yellow awning suggest that this painting is set at one of the popular modern cafes around Tokyo. Items perched on the chair—the umbrella and the wallet—imply that the woman reclining against the railing is of the middle- to upper-class, and that she seems relatively unconcerned with protecting them, all fitting into the typical modern girl image. Also, unlike the dance hall woodblock print which depicts a con-

¹⁸ Brown, 32.

¹⁹ Ibid.
women sitting at the table.

The woman on the left is the more risque and Western looking of the two, with a backless western dress, bobbed haircut, and exaggerated makeup around the eyes and on the lips. Yamamura draws particular attention to this figure’s sexual appeal by emphasizing the curve of her bare back with a light line that continues on to draw attention to her unadorned and uncovered pale neck. Furthermore, the bright red of her lips, her jacket, and the hat on the woman sitting next to her makes the pair stand out in almost a gaudy, extravagant fashion, even though they are not the primary focus of the woodblock. The modern girl on the right has her face turned away from the view, giving her a sense of “anonymity that underscores the fierce physicality of the scene” compared to the dancers behind them.¹⁸

Though the shapes of the dancers behind them suggest frenzied movement, what stands out most is the female figures participating in the wild dancing. Unlike the somewhat bulky appearance of the kimono which completely hides the feminine body, these women have their arms bare and dresses tapered at the waist, suggesting a curvy figure with little left to the imagination. The men’s hands placed on women’s hips also create a very intimate image that appears to be acceptable in this new environment.

The “Western” space of 1924 Shanghai with modern participants is brought together with the two empty looking martini glasses sitting on the table, hinting at pleasure and relaxation through nontraditional and risque means. In comparison to later prints and paintings of this era, the sexual nature of the moga in New Carleton Dancers, Shanghai is relatively tame; however, when it was released to the public, Yamamura’s publisher refused to print this woodblock.¹⁹ The refusal to do so appears to hint at the relative newness of the moga and Japan’s wariness at spreading such an image.

In comparison, the 1932 painting Midsummer Harbor by Yamada Kisaku shows a much more risque image of a moga outside of the dance hall (fig. 4). The modern girl in this picture is sitting on the railing of a Western-styled porch overlooking a small town with the ocean in the distance. She is turned away from the viewer, possibly looking towards the sea or at something off to the left. Unlike Yamamura’s woodblock, this image is stationary with the only implied movement being the flags and the small veil encircling the woman’s hat blowing slightly in the sea breeze. Though this seems to suggest there is less of the moga element, the actual figure itself in tandem with a closer examination of the scene offers a different perspective.

The woman seems to be overlooking a harbor from an unknown location, but the table to the left with what appears to be a cup of coffee as well as the bright pink and yellow awning suggest that this painting is set at one of the popular modern cafes around Tokyo. Items perched on the chair—the umbrella and the wallet—imply that the woman reclining against the railing is of the middle- to upper-class, and that she seems relatively unconcerned with protecting them, all fitting into the typical modern girl image. Also, unlike the dance hall woodblock print which depicts a con-

¹⁸ Brown, 32.

¹⁹ Ibid.

http://scholarcommons.scu.edu/historical-perspectives/vol19/iss1/1
fined space intended for modern men and women to meet, the moga in this image is out on public display in the middle of the day.

The most important aspect of this painting is the woman’s figure itself and her clothing. The modern girl is sitting in a relaxed position, her arms keeping her balance on the railing. Her hair is cut into a bob with a Western style hat, and it is easy to tell that she is wearing makeup, though not as heavily applied as the moga in Yamamura’s work. However, what identifies her as a modern girl of the 1930s is the rest of her clothing. The bottom of her dress is pulled up much higher than typically presented in older works, though this is attributed to the fact that she is consciously sitting and, therefore, knowledgeable of the fact that the cloth has risen to near the top of her shins. The dress is also see-through, letting the viewer peek underneath to see the start of her chemise around her knees. Similarly, the undergarment is again showing near the low cut neckline of the dress, and the cloth of the outfit is clinging to her body, displaying her figure. All of these aspects play into the idea of the modern girl’s sexuality—though she is not looking directly ahead of her, she is still flirting with little shows of skin and flaunting her appearance.

When this painting was displayed at an art gallery and given to critics to judge, this and other paintings which displayed the moga, caused one to remark, “It was gratifying to see that artists have turned more and more to modern social conditions for their themes,” showing that reservations in displaying the modern girl in art in 1924 were almost non-existent in other portrayals a few years later.

The Modern Girl and Women’s Magazines

The comparison between the images of the modern girl and the modernized good wife, wise mother were not just explored in the visual arts which, to many women, might have been inaccessible within their daily routine. They were addressed in more accessible formats as well. The largest and most available forms of representation were women’s magazines (fujin zasshi), which claimed a large readership of both women and men during the interwar period. Magazines like Josei, Japanese Business Girls, Housewife’s Friend, and Ladies’ Review catered to the growing populations of “modern girls” and middle class housewives who moved to the cities for economic and social reasons. By 1927, the total circulation of women’s magazines was around the one million mark, establishing their centrality within popular culture and adding creditability to their skill in spreading ideals and offering a place to articulate opinions about their modernizing society.

Three factors of these women’s magazines contributed to the persistent image of the modern girl: the public discourse between prominent intellectuals, stories published in the magazines and later serialized, and advertisements aimed at selling products to the evolving consumerist reader base. The debates among scholars that found their way into the limelight

21 Frederick, Turning pages, 14-16.
22 Ibid, 6.
fined space intended for modern men and women to meet, the *moga* in this image is out on public display in the middle of the day.

The most important aspect of this painting is the woman’s figure itself and her clothing. The modern girl is sitting in a relaxed position, her arms keeping her balance on the railing. Her hair is cut into a bob with a Western style hat, and it is easy to tell that she is wearing makeup, though not as heavily applied as the *moga* in Yamamura’s work. However, what identifies her as a modern girl of the 1930s is the rest of her clothing. The bottom of her dress is pulled up much higher than typically presented in older works, though this is attributed to the fact that she is consciously sitting and, therefore, knowledgeable of the fact that the cloth has risen to near the top of her shins. The dress is also see-through, letting the viewer peek underneath to see the start of her chemise around her knees. Similarly, the undergarment is again showing near the low cut neckline of the dress, and the cloth of the outfit is clinging to her body, displaying her figure. All of these aspects play into the idea of the modern girl’s sexuality—though she is not looking directly ahead of her, she is still flirting with little shows of skin and flaunting her appearance.

When this painting was displayed at an art gallery and given to critics to judge, this and other paintings which displayed the *moga*, caused one to remark, “It was gratifying to see that artists have turned more and more to modern social conditions for their themes,” showing that reservations in displaying the modern girl in art in 1924 were almost non-existent in other portrayals a few years later.20

### The Modern Girl and Women’s Magazines

The comparison between the images of the modern girl and the modernized good wife, wise mother were not just explored in the visual arts which, to many women, might have been inaccessible within their daily routine. They were addressed in more accessible formats as well. The largest and most available forms of representation were women’s magazines (*fujin zasshi*), which claimed a large readership of both women and men during the interwar period. Magazines like *Josei*, *Japanese Business Girls*, *Housewife’s Friend*, and *Ladies’ Review* catered to the growing populations of “modern girls” and middle class housewives who moved to the cities for economic and social reasons.21 By 1927, the total circulation of women’s magazines was around the one million mark, establishing their centrality within popular culture and adding creditability to their skill in spreading ideals and offering a place to articulate opinions about their modernizing society.22

Three factors of these women’s magazines contributed to the persistent image of the modern girl: the public discourse between prominent intellectuals, stories published in the magazines and later serialized, and advertisements aimed at selling products to the evolving consumerist reader base. The debates among scholars that found their way into the limelight

---


21 Frederick, *Turning pages*, 14-16.

22 Ibid, 6.
through their display in *fujin zasshi* often centered on defining women’s roles in Japanese society, including the concepts of citizenship, marriage, suffrage, and modernization. Notable exchanges in *Ladies’ Review* discussed redefining the modern woman while attempting, in passing, to erase the “rampant” and dangerous image of the *moga*.

One discussion was held by nine prominent intellectuals writing in *Ladies’ Review* who offered a contribution to the restructuring of the neo-Confucian *Greater Learning for Women (onna daigaku)* written by Kaibara Ekiken in the late Edo period. Onna daigaku, along with other Confucian texts used as a means to teach young girls how to read, had firmly established the “good wife, wise mother” (*ryôsai kenbo*) ideal and later influenced the formation of the “repository” role for women within Japanese society. The public analysis and reconstruction of this text in *Ladies’ Review* by leading experts suggested a distinct shift in the understanding of a woman’s place based on modernization within societal philosophy. The dialogue among the scholars concluded that *ryôsai kenbo* education had been overturned and replaced by a woman’s conscious decision to formally educate herself and identify where she fit in the new modern framework.

The image of the modern girl and her mother, the new woman, contributed to the limitations the scholars placed on this altered role. Stereotypical views of the sexual *moga* and the political new woman were cited as a threat to the functionality of society as their free-spirited, temperamental, and flippant attitudes would bring about constant unrest. The solution, similar to the answer posited by the artists, was to hybridize modernization with traditional values by cultivating womanly, and by that same account domestic, “virtue” alongside the guiding hand of education. With this conclusion, the debate participants validated a formal modernization, but removed the “riskier” and more individualistic side to a woman’s changing societal role. Essentially, scholars wished to promote a form of intellectual motherhood, but deny any connection to the *moga*.

**The Moga in Advertising**

Outside of *fujin zasshi*, the image of the *moga* was seen in almost every department store in a variety of forms. Advertising businesses extended into manipulating the image of the modern girl to sell products and magazines. The most prominent of these were the mannequin girls, or groups of young women that stood in the store windows, dressed in the latest fashions, acting as living dolls for the passerby. These women took the advertisements in the magazines and brought them to life so that other women could see what Western clothing would look on their form, and how their bodies should look to “correctly” wear the newer fashion. Mannequin girls, therefore, were a deliberate attempt by the clothing and cosmetic companies to play on the concept of imitation and the “new attractiveness” of the modern girl to sell their products.

Additionally, cosmetic companies evolved during the interwar period to better capture the ideal image of

---

23 Ibid, 39.
24 Ibid, 40.
through their display in *fujin zasshi* often centered on defining women’s roles in Japanese society, including the concepts of citizenship, marriage, suffrage, and modernization. Notable exchanges in *Ladies’ Review* discussed redefining the modern woman while attempting, in passing, to erase the “rampant” and dangerous image of the *moga*.

One discussion was held by nine prominent intellectuals writing in *Ladies’ Review* who offered a contribution to the restructuring of the neo-Confucian *Greater Learning for Women (onna daigaku)* written by Kaibara Ekiken in the late Edo period.23 *Onna daigaku*, along with other Confucian texts used as a means to teach young girls how to read, had firmly established the “good wife, wise mother” (*ryô sai kenbo*) ideal and later influenced the formation of the “repository” role for women within Japanese society. The public analysis and reconstruction of this text in *Ladies’ Review* by leading experts suggested a distinct shift in the understanding of a woman’s place based on modernization within societal philosophy. The dialogue among the scholars concluded that *ryô sai kenbo* education had been overturned and replaced by a woman’s conscious decision to formally educate herself and identify where she fit in the new modern framework.24

The image of the modern girl and her mother, the new woman, contributed to the limitations the scholars placed on this altered role. Stereotypical views of the sexual *moga* and the political new woman were cited as a threat to the functionality of society as their free-spirited, temperamental, and flippant attitudes would bring about constant unrest. The solution, similar to the answer posited by the artists, was to hybridize modernization with traditional values by cultivating womanly, and by that same account domestic, “virtue” alongside the guiding hand of education.25 With this conclusion, the debate participants validated a formal modernization, but removed the “riskier” and more individualistic side to a woman’s changing societal role. Essentially, scholars wished to promote a form of intellectual motherhood, but deny any connection to the *moga*.

**The Moga in Advertising**

Outside of *fujin zasshi*, the image of the *moga* was seen in almost every department store in a variety of forms. Advertising businesses extended into manipulating the image of the modern girl to sell products and magazines. The most prominent of these were the mannequin girls, or groups of young women that stood in the store windows, dressed in the latest fashions, acting as living dolls for the passerby.26 These women took the advertisements in the magazines and brought them to life so that other women could see what Western clothing would look on their form, and how their bodies should look to “correctly” wear the newer fashion. Mannequin girls, therefore, were a deliberate attempt by the clothing and cosmetic companies to play on the concept of imitation and the “new attractiveness” of the modern girl to sell their products.

Additionally, cosmetic companies evolved during the interwar period to better capture the ideal image of

---

23 Ibid, 39.
24 Ibid, 40.
25 Ibid, 41.
26 Silverberg, 247.
the modern girl. For example, the three advertisements for hair oil by the Shiseido company, the top from 1914 and the bottom two from 1916, show both an increasing understanding of the changing needs of the culture and its ability to respond quickly to new fashion. The top image displays a very flat, simple image of a Heian period woman holding what looks to be a bottle of hair oil on top of her fan. Instead of playing into the more recent changes of Japan’s modernization, the ad calls back to the classical era of Japanese history, almost as if attempting to regain a piece of that culture through pressing the particular beauty ideals of before the West arrived in Japan.\footnote{“Cosmopolitan Glamour,” Selling Shiseido http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/shiseido_01/sh_esssay02.html}

The first 1916 image follows the same pattern, though this time the bottle is at the front of the image, sliding down bright, black hair. The use of color also helps make the hair oil pop out against the other darker colors. Though the first two images try to call up a classical Japan, the third image approaches the ad from a modern perspective in the form of the traditional, kimono clad woman. This shows a rapid change in the target demographic between the first and second 1916 advertisements. By 1932, Shiseido had a marked understanding of their target audience, as seen with the advertising fan depicting a moga wearing a cloche hat and Western dress (fig. 6). What really creates the full modern girl style, however, isn’t the woman standing at the forefront of the picture, but the background behind her. By placing her in her “element,” in the nightlife of a crowded street mostly populated by men, the advertisement suggests sex, fashion, and freedom which are all obtainable if the owner of the fan purchases Shiseido’s products.

Fujin zasshi also contained a large number of modern girl advertisements aimed at all different classes of women. Most of these ads dealt with the idea of beauty and focused on promoting new products which would make everyday women appear just as fashion-forward as the modern girl at home and abroad. Though these images were promoted and enforced by the media and advertisements, many people continued to state that moga were only focused on feeding into the vapid consumerism that was rapidly becoming a part of Japanese culture. Because society had attributed consumerist tendencies to the idea of the modern girl, the media representation of her responded accordingly and continued to remain part of the advertisement art seen in women’s magazines.

**Literature**

The image of the moga was further reinforced in written works by authors who published in a variety of women’s magazines. Unlike the debates, which were politically and philosophically weighty, literature could similarly popularize the image of the modern girl without overwhelming the reader. In this way, the moga entered mainstream culture and settled herself firmly in the public’s mind in a form of media easily accessible to and understandable by a wider audience.

One of the most prominent images of the modern girl in literature was Tanizaki Junichiro’s Naomi from his 1924 to 1925 serialization *A Fool’s Love*. Originally published in the *Osaka Asahi* newspaper until its
the modern girl. For example, the three advertisements for hair oil by the Shiseido company, the top from 1914 and the bottom two from 1916, show both an increasing understanding of the changing needs of the culture and its ability to respond quickly to new fashion. The top image displays a very flat, simple image of a Heian period woman holding what looks to be a bottle of hair oil on top of her fan. Instead of playing into the more recent changes of Japan's modernization, the ad calls back to the classical era of Japanese history, almost as if attempting to regain a piece of that culture through pressing the particular beauty ideals of before the West arrived in Japan.

The first 1916 image follows the same pattern, though this time the bottle is at the front of the image, sliding down bright, black hair. The use of color also helps make the hair oil pop out against the other darker colors. Though the first two images try to call up a classical Japan, the third images approaches the ad from a modern perspective in the form of the traditional, kimono clad woman. This shows a rapid change in the target demographic between the first and second 1916 advertisements. By 1932, Shiseido had a marked understanding of their target audience, as seen with the advertising fan depicting a moga wearing a cloche hat and Western dress (fig. 6). What really creates the full modern girl style, however, isn't the woman standing at the forefront of the picture, but the background behind her. By placing her in her “element,” in the nightlife of a crowded street mostly populated by men, the advertisement suggests sex, fashion, and freedom which are all obtainable if the owner of the fan purchases Shiseido's products.

Fujin zasshi also contained a large number of modern girl advertisements aimed at all different classes of women. Most of these ads dealt with the idea of beauty and focused on promoting new products which would make everyday women appear just as fashion-forward as the modern girl at home and abroad. Though these images were promoted and enforced by the media and advertisements, many people continued to state that moga were only focused on feeding into the vapid consumerism that was rapidly becoming a part of Japanese culture. Because society had attributed consumerist tendencies to the idea of the modern girl, the media representation of her responded accordingly and continued to remain part of the advertisement art seen in women's magazines.

Literature

The image of the moga was further reinforced in written works by authors who published in a variety of women's magazines. Unlike the debates, which were politically and philosophically weighty, literature could similarly popularize the image of the modern girl without overwhelming the reader. In this way, the moga entered mainstream culture and settled herself firmly in the public's mind in a form of media easily accessible to and understandable by a wider audience.

One of the most prominent images of the modern girl in literature was Tanizaki Junichiro's Naomi from his 1924 to 1925 serialization A Fool's Love. Originally published in the Osaka Asahi newspaper until its

27 “Cosmopolitan Glamour,” Selling Shiseido
http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/shiseido_01/sh_essay02.html
content made it too scandalous to continue in that venue, it was later picked up by the woman’s magazine *Josei*. *A Fool’s Love* is centered on a story of obsessive love between a male narrator and a young girl whom he removes from her job as a cafe waitress to become his wife.28 Unlike the typical image of the Japanese woman, Naomi represents the extreme modern girl, intent on being as Western in appearance and manner as possible.

Not only is Naomi heavily sexualized within the novel, but she also plays the role of an active “consumer whose appetite for moving pictures and carefully chosen foreign and domestic order-in delicacies is matched only by her desire for a large assortment of male companions” while “producing goods, services, and new habits.”29 This depiction of the *moga* as a non-conforming, sexual, consumption-oriented woman who destabilizes the happy balance offered by society plays into a fear of the West and the danger of modernization to a stable, traditional society. Naomi’s actions continue to feed into this fear when she begins to clad herself both in female and male clothing as well as adopt the use of masculine pronouns.

Her decision to embrace both genders through Western fashion and personality throws into question how the modern girl fits into the culture. By having Naomi cross-dress and speak in a masculine way, Tanizaki brings into play the *moga*’s inherent denial of complementary gender roles. Naomi’s actions show her directly taking over parts of the masculine sphere while denying aspects of the domestic female one. By the end of the novel Naomi’s actions intimidate the narrator, ultimately causing him to flee and return to Japanese “normalcy.” The conclusion of the book establishes the modern girl and the West as something to be feared, as Western clothes and ideas make her unable to fit into either gender role entirely and eventually lead her to becoming a dangerous and influential outcast with a potential to corrupt others.

**Women Writers on the Modern Woman**

Though much of the mainstream media portrayed the *moga* as a widespread societal image and overall the modern girl was a strikingly prominent fixture in the selling of feminine products like cosmetics, Japanese women living in interwar society were never fully drawn into the representation of the overtly-sexual, Western dressing young woman. This is most prominently seen in semi-autobiographical literature produced by women and in female intellectuals who, though did have a number of modern girl traits, contested the association between Western clothing and defying gender roles.

Not all authors took a similar approach to the West or Western-styled dress, instead using them as a way to express freedom within a confining society. Yoshiya Nobuko, one of the founders of the *shōjo* genre, used the West as a symbol for escape in her 1920 novel *Two Virgins in the Attic* that undermined the typical interpretation of a modern girl.30 *Two Virgins* revolves

---

28 Frederick, *Turning pages*, 70.
29 Silverberg, 247.

---

30 *Shōjo* means “girl”; most *shōjo* usually have the main character(s) as innocent and extremely feminine. The setting is usually a school or place that can be isolated from society. Often very pure and sweet.
content made it too scandalous to continue in that venue, it was later picked up by the woman’s magazine Josei. A Fool’s Love is centered on a story of obsessive love between a male narrator and a young girl whom he removes from her job as a cafe waitress to become his wife.  

Unlike the typical image of the Japanese woman, Naomi represents the extreme modern girl, intent on being as Western in appearance and manner as possible. Not only is Naomi heavily sexualized within the novel, but she also plays the role of an active “consumer whose appetite for moving pictures and carefully chosen foreign and domestic order-in delicacies is matched only by her desire for a large assortment of male companions” while “producing goods, services, and new habits.” This depiction of the moga as a non-conforming, sexual, consumption-oriented woman who destabilizes the happy balance offered by society plays into a fear of the West and the danger of modernization to a stable, traditional society. Naomi’s actions continue to feed into this fear when she begins to clad herself both in female and male clothing as well as adopt the use of masculine pronouns.

Her decision to embrace both genders through Western fashion and personality throws into question how the modern girl fits into the culture. By having Naomi cross-dress and speak in a masculine way, Tanizaki brings into play the moga’s inherent denial of complementary gender roles. Naomi’s actions show her directly taking over parts of the masculine sphere while denying aspects of the domestic female one. By

the end of the novel Naomi’s actions intimidate the narrator, ultimately causing him to flee and return to Japanese “normalcy.” The conclusion of the book establishes the modern girl and the West as something to be feared, as Western clothes and ideas make her unable to fit into either gender role entirely and eventually lead her to becoming a dangerous and influential outcast with a potential to corrupt others.

**Women Writers on the Modern Woman**

Though much of the mainstream media portrayed the moga as a widespread societal image and overall the modern girl was a strikingly prominent fixture in the selling of feminine products like cosmetics, Japanese women living in interwar society were never fully drawn into the representation of the overtly-sexual, Western dressing young woman. This is most prominently seen in semi-autobiographical literature produced by women and in female intellectuals who, though did have a number of modern girl traits, contested the association between Western clothing and defying gender roles.

Not all authors took a similar approach to the West or Western-styled dress, instead using them as a way to express freedom within a confining society. Yoshiya Nobuko, one of the founders of the shōjo genre, used the West as a symbol for escape in her 1920 novel Two Virgins in the Attic that undermined the typical interpretation of a modern girl.  

**Two Virgins** revolves

---

28 Frederick, *Turning pages*, 70.

29 Silverberg, 247.

30 Shōjo means “girl”; most shōjo usually have the main character(s) as innocent and extremely feminine. The setting is usually a school or place that can be isolated from society. Often very pure and sweet.
around the romantic relationship of two women, the shy Takimoto Akiko and the outgoing Miss Akitsu, which starts after the latter rescues Akiko from a fire in her room, an attic in the YWCA where she is staying. The two then spend the rest of the story finding freedom from societal pressures and problems in the attic as it allows them to break away from the “proper” behavior expected of young Japanese women. In these bits of escape, the image of the attic, along with other Western images like nightgowns, balconies, Catholic schools, and pianos among other things, are made exotic and fantasy-like, adding another layer of detachment from society through a pseudo-foreign isolation.

Unlike the typical association with Western fashion, the two main characters do not share any traits comparable to those demonstrated by Naomi in A Fool’s Love. Instead, Western clothes are shown to be part of the gently intimate setting of the attic while, at the same time, displayed as hyper-feminine. In one of the most romantic scenes in the novel, in which Akiko and Miss Akitsu share a bed, their Western pajamas are referenced in very delicate terms. “Miss Akitsu’s linen pajamas have the soft scent of magnolias......and unnoticed that scent of the magnolia flower was transferred to the flannel sleeves of Akiko’s own sleepwear......” Even though the scene could be read as sexual, and indeed defies a number of sexual boundaries, the transfer of the magnolia scent between bedclothes is pure and untainted. This imagery and others like it in Two Virgins share many similarities with the general idea of the moga. These include the defiance of domestic gender roles, Western attitudes and clothing, the acknowledgment of some intimacies between the characters, and friendships between those who could be defined as both modern girls and new women. However, Akiko and Miss Akitsu are comparatively not modern girls themselves.

What makes Akiko and Miss Akitsu different from moga is the shōjo genre with its femininity and manipulation of the gender situation within Japanese society. Though they did share a number of characteristics, the shōjo had a wider berth of freedom than the modern girl, that is, she had an “association with purity and warmth” and “was often defined in literature and art by qualities associated with femininity at the time—sentimentality, interest in flowers, clothing, dolls, and dreamy thoughts of the moon and stars.” Additionally, Akiko and Miss Akitsu remain together at the end of the novel, deciding to leave the attic and, essentially, “become adults.” At the same time, Akiko goes through the transition from girlhood to adulthood while still maintaining her purity and honesty. Because her growth did not force her to lose those qualities and allowed her to “rebel against natural imperatives to marry and reproduce” it established her as a “more civilized human.” Therefore, because their

32 Ibid, 72.
34 Frederick, “Not that Innocent,” 68.
around the romantic relationship of two women, the shy Takimoto Akiko and the outgoing Miss Akitsu, which starts after the latter rescues Akiko from a fire in her room, an attic in the YWCA where she is staying. The two then spend the rest of the story finding freedom from societal pressures and problems in the attic as it allows them to break away from the "proper" behavior expected of young Japanese women. In these bits of escape, the image of the attic, along with other Western images like nightgowns, balconies, Catholic schools, and pianos among other things, are made exotic and fantasy-like, adding another layer of detachment from society through a pseudo-foreign isolation. Unlike the typical association with Western fashion, the two main characters do not share any traits comparable to those demonstrated by Naomi in A Fool’s Love. Instead, Western clothes are shown to be part of the gently intimate setting of the attic while, at the same time, displayed as hyper-feminine. In one of the most romantic scenes in the novel, in which Akiko and Miss Akitsu share a bed, their Western pajamas are referenced in very delicate terms. “Miss Akitsu’s linen pajamas have the soft scent of magnolias......and unnoticed that scent of the magnolia flower was transferred to the flannel sleeves of Akiko’s own sleepwear......” Even though the scene could be read

as sexual, and indeed defies a number of sexual boundaries, the transfer of the magnolia scent between bedclothes is pure and untainted. This imagery and others like it in Two Virgins share many similarities with the general idea of the moga. These include the defiance of domestic gender roles, Western attitudes and clothing, the acknowledgment of some intimacies between the characters, and friendships between those who could be defined as both modern girls and new women. However, Akiko and Miss Akitsu are comparatively not modern girls themselves.

What makes Akiko and Miss Akitsu different from moga is the shōjo genre with its femininity and manipulation of the gender situation within Japanese society. Though they did share a number of characteristics, the shōjo had a wider berth of freedom than the modern girl, that is, she had an “association] with purity and warmth” and “was often defined in literature and art by qualities associated with femininity at the time—sentimentality, interest in flowers, clothing, dolls, and dreamy thoughts of the moon and stars.” Additionally, Akiko and Miss Akitsu remain together at the end of the novel, deciding to leave the attic and, essentially, “become adults.” At the same time, Akiko goes through the transition from girlhood to adulthood while still maintaining her purity and honesty. Because her growth did not force her to lose those qualities and allowed her to “rebel against natural imperatives to marry and reproduce” it established her as a “more civilized human.” Therefore, because their

32 Ibid, 72.
34 Ibid, 76.
35 Frederick, “Not that Innocent,” 68.
36 Ibid, 76.
relationship was a rebellion and not an attempt to take down society, Akiko and Miss Akitsu were “acceptable.”

The image of the moga was heavily discussed and criticized by society, but shades of the modern girl could be portrayed in an acceptable, even traditionally acceptable, light if certain qualities were altered to fit within a certain framework, as seen in the case of Yoshiya’s Two Virgins in the Attic.

Hayashi Fumiko’s novel Diary of a Vagabond, on the other hand, shows what is was like for women living on the edge of a modernizing society, removed from the shōjo setting. Vagabond is written in diary format and tells the story of a young woman writer trying to make ends meet in a southern town, and shares a number of similarities with the author’s own life. The protagonist takes on a number of jobs, from peddler to waitress at a local cafe, in order to establish some financial security for herself and her mother. By putting her right into the heart of the typical “modern” setting, it is not unexpected to see links between the main character and a moga, like Naomi. However, though there are a couple cafe scenes, the author does not romanticize nor emphasize any hidden sexuality about them, instead focusing on the conditions, the mundane work, and the waitresses. Those women who work in a cafe are also not painted as “modern girls” as the main character notes that she is the youngest, around her mid-twenties, and that one of the other workers has two children. These statements offer a realistic, humanizing look at the supposed moga of the cafe scene in contrast to the dominant forms of media portraying a very different image.

Outside of the cafe, the protagonist still dresses in the “traditional” kimono, even mentioning the luxury of affording tabi socks when she secures the job and trading her kimono top to afford a bath. At the same time, she includes a wide variety of Western figures and movements in her recollections including Dadaist poetry, Maillol sculptures, and Eugene O’Neill, and this is especially notable in one scene where she has enough money to purchase a collection of Chekhov and Tolstoy memoirs and makes references to them throughout the story. The image of an everyday woman presented by the author seems to contradict both the image of the moga and that of the updated traditional woman. There is no visible distinction based on clothing or even action that rightly defines the protagonist as either. This reflects that though the modern girl existed and may have been a part of literature and discourse, many women did not fully see themselves in such strict or structured identity terms.

These two pieces of literature fit into real women intellectuals debating a variety of topics from love, to independence, to politics, to womanhood, to what it meant to be modern in the public sphere. Many of them were those that could be identified in some terms as a “modern girl,” but did not see themselves as such in the context of the media’s image of the moga. At the

36 “Vagabond Song” is a translated excerpt from Hayashi’s full novel Diary of a Vagabond released in Japan as a novel in 1930.

relationship was a rebellion and not an attempt to take down society, Akiko and Miss Akitsu were “acceptable.”

The image of the moga was heavily discussed and criticized by society, but shades of the modern girl could be portrayed in an acceptable, even traditionally acceptable, light if certain qualities were altered to fit within a certain framework, as seen in the case of Yoshiya’s Two Virgins in the Attic.

Hayashi Fumiko’s novel Diary of a Vagabond, on the other hand, shows what it was like for women living on the edge of a modernizing society, removed from the shōjo setting. Vagabond is written in diary format and tells the story of a young woman writer trying to make ends meet in a southern town, and shares a number of similarities with the author’s own life. The protagonist takes on a number of jobs, from peddler to waitress at a local cafe, in order to establish some financial security for herself and her mother. By putting her right into the heart of the typical “modern” setting, it is not unexpected to see links between the main character and a moga, like Naomi. However, though there are a couple cafe scenes, the author does not romanticize nor emphasize any hidden sexuality about them, instead focusing on the conditions, the mundane work, and the waitresses. Those women who work in a cafe are also not painted as “modern girls” as the main character notes that she is the youngest, around her mid-twenties, and that one of the other workers has two children. These statements offer a realistic, humanizing look at the supposed moga of the cafe scene in contrast to the dominant forms of media portraying a very different image.

Outside of the cafe, the protagonist still dresses in the “traditional” kimono, even mentioning the luxury of affording tabi socks when she secures the job and trading her kimono top to afford a bath. At the same time, she includes a wide variety of Western figures and movements in her recollections including Dadaist poetry, Maillol sculptures, and Eugene O’Neill, and this is especially notable in one scene where she has enough money to purchase a collection of Chekhov and Tolstoy memoirs and makes references to them throughout the story. The image of an everyday woman presented by the author seems to contradict both the image of the moga and that of the updated traditional woman. There is no visible distinction based on clothing or even action that rightly defines the protagonist as either. This reflects that though the modern girl existed and may have been a part of literature and discourse, many women did not fully see themselves in such strict or structured identity terms.

These two pieces of literature fit into real women intellectuals debating a variety of topics from love, to independence, to politics, to womanhood, to what it meant to be modern in the public sphere. Many of them were those that could be identified in some terms as a “modern girl,” but did not see themselves as such in the context of the media’s image of the moga. At the

36 “Vagabond Song” is a translated excerpt from Hayashi’s full novel Diary of a Vagabond released in Japan as a novel in 1930.

same time, these women also lacked an overarching
dress code—it was a matter of personal choice whether
or not they chose to wear kimono or western outfits.
Hiratsuka Raichô, a prominent feminist who left
lasting effects on the movement for women’s rights,
even denied the connection between western clothing
and the “real Modern Girl,” concluded that it was not
fashion which identified modernity, but “social con-
science.” 38 Hiratsuka’s essay reflected a wider social
try to locate the true modern girl outside of
superficial appearance and apolitical identity.

Conclusion
What can be seen in these overarching portrayals
of the modern girl and the new traditional woman is a
series of contradictory images of how women were
expected to act within a modernizing Japan. Though
the traditional kimono-clad woman was the ideal that
intellectuals claimed was the next step for female
identity, moga images were equally, if not more so,
presented in the media with varying contextual
shades. Her representation in political discussion and
literature as a Western clothed, athletic woman sug-
gested a dangerous, subversion to societal gender roles
in that it redressed the physical body with masculine
aspects. The modern girl was expected to be sporty
and in shape, capable of a wild night of dancing in low-
cut dresses or tanning on the beach, while at the same
time exuding an independent, high-spirited energy not
traditionally attributed to the preferred female person-
ality and body. These actions placed her outside of the
expected societal roles and made her dangerous to the

stability and functionality of a changing Japanese
world.
At the same time, art and advertisements contrib-
uted to the popularization and spread of the Western
appearance. Oil paintings, wood blocks, and other art
pieces that made their way into public view often
showed the overlapping of Japan and the West, espe-
cially when it came to attempts to hybridize the
different cultures into one defining image. Art of the
moga, in see-through dresses or in places associated
with modernity, became popular as they entered
galleries of the wealthy, upper classes. The sexualized,
modern woman in art had a particular appeal, even if
it still kept the subject in the traditional, but altered
kimono. To the lower and middle classes, their experi-
ences of the modern girl came through the advertise-
ments in magazines and display shop windows at local
department stores. These images sold them an ideal of
what they could be—the attractive, seductive woman
in the new, modern sense—with a little bit of makeup
or a new outfit. Though the political significance of the
moga was treated with nervousness and a wide dis-
tance, the actual wearing of Western clothing and the
changed appearance was pushed for in the media. It
became an important selling point, even if a woman
decided to only partially play into the consumerist
nature of modernization.
Even though the modern girl and Western clothing
were presented in a paradoxical, yet idealized manner,
prolominent women at the time subverted the multilay-
ered, but strict duality promoted in popular culture.
This was seen especially in works by female authors
who suggested an incredibly nuanced and complex
relation to the West and Western culture in their own

38 Silverberg, 249.
same time, these women also lacked an overarching dress code—it was a matter of personal choice whether or not they chose to wear kimono or western outfits. Hiratsuka Raichō, a prominent feminist who left lasting effects on the movement for women’s rights, even denied the connection between western clothing and the “real Modern Girl,” concluded that it was not fashion which identified modernity, but “social conscience.”

Hiratsuka’s essay reflected a wider social attempt to locate the true modern girl outside of superficial appearance and apolitical identity.

Conclusion

What can be seen in these overarching portrayals of the modern girl and the new traditional woman is a series of contradictory images of how women were expected to act within a modernizing Japan. Though the traditional kimono-clad woman was the ideal that intellectuals claimed was the next step for female identity, moga images were equally, if not more so, presented in the media with varying contextual shades. Her representation in political discussion and literature as a Western clothed, athletic woman suggested a dangerous, subversion to societal gender roles in that it redressed the physical body with masculine aspects. The modern girl was expected to be sporty and in shape, capable of a wild night of dancing in low-cut dresses or tanning on the beach, while at the same time exuding an independent, high-spirited energy not traditionally attributed to the preferred female personality and body. These actions placed her outside of the expected societal roles and made her dangerous to the stability and functionality of a changing Japanese world.

At the same time, art and advertisements contributed to the popularization and spread of the Western appearance. Oil paintings, wood blocks, and other art pieces that made their way into public view often showed the overlapping of Japan and the West, especially when it came to attempts to hybridize the different cultures into one defining image. Art of the moga, in see-through dresses or in places associated with modernity, became popular as they entered galleries of the wealthy, upper classes. The sexualized, modern woman in art had a particular appeal, even if it still kept the subject in the traditional, but altered kimono. To the lower and middle classes, their experiences of the modern girl came through the advertisements in magazines and display shop windows at local department stores. These images sold them an ideal of what they could be—the attractive, seductive woman in the new, modern sense—with a little bit of makeup or a new outfit. Though the political significance of the moga was treated with nervousness and a wide distance, the actual wearing of Western clothing and the changed appearance was pushed for in the media. It became an important selling point, even if a woman decided to only partially play into the consumerist nature of modernization.

Even though the modern girl and Western clothing were presented in a paradoxical, yet idealized manner, prominent women at the time subverted the multilayered, but strict duality promoted in popular culture. This was seen especially in works by female authors who suggested an incredibly nuanced and complex relation to the West and Western culture in their own

38 Silverberg, 249.
lives. Though clothing had been a defining characteristic of the modern girl in interwar women’s literature, whether the characters wore a kimono or dress, whether they submerged themselves completely in the fashion or only explored it in passing, it did not define or identify who they were as a person in their society.

Essentially the moga represented both a fear of the West and the modern ideal projected onto a particular gender. During the transition between old and new ways women were expected to both modernize, yet remain a reminder of the past. The modern girl was the created physical representation of the extreme, dangerous modern woman. What lay behind this image was that the moga had parts of what real women were like during this time period, and many fed into certain aspects of the appearance seen through advertisements, but clothing and looks were not an outward definition of a “true” moga or even the everyday woman. Many women did not make the complete transfer, nor did they remain the perfect definition of the new traditional woman.

Shelby Wright is a graduating senior at Santa Clara University with a major in United States history and a minor in Asian Studies. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. “Fashion, Feminine Identity, and Japan’s Interwar Period” is the result of her research on the changing of Japanese identity and gender values as seen through popular culture and fashion. She hopes to continue similar studies in the future.

lives. Though clothing had been a defining characteristic of the modern girl in interwar women’s literature, whether the characters wore a kimono or dress, whether they submerged themselves completely in the fashion or only explored it in passing, it did not define or identify who they were as a person in their society.

Essentially the moga represented both a fear of the West and the modern ideal projected onto a particular gender. During the transition between old and new ways women were expected to both modernize, yet remain a reminder of the past. The modern girl was the created physical representation of the extreme, dangerous modern woman. What lay behind this image was that the moga had parts of what real women were like during this time period, and many fed into certain aspects of the appearance seen through advertisements, but clothing and looks were not an outward definition of a “true” moga or even the everyday woman. Many women did not make the complete transfer, nor did they remain the perfect definition of the new traditional woman.

Shelby Wright is a graduating senior at Santa Clara University with a major in United States history and a minor in Asian Studies. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. “Fashion, Feminine Identity, and Japan’s Interwar Period” is the result of her research on the changing of Japanese identity and gender values as seen through popular culture and fashion. She hopes to continue similar studies in the future.


Yamamura Kōka, New Carleton Dancers, Shanghai, 1924; woodblock print; ink and color on paper, 1924, in Taishō Chic: Japanese Modernity, Nostalgia, and Deco, Kendall H. Brown and Sharon Minichiello, (Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2001), 32.
FIGURE 2


FIGURE 3


Finding a solution to the Israeli and Palestinian conflict is continually at the top of the American foreign policy agenda. Secretary of State John Kerry worked to begin yet another round of peace negotiations between President Netanyahu and the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority this past October. Although it is now beginning to seem as though the talks are in jeopardy as “each side appears to be maneuvering and potentially laying the foundation to avoid blame should the talks fail,” it is likely efforts will continually be made until some sort of agreeable solution is found.¹

The United States has long been “Israel’s main patron and strategic ally.”² In terms of total money received, Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of military assistance from the United States since World War II.³ Much of this is due to the clout of pro-Israel

---

**Al-Nakba: An Analysis of the Historical and Contemporary Israeli Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine**

Will Zupan

Finding a solution to the Israeli and Palestinian conflict is continually at the top of the American foreign policy agenda. Secretary of State John Kerry worked to begin yet another round of peace negotiations between President Netanyahu and the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority this past October. Although it is now beginning to seem as though the talks are in jeopardy as “each side appears to be maneuvering and potentially laying the foundation to avoid blame should the talks fail,” it is likely efforts will continually be made until some sort of agreeable solution is found.¹

The United States has long been “Israel’s main patron and strategic ally.”² In terms of total money received, Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of military assistance from the United States since World War II.³ Much of this is due to the clout of pro-Israel

---


lobbyist groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), amongst the most powerful in Washington. It is considered a foolish mistake for any American politician to criticize Israel.

Today, Israel is often pointed to as a bastion of democracy amidst the sea of turmoil that is the Middle East. Yet, there is a side to the country’s history and politics that is all too often ignored or shied away from: its treatment of the Palestinian people, both historically and in the present day. This essay will argue that, since the nation’s founding in 1948, Israel has engaged in the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people from as well as within their native homeland. The cleansing process still continues today in the form of Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in the form of discriminatory and dehumanizing practices against members of the Arab population within Israel’s formal borders.

This paper will examine the Israeli ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in depth. It will first establish a working definition of the term “ethnic cleansing,” as well as identify and scrutinize the common practices that ethnic cleansing involves. It will then examine both the historical and contemporary treatment of the Palestinians by the Israelis and apply that working definition and list of practices to that particular case.

Defining Ethnic Cleansing

Before analyzing the historical and contemporary Israeli practices that constitute the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians, it is important to define the term and examine the common practices that it entails.

With Security Resolution 780, the United Nations established ethnic cleansing as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.” In the introduction of his book, Ethnic Cleansing, Andrew Bell-Fialkoff delineates ethnic cleansing as “a planned, deliberate removal from a certain territory of an undesirable population distinguished by one or more characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, race, class, or sexual preference. These characteristics must serve as the basis for removal for it to qualify as cleansing.”

Ethnic cleansing involves the homogenization of a particular territory or region by purging it of any undesirable elements. It involves the permanent removal of these undesirable elements from their native land through either population transfers or large-scale killing. This is precisely what happened in the case of Palestine as “half of the indigenous people living” in the former British Mandate “were driven out, half of their villages and towns were destroyed, and only very few among them ever managed to return.”

There are a number of different practices that constitute or accompany efforts at ethnic cleansing. They include, but are not limited to: the identification of a dominant, ideal group coupled with the simulta-
lobbyist groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), amongst the most powerful in Washington. It is considered a foolish mistake for any American politician to criticize Israel.

Today, Israel is often pointed to as a bastion of democracy amidst the sea of turmoil that is the Middle East. Yet, there is a side to the country’s history and politics that is all too often ignored or shied away from: its treatment of the Palestinian people, both historically and in the present day. This essay will argue that, since the nation’s founding in 1948, Israel has engaged in the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people from as well as within their native homeland. The cleansing process still continues today in the form of Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in the form of discriminatory and dehumanizing practices against members of the Arab population within Israel’s formal borders.

This paper will examine the Israeli ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in depth. It will first establish a working definition of the term “ethnic cleansing,” as well as identify and scrutinize the common practices that ethnic cleansing involves. It will then examine both the historical and contemporary treatment of the Palestinians by the Israelis and apply that working definition and list of practices to that particular case.

Defining Ethnic Cleansing

Before analyzing the historical and contemporary Israeli practices that constitute the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians, it is important to define the term and examine the common practices that it entails.

With Security Resolution 780, the United Nations established ethnic cleansing as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.”4 In the introduction of his book, Ethnic Cleansing, Andrew Bell-Fialkoff delineates ethnic cleansing as “a planned, deliberate removal from a certain territory of an undesirable population distinguished by one or more characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, race, class, or sexual preference. These characteristics must serve as the basis for removal for it to qualify as cleansing.”5

Ethnic cleansing involves the homogenization of a particular territory or region by purging it of any undesirable elements. It involves the permanent removal of these undesirable elements from their native land through either population transfers or large-scale killing. This is precisely what happened in the case of Palestine as “half of the indigenous people living” in the former British Mandate “were driven out, half of their villages and towns were destroyed, and only very few among them ever managed to return.”6

There are a number of different practices that constitute or accompany efforts at ethnic cleansing. They include, but are not limited to: the identification of a dominant, ideal group coupled with the simulta-

---

neous ostracizing and dehumanization of an “inferior” or “other” group; the forced removal of people from their homes and lands; efforts to homogenize society along the lines of the dominant group; and efforts to erase the cultural memory of the “cleansed” peoples.

Establishing and Demonizing “The Other”

The ostracizing of an “inferior” group is a very important component of ethnic cleansing and one that has been present in every genocide or example of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. Research Professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention at George Mason University, Gregory H. Stanton outlines “classification,” “symbolization,” and “dehumanization” as the first three components of any genocide or ethnic cleansing.⁷

The Nazis’ infamous application of these three processes is widely known. The 1935 Nuremburg Laws classified people according to the amount of “German blood” that they possessed and then instituted discriminatory statutes against those with inferior “Jewish” or “mixed” blood. Classification was then expressed through symbolization, as a plethora of ciphers were instituted to demarcate those who were Jewish, gypsies, criminals, etc.; most famous of course the Star of David that Jews were forced to wear. Finally, long before any killing began, German Jews were subjugated to all sorts of dehumanizing treatments: their businesses were boycotted, they were forced to endure humiliating public rituals, and they were required to carry and present paperwork documenting their religion and ethnicity upon request.

Similar circumstances unfolded in Rwanda in the decades leading up to the country’s brutal genocide. In 1916, the Belgians, at the time the colonial power in charge of Rwanda, took the Hutu and Tutsi, essentially two different socioeconomic groups, and classified them racially according to differing physical features. The Tutsi were also given legal privileges over the Hutu by the Belgians. Then, with the 1959 Hutu Revolution, the existing social order was overturned and it became the Hutu’s turn to wield power over the Tutsi minority.⁸ In the years leading up to the genocide, numerous acts of violence were perpetrated by the Hutu against the Tutsi. The Tutsi were also given the dehumanizing name of “inyenzi,” which is the Kinyarwanda word for “cockroaches.”

What many are not very aware of, especially in the United States, is the amount of classification, symbolization, and dehumanization that gets carried out by the Israelis against the Palestinians, both those living in Israel, as well as those in the occupied territories. “There are more than thirty laws that discriminate against Palestinian citizens of Israel, directly or indirectly, based solely on their ethnicity.”⁹ There are also widespread anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab sentiments

---


neous ostracizing and dehumanization of an “inferior” or “other” group; the forced removal of people from their homes and lands; efforts to homogenize society along the lines of the dominant group; and efforts to erase the cultural memory of the “cleansed” peoples.

Establishing and Demonizing “The Other”

The ostracizing of an “inferior” group is a very important component of ethnic cleansing and one that has been present in every genocide or example of ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. Research Professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention at George Mason University, Gregory H. Stanton outlines “classification,” “symbolization,” and “dehumanization” as the first three components of any genocide or ethnic cleansing.7

The Nazis’ infamous application of these three processes is widely known. The 1935 Nuremburg Laws classified people according to the amount of “German blood” that they possessed and then instituted discriminatory statutes against those with inferior “Jewish” or “mixed” blood. Classification was then expressed through symbolization, as a plethora of ciphers were instituted to demarcate those who were Jewish, gypsies, criminals, etc.; most famous of course the Star of David that Jews were forced to wear. Finally, long before any killing began, German Jews were subjugated to all sorts of dehumanizing treatments: their businesses were boycotted, they were forced to endure humiliating public rituals, and they were required to carry and present paperwork documenting their religion and ethnicity upon request.

Similar circumstances unfolded in Rwanda in the decades leading up to the country’s brutal genocide. In 1916, the Belgians, at the time the colonial power in charge of Rwanda, took the Hutu and Tutsi, essentially two different socioeconomic groups, and classified them racially according to differing physical features. The Tutsi were also given legal privileges over the Hutu by the Belgians. Then, with the 1959 Hutu Revolution, the existing social order was overturned and it became the Hutu’s turn to wield power over the Tutsi minority.8 In the years leading up to the genocide, numerous acts of violence were perpetrated by the Hutu against the Tutsi. The Tutsi were also given the dehumanizing name of “inyenzi,” which is the Kinyarwanda word for “cockroaches.”

What many are not very aware of, especially in the United States, is the amount of classification, symbolization, and dehumanization that gets carried out by the Israelis against the Palestinians, both those living in Israel, as well as those in the occupied territories. “There are more than thirty laws that discriminate against Palestinian citizens of Israel, directly or indirectly, based solely on their ethnicity.”9 There are also widespread anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab sentiments

---


held by Israelis. They will be explored later in this essay when it comes to discussing the contemporary Israeli examples of ethnic cleansing.

Population Transfer

The concept of population transfer is central to the events of 1948 and the mass-scale removal of the Palestinians from their homeland. It has also been considered or actually implemented in almost every twentieth century example of genocide or ethnic cleansing. Take the Armenian Genocide, for example. Although there is ample evidence that the Young Turks desired to exterminate the Ottoman’s Armenian population all along, their forced deportations for security reasons and as part of the general drive to eliminate non-“Turkish” elements from the Empire were most certainly population transfers.¹⁰ This effort at ethnic cleansing resulted in genocide, as thousands of those forced to do the compulsory marches perished in the unforgiving deserts of Mesopotamia.

Most are familiar with the population transfers that were the Nazi deportations of Jews in Germany, Poland, and other occupied territories to the extermination camps. However, few are aware that following Kristallnacht, Nazi economics minister, Hjalmar Schacht, actually suggested a plan to deport the remaining German and Austrian Jews, roughly 600,000 people, to Madagascar. Hitler even initially approved the Madagascar plan in December 1938, at which point he “called for Jewish institutions in the


Selective Memory

Another important component of ethnic cleansing involves the re-writing of history and the erasing of the cleansed group from collective national memory. It seems this is a key feature that actually separates the term “genocide” from the term “ethnic cleansing.” Genocide attempts to physically exterminate a group while ethnic cleansing is more about the complete removal of that group from all facets of society, albeit not necessarily through killing.

This was the case with the Armenian genocide. To this day the Turkish government still refuses to

¹² *Ibid.*, 139-84
held by Israelis. They will be explored later in this essay when it comes to discussing the contemporary Israeli examples of ethnic cleansing.

Population Transfer

The concept of population transfer is central to the events of 1948 and the mass-scale removal of the Palestinians from their homeland. It has also been considered or actually implemented in almost every twentieth century example of genocide or ethnic cleansing. Take the Armenian Genocide, for example. Although there is ample evidence that the Young Turks desired to exterminate the Ottoman’s Armenian population all along, their forced deportations for security reasons and as part of the general drive to eliminate non-“Turkish” elements from the Empire were most certainly population transfers. This effort at ethnic cleansing resulted in genocide, as thousands of those forced to do the compulsory marches perished in the unforgiving deserts of Mesopotamia.

Most are familiar with the population transfers that were the Nazi deportations of Jews in Germany, Poland, and other occupied territories to the extermination camps. However, few are aware that following Kristallnacht, Nazi economics minister, Hjalmar Schacht, actually suggested a plan to deport the remaining German and Austrian Jews, roughly 600,000 people, to Madagascar. Hitler even initially approved the Madagascar plan in December 1938, at which point he “called for Jewish institutions in the


11 Ibid., 72.

12 Ibid., 139-84

West to put up the capital for the forced emigration of Jews of working and child-bearing age and their families.”

Population transfer and expulsion were also at the core of Slobodan Milošević and the Serbians’ efforts at ethnically cleansing various parts of the former Yugoslavia during the Wars of Yugoslav Succession—from Kosovo to Croatia and, above all, to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Population transfer is at the core of any attempt at ethnic cleansing. Identifying an “ideal” group while simultaneously singling out and ostracizing an “other,” inferior group paves the ground for this process, but it is the forced expulsion itself that principally defines any effort at ethnic cleansing. The Israelis have labored on their cleansing operations ever since, but at the core of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine is the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which will be examined later.

Selective Memory

Another important component of ethnic cleansing involves the re-writing of history and the erasing of the cleansed group from collective national memory. It seems this is a key feature that actually separates the term “genocide” from the term “ethnic cleansing.” Genocide attempts to physically exterminate a group while ethnic cleansing is more about the complete removal of that group from all facets of society, albeit not necessarily through killing.

This was the case with the Armenian genocide. To this day the Turkish government still refuses to
acknowledge that the actions of the Young Turks toward the Armenian population during World War I constituted either genocide or ethnic cleansing. In fact, it is a crime in Turkey to label the events as genocide and, in March 2010,

Turkey withdrew its ambassador to Washington after a United States congressional committee narrowly approved a resolution branding the killings as ‘genocide.’ The House Foreign Affairs Committee endorsed it, despite the objections of the White House. Barack Obama’s administration has called for the resolution not to be ‘acted upon’ by the full Congress.\textsuperscript{13}

This phenomenon of essentially trying to rewrite history has been present in other genocides and ethnic cleansing efforts as well, including the Holocaust, the Rwandan Hutu genocide of the Tutsis and the Serbian ethnic cleansing of Bosnia’s Muslim population. It has also been a part of the story of Israel’s ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians.

\textit{Nationalism}

There is one more very important component of ethnic cleansing that correlated with its dramatically increased occurrence in the twentieth century. That driving force is nationalism. American historian, Norman A. Naimark, argues this point, claiming that the increased prevalence of ethnic cleansing ran concurrent with the “increasing popularity of modern, racist nationalism as it developed throughout Europe and the West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” In his view, this “post-positivist, post-Darwinian, and new extreme form of nationalism represented an essentialist view of nations, a view which excluded the ‘other’ and forswore assimilation.”\textsuperscript{14}

Essentially the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw an increasing tendency by people, in particular Europeans, to define and differentiate themselves along racial and ethnic lines. This in turn led to the desire to replace more multi-cultural empires with smaller, more ethnically homogenous nation states. This process, of course, helped spawn the rise of identifying dominant, desirable groups in contrast with unwanted, other groups that were slated for removal.

Historically, nationalism has gone hand in hand with almost every example of genocide or ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. Assuming power in a crumbling Ottoman Empire that had been for centuries a powerful and multicultural entity, the Young Turks promulgated their nationalistic beliefs about Turkish pride and superiority. Though the Armenians had been persecuted before under previous sultans, this new ideology certainly played a role in making the genocide possible.

As is well known and documented, the Nazis propagated highly nationalistic views as part of their strategy to reinvigorate a Germany that had been left in shambles by World War I and the world wide de-


\textsuperscript{14} Naimark, \textit{Fires of Hatred}, 7.
acknowledge that the actions of the Young Turks toward the Armenian population during World War I constituted either genocide or ethnic cleansing. In fact, it is a crime in Turkey to label the events as genocide and, in March 2010, Turkey withdrew its ambassador to Washington after a United States congressional committee narrowly approved a resolution branding the killings as ‘genocide.’ The House Foreign Affairs Committee endorsed it, despite the objections of the White House. Barack Obama’s administration has called for the resolution not to be ‘acted upon’ by the full Congress.13

This phenomenon of essentially trying to rewrite history has been present in other genocides and ethnic cleansing efforts as well, including the Holocaust, the Rwandan Hutu genocide of the Tutsis and the Serbian ethnic cleansing of Bosnia’s Muslim population. It has also been a part of the story of Israel’s ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians.

Nationalism

There is one more very important component of ethnic cleansing that correlated with its dramatically increased occurrence in the twentieth century. That driving force is nationalism. American historian, Norman A. Naimark, argues this point, claiming that the increased prevalence of ethnic cleansing ran concurrent with the “increasing popularity of modern, racist nationalism as it developed throughout Europe and the West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” In his view, this “post-positivist, post-Darwinian, and new extreme form of nationalism represented an essentialist view of nations, a view which excluded the ‘other’ and forswore assimilation.”14

Essentially the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw an increasing tendency by people, in particular Europeans, to define and differentiate themselves along racial and ethnic lines. This in turn led to the desire to replace more multi-cultural empires with smaller, more ethnically homogenous nation states. This process, of course, helped spawn the rise of identifying dominant, desirable groups in contrast with unwanted, other groups that were slated for removal.

Historically, nationalism has gone hand in hand with almost every example of genocide or ethnic cleansing in the twentieth century. Assuming power in a crumbling Ottoman Empire that had been for centuries a powerful and multicultural entity, the Young Turks promulgated their nationalistic beliefs about Turkish pride and superiority. Though the Armenians had been persecuted before under previous sultans, this new ideology certainly played a role in making the genocide possible.

As is well known and documented, the Nazis propagated highly nationalistic views as part of their strategy to reinvigorate a Germany that had been left in shambles by World War I and the world wide de-


14 Naimark, Fires of Hatred, 7.
pression of the late 1920s and 30s. This nationalistic sentiment soon took an infamously dark turn as a “true” German came to be equated with members of the Aryan race and the desire to purge all inferior elements slowly grew.

Under General Marshall Tito in Communist Yugoslavia, nationalistic sentiments had been fairly well suppressed as part of the General’s desire to strengthen the state as a whole. However, with the deterioration of the former Yugoslavia, nationalistic fervor began to sweep through Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and other former regions that had previously been a part of the communist state. The result of this nationalism was brutal violence between members of the various regions, particularly between the Serbs and Bosnians. The end result of it all was the creation of relatively ethnically homogenous states harboring resentment toward one another.

Nationalism played a role in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, too. Zionism was very much a European, nationalistic movement and it ultimately led to the creation of a new Jewish state.

The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

Now that a working definition of ethnic cleansing has been established and the common practices that it involves have been examined, this essay will scrutinize three important periods in Israeli history: the Mandate years, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and the post-war era to demonstrate Israeli policies and practices.

Zionism, Anti-Arabism, and the Mandate Years

Behind ethnic cleansing is the “the intent of driving victims from territory claimed by the perpetrators.”

Though the actual ethnic cleansing of Palestine did not begin until after the UN Partition plan was formulated and especially with the onset of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, it is important to point out that there is ample evidence of Zionist intent to cleanse the territory of its Arab inhabitants that dates back to the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The concept of population transfer was, and is, deeply rooted in Zionist thought. From the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, to the main leaders of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine, cleansing the land was a valid option. As one of the movement’s most liberal thinkers, Leo Motzkin, put it in 1917:

Our thought is that the colonization of Palestine has to go in two directions: Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel and the resettlement of the Arabs of Eretz Israel in areas outside the country. The transfer of so many Arabs may seem at first unacceptable economically, but is nonetheless practical. It does not require too much money to resettle a Palestinian village on another land.

Zionist leader and founder of Israel, David Ben-Gurion was aware that armed force would be necessary to establish the state of Israel and drive the Palestinians out over a decade before any action was taken. In the conclusion of a letter that he wrote to the Jewish Agency Executive of June 9, 1936, Ben-Gurion “regarded the Arabs of Palestine as a national movement...
pression of the late 1920s and 30s. This nationalistic sentiment soon took an infamously dark turn as a “true” German came to be equated with members of the Aryan race and the desire to purge all inferior elements slowly grew.

Under General Marshall Tito in Communist Yugoslavia, nationalistic sentiments had been fairly well suppressed as part of the General’s desire to strengthen the state as a whole. However, with the deterioration of the former Yugoslavia, nationalistic fervor began to sweep through Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and other former regions that had previously been a part of the communist state. The result of this nationalism was brutal violence between members of the various regions, particularly between the Serbs and Bosnians. The end result of it all was the creation of relatively ethnically homogenous states harboring resentment toward one another.

Nationalism played a role in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, too. Zionism was very much a European, nationalistic movement and it ultimately led to the creation of a new Jewish state.

The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

Now that a working definition of ethnic cleansing has been established and the common practices that it involves have been examined, this essay will scrutinize three important periods in Israeli history: the Mandate years, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and the post-war era to demonstrate Israeli policies and practices.

Zionism, Anti-Arabism, and the Mandate Years

Behind ethnic cleansing is the “the intent of driving victims from territory claimed by the perpetrators.”\textsuperscript{15} Though the actual ethnic cleansing of Palestine did not begin until after the UN Partition plan was formulated and especially with the onset of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, it is important to point out that there is ample evidence of Zionist intent to cleanse the territory of its Arab inhabitants that dates back to the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The concept of population transfer was, and is, deeply rooted in Zionist thought. From the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, to the main leaders of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine, cleansing the land was a valid option. As one of the movement’s most liberal thinkers, Leo Motzkin, put it in 1917:

Our thought is that the colonization of Palestine has to go in two directions: Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel and the resettlement of the Arabs of Eretz Israel in areas outside the country. The transfer of so many Arabs may seem at first unacceptable economically, but is nonetheless practical. It does not require too much money to resettle a Palestinian village on another land.\textsuperscript{16}

Zionist leader and founder of Israel, David Ben-Gurion was aware that armed force would be necessary to establish the state of Israel and drive the Palestinians out over a decade before any action was taken. In the conclusion of a letter that he wrote to the Jewish Agency Executive of June 9, 1936, Ben-Gurion “regarded the Arabs of Palestine as a national movement

\textsuperscript{15} Naimark, \textit{Fires of Hatred}, 3.

\textsuperscript{16} Pappé, \textit{The Ethnic Cleansing}, 7-8.
that by its very nature was bound to resist the en-croachment of Zionism on its land.” He demonstrated an understanding of the fact that the Palestinian Arab population would not willingly make way for a Jewish state, as well as the belief “that the Arabs would continue to fight for as long as they retained any hope of preventing the Jewish takeover of their country.” Ben-Gurion went on to conclude “that only insuperable Jewish military strength would eventually make the Arabs despair of the struggle and come to terms with a Jewish state in Palestine.”

Thirteen years earlier, revisionist Zionist leader, Ze’ev Jabotinsky, had concluded virtually the same thing in two articles that he published under the heading “The Iron Wall.” As Ben-Gurion would later, Jabotinsky acknowledged that an agreement between the Zionists and Arabs would be virtually inconceivable, that the Palestinian Arab population would fiercely resist any outside colonization efforts and that force was the most viable option if the state of Israel were to be created. He concluded his letter with the following statement:

“We cannot promise any reward either to the Arabs of Palestine or to the Arabs outside Palestine. A voluntary agreement is unattainable. And so those who regard an accord with the Arabs as an indispensable condition of Zionism must admit to themselves today that this condition cannot be attained and hence that we must give up Zionism. We must either suspend our settlement efforts or continue them without paying attention to the mood of the natives. Settlement can thus develop under the protection of a force that is not dependent on the local population, behind an iron wall which they will be powerless to break down.”

Essentially, in much the same vein that Ben-Gurion would advocate over a decade later, Jabotinsky was arguing that if the Zionists were to have their Israeli state, it would only be through the use of powerful military force against the native population and any opposition to the Zionists’ goals.

Israeli historian, Benny Morris, argues that the idea of mass transfer of the Palestinian Arabs to Transjordan or elsewhere has a much longer history and significance in Zionist thinking than is commonly acknowledged. He cites Israel Zangwill’s well-known 1905 remark that the Arabs should “fold their tents and silently steal away,” Arthur Ruppin’s proposal in 1911 for “a limited population transfer,” Chaim Weizmann’s suggestion in 1930 that a “quasi-exchange of population could be fostered and encouraged” and Ben-Gurion’s statement before the Zionist Congress in 1937 that “transfer...is what will make possible a comprehensive settlement programme” to help support his argument.

The Zionists even created what became known as “the village files,” further evidence of the


that by its very nature was bound to resist the en-
croachment of Zionism on its land.” He demonstrated
an understanding of the fact that the Palestinian Arab
population would not willingly make way for a Jewish
state, as well as the belief “that the Arabs would
continue to fight for as long as they retained any hope
of preventing the Jewish takeover of their country.”
Ben-Gurion went on to conclude “that only insuper-
able Jewish military strength would eventually make
the Arabs despair of the struggle and come to terms
with a Jewish state in Palestine.”

Thirteen years earlier, revisionist Zionist leader,
Ze’ev Jabotinsky, had concluded virtually the same
thing in two articles that he published under the
heading “The Iron Wall.” As Ben-Gurion would later,
Jabotinsky acknowledged that an agreement between
the Zionists and Arabs would be virtually unconceiv-
able, that the Palestinian Arab population would
fiercely resist any outside colonization efforts and that
force was the most viable option if the state of Israel
were to be created. He concluded his letter with the
following statement:

“We cannot promise any reward either to the
Arabs of Palestine or to the Arabs outside
Palestine. A voluntary agreement is unattain-
able. And so those who regard an accord with
the Arabs as an indispensable condition of
Zionism must admit to themselves today that
this condition cannot be attained and hence
that we must give up Zionism. We must either

sustain our settlement efforts or continue
them without paying attention to the mood of
the natives. Settlement can thus develop under
the protection of a force that is not dependent
on the local population, behind an iron wall
which they will be powerless to break down.”

Essentially, in much the same vein that Ben-Gurion
would advocate over a decade later, Jabotinsky was
arguing that if the Zionists were to have their Israeli
state, it would only be through the use of powerful
military force against the native population and any
opposition to the Zionists’ goals.

Israeli historian, Benny Morris, argues that the
idea of mass transfer of the Palestinian Arabs to
Transjordan or elsewhere has a much longer history
and significance in Zionist thinking than is commonly
acknowledged. He cites Israel Zangwill’s well-known
1905 remark that the Arabs should “fold their tents
and silently steal away,” Arthur Ruppin’s proposal in
1911 for “a limited population transfer,” Chaim
Weizmann’s suggestion in 1930 that a “quasi-exchange
of population could be fostered and encouraged” and
Ben-Gurion’s statement before the Zionist Congress in
1937 that “transfer...is what will make possible a
comprehensive settlement programme” to help support
his argument.

The Zionists even created what became known
as “the village files,” further evidence of the

17 Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (New

19 Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-
Arab Conflict, 1881-1999 (New York: Knopf, 1999), 139-144.
systematic planning for population transfer that was built into Zionist thinking. The suggestion for the plan “came from a young bespectacled historian from the Hebrew University by the name of Ben-Zion Luria, at the time an employee of the educational department of the Jewish Agency. Luria pointed out how useful it would be to have a detailed registry of all Arab villages, and proposed that the Jewish National Fund (JNF) conduct such an inventory. ‘This would greatly help the redemption of the land,’ he wrote to the JNF.”

In fact, “precise details were recorded about the topographic location of each village, its access roads, quality of land, water springs, main sources of income, its socio-political composition, religious affiliations, names of its muhtkars, its relationship with other villages, the age of individual men, and many more.” There was even a category that attempted to measure a particular village’s level of “hostility” toward Zionism based on which villages and people participated in the 1936 revolt. Yigael Yadin, who served as the second Chief of Staff of the Israeli defense forces would later recall that it was this minute and detailed knowledge of what was happening in each single Palestinian village that enabled the Zionist military command in November 1947 to conclude ‘that the Palestine Arabs had nobody to organize them properly.’ The only serious problem was the British: ‘If not for the British, we could have quelled the Arab riot [the opposition to the United Nations Partition Resolution in 1947] in one month.’

What becomes clear is that the need for the transfer of the Arab population out of Palestine and the need for the use of military force in order to create the Israeli state were intertwined from an early stage in Zionist thought. Furthermore, there is ample evidence, in particular with the case of the village files, that systematic plans were indeed in place for a future ethnic cleansing.

Proving intent can often be a difficult task when it comes to genocide or ethnic cleansing because rarely can one find a definitive document or order that gives the go ahead to expel or kill hundreds of thousands of people. However, it is clear that the Zionist leaders understood that they would not have their coveted state without engaging in some form of ethnic cleansing or forced population expulsions, and that is exactly what unfolded in 1947 and 1948 following the United Nations’ Partition Resolution and subsequent withdrawal.

Al-Nakba

Though the intent to create a Jewish homeland and purge the region intended for its creation dates back decades earlier, the 1948 war, “which the Israelis call the War of Independence and the Arabs call al-Nakba, or the disaster,” was the single greatest watershed

---

21 Ibid., 19.
22 Ibid., 19-22.
systematic planning for population transfer that was built into Zionist thinking. The suggestion for the plan “came from a young bespectacled historian from the Hebrew University by the name of Ben-Zion Luria, at the time an employee of the educational department of the Jewish Agency. Luria pointed out how useful it would be to have a detailed registry of all Arab villages, and proposed that the Jewish National Fund (JNF) conduct such an inventory. ‘This would greatly help the redemption of the land,’ he wrote to the JNF.”

In fact, “precise details were recorded about the topographic location of each village, its access roads, quality of land, water springs, main sources of income, its socio-political composition, religious affiliations, names of its muhktars, its relationship with other villages, the age of individual men, and many more.”

There was even a category that attempted to measure a particular village’s level of “hostility” toward Zionism based on which villages and people participated in the 1936 revolt. Yigael Yadin, who served as the second Chief of Staff of the Israeli defense forces would later recall that it was this minute and detailed knowledge of what was happening in each single Palestinian village that enabled the Zionist military command in November 1947 to conclude ‘that the Palestine Arabs had nobody to organize them properly.’ The only serious problem was the British: ‘If not for the British, we could have quelled the Arab riot [the opposition to the United Nations Partition Resolution in 1947] in one month.’

What becomes clear is that the need for the transfer of the Arab population out of Palestine and the need for the use of military force in order to create the Israeli state were intertwined from an early stage in Zionist thought. Furthermore, there is ample evidence, in particular with the case of the village files, that systematic plans were indeed in place for a future ethnic cleansing.

Proving intent can often be a difficult task when it comes to genocide or ethnic cleansing because rarely can one find a definitive document or order that gives the go ahead to expel or kill hundreds of thousands of people. However, it is clear that the Zionist leaders understood that they would not have their coveted state without engaging in some form of ethnic cleansing or forced population expulsions, and that is exactly what unfolded in 1947 and 1948 following the United Nations’ Partition Resolution and subsequent withdrawal.

Al-Nakba

Though the intent to create a Jewish homeland and purge the region intended for its creation dates back decades earlier, the 1948 war, “which the Israelis call the War of Independence and the Arabs call al-Nakba, or the disaster,” was the single greatest watershed

---

21 Ibid., 19.
mark in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine because of the very large number of people who were driven from their homeland and never permitted to return. Tensions had been growing between Jews and Arabs living in the region over the previous decades but this was truly the historical turning point and the birth of the modern state of Israel.

In 1947 the newly formed United Nations devised a plan to create a dual-state system in the former British Mandate of Palestine. The territory was to be divided into seven sectors: three were to be allotted to the Palestinians, three to the Israelis, and the seventh, the city of Jerusalem, was to become an international neutral zone that both parties were to be allowed access to.

The UN’s Partition Resolution “was adopted on November 29, 1947, and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine began in early December 1947 with a series of Jewish attacks on Palestinian villages and neighborhoods in the Palestinian protest against the UN resolution during the first few days after its adoption. Though sporadic, these early Jewish assaults were severe enough to cause the exodus of a substantial number of people (almost 75,000).” The middle of February 1948 saw further coerced expulsions “when Jewish troops succeeded in emptying five Palestinian villages in one day.” By the end of April, roughly 250,000 Palestinians had been uprooted. Their removal coincided with several massacres, “most notable of which was the Deir Yassin massacre. At this point, the Arab League decided to intervene militarily once the British Mandate officially came to an end. An important development from this time period and component of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine was the adoption of Plan Dalet, also known as Plan D. It was prepared by the leaders of Haganah, the Jewish paramilitary organization, on March 10, 1948. According to British-Israeli historian, Avi Shlaim,

The aim of Plan D was to secure all the areas allocated to the Jewish state under the UN partition resolution, as well as Jewish settlements outside these areas and corridors leading to them, so as to provide a solid and continuous basis for Jewish sovereignty. The novelty and audacity of the plan lay in the orders to capture Arab villages and cities, something the Haganah had never attempted before. Although the wording of Plan D was vague, its objective was to clear the interior of the country of hostile and potentially hostile Arab elements, and in this sense it provided a warrant for expelling civilians.

The following is an excerpt from the Plan itself:

These operations can be carried out in the following manner: either by destroying villages (by setting fire to them, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in their rubble), and especially those population centers that are difficult to control permanently; or by mounting

---


25 Shlaim, The Iron Wall,
mark in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine because of the very large number of people who were driven from their homeland and never permitted to return.\textsuperscript{23} Tensions had been growing between Jews and Arabs living in the region over the previous decades but this was truly the historical turning point and the birth of the modern state of Israel.

In 1947 the newly formed United Nations devised a plan to create a dual-state system in the former British Mandate of Palestine. The territory was to be divided into seven sectors: three were to be allotted to the Palestinians, three to the Israelis, and the seventh, the city of Jerusalem, was to become an international neutral zone that both parties were to be allowed access to.

The UN’s Partition Resolution “was adopted on November 29, 1947, and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine began in early December 1947 with a series of Jewish attacks on Palestinian villages and neighborhoods in the Palestinian protest against the UN resolution during the first few days after its adoption. Though sporadic, these early Jewish assaults were severe enough to cause the exodus of a substantial number of people (almost 75,000).” The middle of February 1948 saw further coerced expulsions “when Jewish troops succeeded in emptying five Palestinian villages in one day.” By the end of April, roughly 250,000 Palestinians had been uprooted. Their removal coincided with several massacres, “most notable of which was the Deir Yassin massacre. At this point, the Arab League decided to intervene militarily once the British Mandate officially came to an end.\textsuperscript{24}

An important development from this time period and component of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine was the adoption of Plan Dalet, also known as Plan D. It was prepared by the leaders of Haganah, the Jewish paramilitary organization, on March 10, 1948. According to British-Israeli historian, Avi Shlaim,

The aim of Plan D was to secure all the areas allocated to the Jewish state under the UN partition resolution, as well as Jewish settlements outside these areas and corridors leading to them, so as to provide a solid and continuous basis for Jewish sovereignty. The novelty and audacity of the plan lay in the orders to capture Arab villages and cities, something the Haganah had never attempted before. Although the wording of Plan D was vague, its objective was to clear the interior of the country of hostile and potentially hostile Arab elements, and in this sense it provided a warrant for expelling civilians.\textsuperscript{25}

The following is an excerpt from the Plan itself:

These operations can be carried out in the following manner: either by destroying villages (by setting fire to them, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in their rubble), and especially those population centers that are difficult to control permanently; or by mounting

\textsuperscript{23} Shlaim, \textit{The Iron Wall}, 29.

\textsuperscript{24} Pappé, \textit{The Ethnic Cleansing}, 40.

\textsuperscript{25} Shlaim, \textit{The Iron Wall},
combing and control operations according to the following guidelines: encirclement of the villages, conducting a search inside them. In case of resistance, the armed forces must be wiped out and the population expelled outside the borders of the state.  

With the implementation of Plan Dalet, the Haganah, “directly and decisively contributed to the birth of the Palestinian refugee problem.” The Jewish military offensive intensified throughout 1948 and led to the disintegration of Palestinian society and the Palestinian expulsion had begun: “By the end of 1948 the number of Palestinian refugees had swollen to around 700,000. But the first and largest wave of refugees occurred before the official outbreak of hostilities on 15 May.”

Not only were Palestinians expelled from their homes, but they were also subjected to brutal treatment by Israeli forces and many were even killed. Perhaps the worst example was the massacre that occurred in the village of Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948. Jewish soldiers burst into the village, spraying it with machine gun fire and “the remaining villagers were then gathered in one place and murdered in cold blood, their bodies abused while a number of women were raped and killed.” A twelve year old, Fahim Zaydan, witnessed the murder of his own family:

They took us out one after the other; shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot, too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front of us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him – carrying my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her – they shot her, too.

Zaydan also was shot, “while standing in a row of children the Jewish soldiers had lined up against a wall, which they had then sprayed with bullets, ‘just for the fun of it’, before they left.”

To seal the fate of the expelled Palestinians and to ensure that they would be unable to return in the future, the Israeli government engaged in numerous anti-repatriation policies. An August 1948 Israeli governmental decision was made to “destroy all the evicted villages and transform them into new Jewish settlements or ‘natural’ forests.” Essentially the homes of the former Arab inhabitants were destroyed so that they would have no homes to come back to or claim any sort of right of return to.

The Israeli government even worked to control the demographic distribution of the remaining Palestinians. Some of these remaining Palestinians were taken

---

27 Shlaim, The Iron Wall, 31
28 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
32 Ibid., 188.
Al-Nakba

combing and control operations according to the following guidelines: encirclement of the villages, conducting a search inside them. In case of resistance, the armed forces must be wiped out and the population expelled outside the borders of the state. \(^{26}\)

With the implementation of Plan Dalet, the Haganah, “directly and decisively contributed to the birth of the Palestinian refugee problem.” \(^{27}\) The Jewish military offensive intensified throughout 1948 and led to the disintegration of Palestinian society and the Palestinian expulsion had begun: “By the end of 1948 the number of Palestinian refugees had swollen to around 700,000. But the first and largest wave of refugees occurred before the official outbreak of hostilities on 15 May.” \(^{28}\)

Not only were Palestinians expelled from their homes, but they were also subjected to brutal treatment by Israeli forces and many were even killed. Perhaps the worst example was the massacre that occurred in the village of Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948. Jewish soldiers burst into the village, spraying it with machine gun fire and “the remaining villagers were then gathered in one place and murdered in cold blood, their bodies abused while a number of women were raped and killed.” \(^{29}\) A twelve year old, Fahim Zaydan, witnessed the murder of his own family:

“They took us out one after the other; shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot, too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front of us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him – carrying my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her – they shot her, too.” \(^{30}\)

Zaydan also was shot, “while standing in a row of children the Jewish soldiers had lined up against a wall, which they had then sprayed with bullets, ‘just for the fun of it’, before they left.” \(^{31}\)

To seal the fate of the expelled Palestinians and to ensure that they would be unable to return in the future, the Israeli government engaged in numerous anti-repatriation policies. An August 1948 Israeli governmental decision was made to “destroy all the evicted villages and transform them into new Jewish settlements or ‘natural’ forests.” \(^{32}\) Essentially the homes of the former Arab inhabitants were destroyed so that they would have no homes to come back to or claim any sort of right of return to.

The Israeli government even worked to control the demographic distribution of the remaining Palestinians. Some of these remaining Palestinians were taken


\(^{27}\) Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, 31

\(^{28}\) *Ibid.*


\(^{30}\) *Ibid.*


\(^{32}\) *Ibid.*, 188.
to prison, others were deported, and a substantial number were forced to relocate to different homes in different villages so as to ensure that no Israeli town would have too high of an Arab population.\textsuperscript{33}

The traditional Israeli view of the events of 1948 recounts the tale of a sort of Israeli David mustering up all its strength and courage to fend off an invading, Goliath, coalition of Arab armies. However, most of the events detailed above and much of the forced Palestinian expulsion and destruction of their villages occurred before any Arab army set foot in Israel. In a little under a year and a half, the earlier thinking of men like Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion became a reality. The Israeli government and its paramilitary organizations, the Haganah and Irgun forces, through violence or intimidation expelled nearly 750,000 people from their own homes, killing thousands in the process and did all they possibly could to ensure that those refugees would never see or set foot in their homes again.

Over the next several decades, Palestinian Arabs continued to be expelled from Israel or imprisoned for extended periods of time. Arab villages were destroyed and, in many cases, either turned in to parks or supplanted by Jewish villages. Constitutional laws were passed that prohibited the Jewish National Fund from selling, leasing, or even sub-letting land to non-Jews. This was yet another part of the effort to “prevent Palestinians in Israel from regaining ownership, through purchase, of their own land or that of their people.”\textsuperscript{34} Furthermore, the Palestinian minority was never allowed to build any new rural settlements or villages, let alone any new cities or towns. However, the Israelis, “with a much slower national growth rate,” were allowed to build any settlement, city, or towns as they wanted and wherever they wanted. According to Pappé, “the Palestinian minority in Israel, seventeen percent of the total population after ethnic cleansing, has been forced to make do with just three percent of the land.”\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{Occupied Palestine}

The Six-Day War in June 1967 witnessed the further expansion of Israel and the beginning of the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the remaining two parts of the original Palestinian Mandate. Life under occupation is a brutal existence for the hundreds of thousands of refugees living in those territories. According to a 2013 United Nations report, there are roughly 750,000 Palestinian refugees living in the West Bank and additional 1.2 million living in the Gaza Strip.\textsuperscript{36} Though Gaza is no longer under formal occupation, it is still subjected to numerous military strikes annually; strikes which are carried out by the Israeli military.

Life under Israeli occupation has been an addi-

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 222.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 222-3.}

to prison, others were deported, and a substantial number were forced to relocate to different homes in different villages so as to ensure that no Israeli town would have too high of an Arab population.  

The traditional Israeli view of the events of 1948 recounts the tale of a sort of Israeli David mustering up all its strength and courage to fend off an invading, Goliath, coalition of Arab armies. However, most of the events detailed above and much of the forced Palestinian expulsion and destruction of their villages occurred before any Arab army set foot in Israel. In a little under a year and a half, the earlier thinking of men like Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion became a reality. The Israeli government and its paramilitary organizations, the Haganah and Irgun forces, through violence or intimidation expelled nearly 750,000 people from their own homes, killing thousands in the process and did all they possibly could to ensure that those refugees would never see or set foot in their homes again.

Over the next several decades, Palestinian Arabs continued to be expelled from Israel or imprisoned for extended periods of time. Arab villages were destroyed and, in many cases, either turned in to parks or supplanted by Jewish villages. Constitutional laws were passed that prohibited the Jewish National Fund from selling, leasing, or even sub-letting land to non-Jews. This was yet another part of the effort to “prevent Palestinians in Israel from regaining ownership, through purchase, of their own land or that of their people.” Furthermore, the Palestinian minority was never allowed to build any new rural settlements or villages, let alone any new cities or towns. However, the Israelis, “with a much slower national growth rate,” were allowed to build any settlement, city, or towns as they wanted and wherever they wanted. According to Pappé, “the Palestinian minority in Israel, seventeen percent of the total population after ethnic cleansing, has been forced to make do with just three percent of the land.”

Occupied Palestine

The Six-Day War in June 1967 witnessed the further expansion of Israel and the beginning of the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the remaining two parts of the original Palestinian Mandate. Life under occupation is a brutal existence for the hundreds of thousands of refugees living in those territories. According to a 2013 United Nations report, there are roughly 750,000 Palestinian refugees living in the West Bank and additional 1.2 million living in the Gaza Strip. Though Gaza is no longer under formal occupation, it is still subjected to numerous military strikes annually; strikes which are carried out by the Israeli military.

Life under Israeli occupation has been an addi-
The military occupation government combined security measures such as curfews, house raids, and surveillance with a web of administrative regulations that left no aspect of daily life untouched. As ‘resident aliens,’ Palestinians could be forced to obtain Israeli permission for everything from buying a refrigerator to building a porch. Books and newspapers were censored, the gathering of ten or more Palestinians outlawed, and such incendiary behavior as holding one’s fingers in the form of a ‘V’ reprimanded by patrolling soldiers.  

Narimen, a Palestinian woman who lives in a village near Bethlehem, recounted her feelings about what it is like to live under occupation:

When you live under occupation it’s like you get squeezed from the pressure. Before the Intifada I used to go to Bethlehem without any problems. But I had to think it over one hundred times before going to Jerusalem, which is just eight kilometers farther away. I was just scared that a soldier would stop me and make me get out of the car and prevent me from going...How am I supposed to think about moving forward with my life, when I can’t even move forward to the next village? How am I supposed to think about continuing my education? How am I ever supposed to live like normal people do?  

Experiences like Narimen’s are common in the occupied territories. The Israeli military forces, as well as the settlers that live in the territories, actively work to constrict the personal freedoms of Palestinians. They demoralize and humiliate them at every possible opportunity.

The film, 5 Broken Cameras, winner of the International Emmy Award for a Documentary, disturbingly captures the brutality and humiliation of life under occupation. It follows the everyday experiences of Palestinian farmer, Emad Burnat, as he and other Palestinians protest the Israeli bulldozing of village olive groves to build a barrier to separate their settlements from the Palestinian village of Bil’in. In the film, Burnat shows the Israeli army and police mercilessly beating protestors, as well as subjecting them to a barrage of tear gas. He documents Israeli settlers setting the symbolic and tradition-steeped olive groves ablaze, as well as Israeli soldiers raiding his village in the middle of the night to arrest children. Burnat shows his friends and brothers being arrested and even shot—many of the arrests without any formal charge and for indefinite periods of time.

The United Nations Human Rights Commission has repeatedly stated its “grave concern at the continued deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and at the gross violations of

---


38 Ibid., 29.

39 5 Broken Cameras, dir. Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi (Kino Lorber, 2011), DVD.
The military occupation government combined security measures such as curfews, house raids, and surveillance with a web of administrative regulations that left no aspect of daily life untouched. As ‘resident aliens,’ Palestinians could be forced to obtain Israeli permission for everything from buying a refrigerator to building a porch. Books and newspapers were censored, the gathering of ten or more Palestinians outlawed, and such incendiary behavior as holding one’s fingers in the form of a ‘V’ reprimanded by patrolling soldiers.  

Narimen, a Palestinian woman who lives in a village near Bethlehem, recounted her feelings about what it is like to live under occupation:

When you live under occupation it’s like you get squeezed from the pressure. Before the Intifada I used to go to Bethlehem without any problems. But I had to think it over one hundred times before going to Jerusalem, which is just eight kilometers farther away. I was just scared that a soldier would stop me and make me get out of the car and prevent me from going...How am I supposed to think about moving forward with my life, when I can’t even move forward to the next village? How am I ever supposed to think about continuing my education? How am I ever supposed to live like normal people do?  

Experiences like Narimen’s are common in the occupied territories. The Israeli military forces, as well as the settlers that live in the territories, actively work to constrict the personal freedoms of Palestinians. They demoralize and humiliate them at every possible opportunity.  

The film, 5 Broken Cameras, winner of the International Emmy Award for a Documentary, disturbingly captures the brutality and humiliation of life under occupation. It follows the everyday experiences of Palestinian farmer, Emad Burnat, as he and other Palestinians protest the Israeli bulldozing of village olive groves to build a barrier to separate their settlements from the Palestinian village of Bil’in. In the film, Burnat shows the Israeli army and police mercilessly beating protestors, as well as subjecting them to a barrage of tear gas. He documents Israeli settlers setting the symbolic and tradition-steeped olive groves ablaze, as well as Israeli soldiers raiding his village in the middle of the night to arrest children. Burnat shows his friends and brothers being arrested and even shot—many of the arrests without any formal charge and for indefinite periods of time.  

The United Nations Human Rights Commission has repeatedly stated its “grave concern at the continued deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and at the gross violations of

---

38 Ibid., 29.
39 5 Broken Cameras, dir. Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi (Kino Lorber, 2011), DVD.
human rights and international humanitarian law”, and has decried, among other violations, Israel’s “acts of extrajudicial killing, closures, collective punishments, and the persistence in establishing settlements, arbitrary detentions, siege of Palestinian towns and villages, the shelling of Palestinian residential neighbourhoods by warplanes, tanks and Israeli battleships, and incursions into towns, villages and camps to kill innocent men, women and children.” A 2004 report strictly “condemned the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories as being an aggression and an offense against humanity and a flagrant violation of human rights.”  

Recent comments by the UN’s special rapporteur on Palestine, Richard Falk, strongly criticized Israel’s policies as “annexationist, colonialist” and examples of ethnic cleansing, “especially in relation to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.”  

Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, Filippo Grandi, pointed out in early March of this year that “with every year that passes, their impact on Palestinian lives becomes harsher; for young Palestinians, they define a very bleak future.”

There is more to ethnic cleansing than just forcible relocation itself. A large part of it, as discussed earlier, is the dehumanization of the target group. This has been a disturbing component of Israeli policy and treatment of the Palestinians for decades and has only intensified since the 1967 Six-Day War and the beginning of the now almost fifty-year old occupation.

**Settlement Building and Discrimination Today**

The ethnic cleansing of the remainder of Palestine is still being undertaken by the Israelis in the form of settlement building in the West Bank. “Although settlement in occupied territory is patently illegal according to international law, the Israeli government offers its citizens tax breaks and other benefits in order to move from Israel proper to Palestinian territory.” Israeli settlers are allowed to traverse the “Palestinian Territories at their convenience” while “Palestinians themselves cannot travel without facing Israeli checkpoints, searches, delays, or permit applications.” The Israeli government has confiscated hundreds of Palestinian homes, as well as thousands of acres of Palestinian land. Much of that land has in turn been used to build Israeli settlements.

Iman, a college student living in Hebron, related some of her experiences about encounters with the Israeli settlers near her village:

The situation in Hebron is really volatile, and we have no protection whatsoever. There are Jewish settlers in the heart of town, which is
human rights and international humanitarian law”, and has decried, among other violations, Israel’s “acts of extrajudicial killing, closures, collective punishments, and the persistence in establishing settlements, arbitrary detentions, siege of Palestinian towns and villages, the shelling of Palestinian residential neighbourhoods by warplanes, tanks and Israeli battleships, and incursions into towns, villages and camps to kill innocent men, women and children.” A 2004 report strictly “condemned the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories as being an aggression and an offense against humanity and a flagrant violation of human rights.”40

Recent comments by the UN’s special rapporteur on Palestine, Richard Falk, strongly criticized Israel’s policies as “annexationist, colonialist” and examples of ethnic cleansing, “especially in relation to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.”41 Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, Filippo Grandi, pointed out in early March of this year that “with every year that passes, their impact on Palestinian lives becomes harsher; for young Palestinians, they define a very bleak future.”42

There is more to ethnic cleansing than just forcible relocation itself. A large part of it, as discussed earlier, is the dehumanization of the target group. This has been a disturbing component of Israeli policy and treatment of the Palestinians for decades and has only intensified since the 1967 Six-Day War and the beginning of the now almost fifty-year old occupation.

**Settlement Building and Discrimination Today**

The ethnic cleansing of the remainder of Palestine is still being undertaken by the Israelis in the form of settlement building in the West Bank. “Although settlement in occupied territory is patently illegal according to international law, the Israeli government offers its citizens tax breaks and other benefits in order to move from Israel proper to Palestinian territory.” Israeli settlers are allowed to traverse the “Palestinian Territories at their convenience” while “Palestinians themselves cannot travel without facing Israeli checkpoints, searches, delays, or permit applications.” The Israeli government has confiscated hundreds of Palestinian homes, as well as thousands of acres of Palestinian land. Much of that land has in turn been used to build Israeli settlements.43

Iman, a college student living in Hebron, related some of her experiences about encounters with the Israeli settlers near her village:

> The situation in Hebron is really volatile, and we have no protection whatsoever. There are Jewish settlers in the heart of town, which is...
where you have to go shopping and run errands... When you’re going home at night, you can get beaten by the settlers or by the soldiers themselves. Once we were passing near a park, and they let their dogs out and made them chase us. Another time my mother and I were out walking and a settler lady stopped us. She spit on us and then just walked off. And then there are the settlers’ children. They’ll follow you on the street and try to provoke you, just because... If we say a thing they can accuse us of trying to kill them. Or maybe they’ll shoot at us from one of the high buildings. So we just have to accept it. We have to swallow what we hear. We have no right to react.  

“More than 550,000 Israelis now live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem,” and a recent report released by Israel’s central bureau of statistics said that work began on 2,534 new housing units in the settlements in 2013, more than double the amount built in 2012, as well as the highest number built since 2000.

Settlers come to the West Bank for a number of different reasons. Some are ideologues who “think the land has to be ‘redeemed’ by Jewish settlement so the Messiah will come. Others are ‘economic settlers,’” who live in settlements because of the huge subsidies that the Israeli government provides for them. The Israeli government motive behind settlement building should not be surprising though; it is the same general purpose that drove them to destroy Arab villages in Israel and build over them in 1948 and the years that followed. Namely, it allows the Israelis to erode Palestinian land even further and slowly but surely turn it over to Israeli jurisdiction. It also steadily takes away from the land that would belong to a future Palestinian state should a peace deal ever be accomplished by using the settlers and their homes as a bargaining chip. This is ironic, as the Israelis evicted the Palestinians from their own homes, yet there has been little more than vocal warnings on the part of the international community to stop the settlements.

The International Court of Justice has repeatedly condemned the building of Israeli settlements and walls in the occupied territory and has denounced them as a violation of international law. In July of 2004, the Court found by a majority of 14 to 1 that Israel’s “building of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory...violated principles outlined in the UN Charter and long-standing global conventions that prohibit the threat or use of force and the acquisition of territory that way, as well as principles upholding the right of peoples to self-determination.” The judges continued on to argue the wall’s construction “would be tantamount to de facto annexation’ as it explained that the barrier could create a potentially permanent

44 Ibid., 169-70.

where you have to go shopping and run errands...When you’re going home at night, you can get beaten by the settlers or by the soldiers themselves. Once we were passing near a park, and they let their dogs out and made them chase us. Another time my mother and I were out walking and a settler lady stopped us. She spit on us and then just walked off. And then there are the settlers’ children. They’ll follow you on the street and try to provoke you, just because...If we say a thing they can accuse us of trying to kill them. Or maybe they’ll shoot at us from one of the high buildings. So we just have to accept it. We have to swallow what we hear. We have no right to react.\textsuperscript{44}

“More than 550,000 Israelis now live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem,” and a recent report released by Israel’s central bureau of statistics said that work began on 2,534 new housing units in the settlements in 2013, more than double the amount built in 2012, as well as the highest number built since 2000.\textsuperscript{45}

Settlers come to the West Bank for a number of different reasons. Some are ideologues who “think the land has to be ‘redeemed’ by Jewish settlement so the Messiah will come. Others are ‘economic settlers,’” who live in settlements because of the huge subsidies that the Israeli government provides for them.\textsuperscript{46} The Israeli government motive behind settlement building should not be surprising though; it is the same general purpose that drove them to destroy Arab villages in Israel and build over them in 1948 and the years that followed. Namely, it allows the Israelis to erode Palestinian land even further and slowly but surely turn it over to Israeli jurisdiction. It also steadily takes away from the land that would belong to a future Palestinian state should a peace deal ever be accomplished by using the settlers and their homes as a bargaining chip. This is ironic, as the Israelis evicted the Palestinians from their own homes, yet there has been little more than vocal warnings on the part of the international community to stop the settlements.

The International Court of Justice has repeatedly condemned the building of Israeli settlements and walls in the occupied territory and has denounced them as a violation of international law. In July of 2004, the Court found by a majority of 14 to 1 that Israel’s “building of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory...violated principles outlined in the UN Charter and long-standing global conventions that prohibit the threat or use of force and the acquisition of territory that way, as well as principles upholding the right of peoples to self-determination.” The judges continued on to argue the wall’s construction “would be tantamount to de facto annexation’ as it explained that the barrier could create a potentially permanent

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid.}, 169-70.


‘fait accompli’ on the ground.”

The Israeli government has also instituted numerous discriminatory policies against the Arabs living both in Israel and the occupied territories that are reminiscent of policies featured in other twentieth century examples of ethnic cleansing. Palestinians are required to obtain Israeli permission before they can attend a conference abroad, launch a business, or build a home. Arab citizens of Israel are forced to carry their identification papers on them at all times and are subject to checks at any point by Israeli police, a policy that is reminiscent of the Nazi treatment of Jews in 1930s Germany.

Even the road systems within the occupied West Bank are segregated. A modern freeway system connects Israeli settlements in the territories to one another, as well as to Israel proper. However, “vehicles with Palestinian licenses are completely prohibited from traveling on approximately 105 kilometers of West Bank Roads.” Palestinians are permitted to “travel on the remaining 180 kilometers of Israeli-built roads in the West Bank only if they can obtain a special permit or if they travel in an ambulance.” Even the way that the road system “crisscrosses the West Bank” appears to be “designed to prevent the formation of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state” moving forward.

**Conclusion**

The overwhelming majority of the land that once belonged to Palestine and its native inhabitants was conquered and cleansed by the Israelis in 1948, and the eroding of land ownership and ethnic cleansing has continued to be organized by Israeli administrations and even the settlers themselves since that time.

As to the proposed transfer of population, it seems clear that, even on the most optimistic view, it is highly improbable that any such transfer will in practice be capable of being carried out on the scale or at the pace contemplated by the Peel report. If it is not carried out rapidly and on a large scale, it will leave the Jewish State with a minority problem of the most formidable dimensions. If it is carried out rapidly and on a large scale, then, whether the Jewish State is formally responsible or not, the odium attaching to the swift and wholesale evacuation of Arab peasants from their homes will fall mainly on the Jews, with results which will be embarrassing not only to the Jewish State itself, but to Jews in other parts of the world. The odium will be all the greater because, notwithstanding the euphemisms em-

---


49 *Close to Home*, dir. Vidi Bilu and Dalia Hager (Jerusalem, Israel: Transfax Film Productions, 2005), DVD.

‘fait accompli’ on the ground.”

The Israeli government has also instituted numerous discriminatory policies against the Arabs living both in Israel and the occupied territories that are reminiscent of policies featured in other twentieth century examples of ethnic cleansing. Palestinians are required to obtain Israeli permission before they can attend a conference abroad, launch a business, or build a home. Arabic citizens of Israel are forced to carry their identification papers on them at all times and are subject to checks at any point by Israeli police, a policy that is reminiscent of the Nazi treatment of Jews in 1930s Germany.

Even the road systems within the occupied West Bank are segregated. A modern freeway system connects Israeli settlements in the territories to one another, as well as to Israel proper. However, “vehicles with Palestinian licenses are completely prohibited from traveling on approximately 105 kilometers of West Bank Roads.” Palestinians are permitted to “travel on the remaining 180 kilometers of Israeli-built roads in the West Bank only if they can obtain a special permit or if they travel in an ambulance.” Even the way that the road system “crisscrosses the West Bank” appears to be “designed to prevent the formation of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state.”

As to the proposed transfer of population, it seems clear that, even on the most optimistic view, it is highly improbable that any such transfer will in practice be capable of being carried out on the scale or at the pace contemplated by the Peel report. If it is not carried out rapidly and on a large scale, it will leave the Jewish State with a minority problem of the most formidable dimensions. If it is carried out rapidly and on a large scale, then, whether the Jewish State is formally responsible or not, the odium attaching to the swift and wholesale evacuation of Arab peasants from their homes will fall mainly on the Jews, with results which will be embarrassing not only to the Jewish State itself, but to Jews in other parts of the world. The odium will be all the greater because, notwithstanding the euphemisms em-

---

48 Pearlman, Occupied Voices, xviii.
49 Close to Home, dir. Vidi Bilu and Dalia Hager (Jerusalem, Israel: Transfax Film Productions, 2005), DVD.
ployed by the Royal Commission, it will in fact be a case of unilateral transfer and not of 'exchange.'

These were the ironic words of Political Secretary of the Zionist Organization, Leonard Stein, in August of 1937. The transfer of population that he worried about was carried out a decade later and with remarkable swiftness. It continues to this day and with little more than finger wagging from the rest of the world, as opposed to the odium he anxiously anticipated.

The story of the creation of the Israeli state and the expulsion of the Palestinians is a classic case of ethnic cleansing, one that bears many of the same hallmarks as the pogroms carried out by the likes of the Young Turks, the Nazis, the Rwandan Hutu, and the Milošević-led Serbian nationalists. At its core was an aggressive, European-inspired nationalism. Intertwined with that nationalism was an understanding that achieving the movement’s goals would mean mass-scale transfers of a local population, something that came to fruition with the British and United Nations’ abandoning of the Palestinian mandate.

The Palestinian Arabs were identified as an inferior “other” long before the creation of Israel and they continue to be ostracized as such, in particular through Israeli laws that discriminate against them and restrict their livelihoods. Finally, there has been a concerted effort (and now arguably a general acceptance on the part of many, especially a significant percentage of the Israeli population) to erase the true nature of the Nakba and the monumental injustice done to the Palestinians.

Will Zupan is a senior history major with an emphasis in Latin American history. He is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and credits Professor David Skinner with sparking his interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Will is travelling to Argentina after graduation to teach English for a year before eventually returning to pursue a law degree.

51 Wasserstein, Israelis and Palestinians, 111-2.
ployed by the Royal Commission, it will in fact be a case of unilateral transfer and not of exchange. 51

These were the ironic words of Political Secretary of the Zionist Organization, Leonard Stein, in August of 1937. The transfer of population that he worried about was carried out a decade later and with remarkable swiftness. It continues to this day and with little more than finger wagging from the rest of the world, as opposed to the odium he anxiously anticipated.

The story of the creation of the Israeli state and the expulsion of the Palestinians is a classic case of ethnic cleansing, one that bears many of the same hallmarks as the pogroms carried out by the likes of the Young Turks, the Nazis, the Rwandan Hutu, and the Milošević-led Serbian nationalists. At its core was an aggressive, European-inspired nationalism. Intertwined with that nationalism was an understanding that achieving the movement’s goals would mean mass-scale transfers of a local population, something that came to fruition with the British and United Nations’ abandoning of the Palestinian mandate.

The Palestinian Arabs were identified as an inferior “other” long before the creation of Israel and they continue to be ostracized as such, in particular through Israeli laws that discriminate against them and restrict their livelihoods. Finally, there has been a concerted effort (and now arguably a general acceptance on the part of many, especially a significant percentage of the Israeli population) to erase the true nature of the Nakba and the monumental injustice done to the Palestinians.

Will Zupan is a senior history major with an emphasis in Latin American history. He is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and credits Professor David Skinner with sparking his interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Will is travelling to Argentina after graduation to teach English for a year before eventually returning to pursue a law degree.

51 Wasserstein, Israelis and Palestinians, 111-2.
“One Only Hope Sustains All These Unhappy Pilgrims”— Migrant Adaptation of the Myth of California in the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl

Kayla Unger

For centuries, California has captivated the imaginations of dreamers throughout the world. Early maps portrayed California as a “mythical island;” maps characterized by historian James Houston as some of the most accurate maps available: “geographically wrong, but psychologically close to the truth.” The fascination with California continues to this day. Whether it be the bustling and illustrious film industry of Los Angeles and Hollywood, the eclectic and historically rich world of San Francisco, or the fast-paced roulette game that is the Silicon Valley, California continues to be a place for dreams to run wild—a place that provides newcomers with hope for a magical future. According to journalist Joel Kotkin, “It has always been a place of unsurpassed splendor; it has inspired and attracted writers, artists, dreamers, savants, and philosophers.”

Though the reality is unable to live up to the myth, California remains a staple in the American and international imagination. Ramón Gil Navarro, a Gold Rush hopeful from Chile, perhaps described the mystery of this lasting allure best: “But this is California, the land of odd events, things never heard of before, land of changes, land made up of strange things, magical land, a land capable of producing another Don Quixote to conquer all of its gold.” Though the myth’s intricacies have varied throughout the years, an aura of sheer magic persists.

Scores of historians have written about California, especially on the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl eras, with many placing special emphasis on the fantastic stories and legends these periods produced. Though they have received such a great deal of attention—both popular and scholarly—there has not been much work done on the California myth itself, especially in terms of why and how it persisted despite the constant failures that hopeful newcomers experienced. Historians have failed to ask why migrants continued to come to California, why they stayed when they realized that the myths were not true, and how they dealt with the tragic loss of the California dreams they held so dearly. The answer to these questions can only be found in the first-hand accounts of the migrants who came to

3 Houston, “From El Dorado,” 173.
“One Only Hope Sustains All These Unhappy Pilgrims”— Migrant Adaptation of the Myth of California in the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl

Kayla Unger

For centuries, California has captivated the imaginations of dreamers throughout the world. Early maps portrayed California as a “mythical island;” maps characterized by historian James Houston as some of the most accurate maps available: “geographically wrong, but psychologically close to the truth.” The fascination with California continues to this day. Whether it be the bustling and illustrious film industry of Los Angeles and Hollywood, the eclectic and historically rich world of San Francisco, or the fast-paced roulette game that is the Silicon Valley, California continues to be a place for dreams to run wild—a place that provides newcomers with hope for a magical future. According to journalist Joel Kotkin, “It has always been a place of unsurpassed splendor; it has inspired and attracted writers, artists, dreamers, savants, and philosophers.” Though the reality is unable to live up to the myth, California remains a staple in the American and international imagination. Ramón Gil Navarro, a Gold Rush hopeful from Chile, perhaps described the mystery of this lasting allure best: “But this is California, the land of odd events, things never heard of before, land of changes, land made up of strange things, magical land, a land capable of producing another Don Quixote to conquer all of its gold.” Though the myth’s intricacies have varied throughout the years, an aura of sheer magic persists.

Scores of historians have written about California, especially on the Gold Rush and Dust Bowl eras, with many placing special emphasis on the fantastic stories and legends these periods produced. Though they have received such a great deal of attention—both popular and scholarly—there has not been much work done on the California myth itself, especially in terms of why and how it persisted despite the constant failures that hopeful newcomers experienced. Historians have failed to ask why migrants continued to come to California, why they stayed when they realized that the myths were not true, and how they dealt with the tragic loss of the California dreams they held so dearly. The answer to these questions can only be found in the first-hand accounts of the migrants who came to California.

3 Houston, “From El Dorado,” 173.
California. California's inability to live up to the myth's remarkable claims forced newcomers to find various means of coping with such an immense loss. For migrants during both the Gold Rush and the Dust Bowl, the only way to survive and find happiness was to adapt one's expectations and understanding of the myth to better fit the reality.

When James Marshall pulled a gold nugget from the water at Sutter's Mill on the morning of January 24, 1848, he unknowingly started one of the most famous gold rushes in modern history. By the summer of 1848, scores of hopefuls arrived in California, ready to try their luck and seek fortune in the local waters, with nearly 5,000 newcomers in California by the end of 1848. Within a year of the discovery, California's population had increased eightfold, a shift that drastically changed its economy, infrastructure, and culture. The thousands who rushed in came with great expectations for California: expectations of "gold nuggets lying about the countryside and available to all." Some accounts described "streams paved with gold," prompting some hopefuls to believe that El Dorado had finally been discovered, while others claimed that a miner could easily dig out $700 each day with little effort or skill. Gold fever spread across the nation like wildfire, bolstered by a flood of advertisements proclaiming California's wealth and majesty.

Songs from the period sing earnest praises: "Hurrah for California! the \[sic\] greatest place in all creation, / Where gold is dug as 'taters are in this 'ere Yankee nation / . . . O! Won't it be a glorious time when gold runs down like water, / And nobody won't have to work, and nobody had oughter [sic]." Miners came primed and ready to enjoy the glories of California.

Illustrations helped feed the fever, providing exaggerated depictions of all California had to offer. In one 1850s French publication, _Travail en Californie_, a surprised miner excitedly revels in his newly-found—and rather sizable—gold nugget lying mere inches beneath the soil. Behind him, the illustration features palm trees, clear streams, and a snowcapped mountain [Appendix, Figure 1]. Another illustration, _California Gold_, shows a successful miner sitting on his enormous gold nugget while a massive sperm whale pulls him around the Cape Horn on his way home to New York. The caption reads, "An accurate drawing of the famous hill of gold" [Appendix, Figure 2]. Other illustrations portrayed the mining life as an enjoyable and easy one, as in _The Idle and Industrious Miner_. This illustration depicts mining as a sure path to success if the miner is only adamant in his efforts and does not fall victim to sloth [Appendix, Figure 3], a conception that further fueled the myth. In addition to these fantastical visual depictions, Gold Rush newcomers were also influenced heavily by the body of travel literature published during the time, with titles such as _What I Saw in California_, _Three Weeks in the Gold Mines_, or Lansford Hastings's infamous _The Emi-

7 Rohrbough, _Days of Gold_, 10.
8 Ibid., 15.
9 Ibid., 19.
10 Ibid., 19.
11 Ibid., 23-24, 27.
12 Peter Browning, ed., _To the Golden Shore_ (Lafayette: Great West Books, 1995), 164.
California. California’s inability to live up to the myth’s remarkable claims forced newcomers to find various means of coping with such an immense loss. For migrants during both the Gold Rush and the Dust Bowl, the only way to survive and find happiness was to adapt one’s expectations and understanding of the myth to better fit the reality.

When James Marshall pulled a gold nugget from the water at Sutter’s Mill on the morning of January 24, 1848, he unknowingly started one of the most famous gold rushes in modern history. By the summer of 1848, scores of hopefuls arrived in California, ready to try their luck and seek fortune in the local waters, with nearly 5,000 newcomers in California by the end of 1848. Within a year of the discovery, California’s population had increased eightfold, a shift that drastically changed its economy, infrastructure, and culture. The thousands who rushed in came with great expectations for California: expectations of “gold nuggets lying about the countryside and available to all.” Some accounts described “streams paved with gold,” prompting some hopefuls to believe that El Dorado had finally been discovered, while others claimed that a miner could easily dig out $700 each day with little effort or skill. Gold fever spread across the nation like wildfire, bolstered by a flood of advertisements proclaiming California’s wealth and majesty.

Songs from the period sing earnest praises: “Hurrah for California! the [sic] greatest place in all creation, / Where gold is dug as ‘taters are in this ‘ere Yankee nation / . . . O! Won’t it be a glorious time when gold runs down like water, / And nobody won’t have to work, and nobody had oughter [sic].” Miners came primed and ready to enjoy the glories of California.

Illustrations helped feed the fever, providing exaggerated depictions of all California had to offer. In one 1850s French publication, Travail en Californie, a surprised miner excitedly revels in his newly-found—and rather sizable—gold nugget lying mere inches beneath the soil. Behind him, the illustration features palm trees, clear streams, and a snowcapped mountain. Another illustration, California Gold, shows a successful miner sitting on his enormous gold nugget while a massive sperm whale pulls him around the Cape Horn on his way home to New York. The caption reads, “An accurate drawing of the famous hill of gold.” Other illustrations portrayed the mining life as an enjoyable and easy one, as in The Idle and Industrious Miner. This illustration depicts mining as a sure path to success if the miner is only adamant in his efforts and does not fall victim to sloth, a conception that further fueled the myth. In addition to these fantastical visual depictions, Gold Rush newcomers were also influenced heavily by the body of travel literature published during the time, with titles such as What I Saw in California, Three Weeks in the Gold Mines, or Lansford Hasting’s infamous The Emi-

---

7 Rohrbough, Days of Gold, 10.
8 Ibid., 15.
9 Ibid., 19.
10 Ibid., 19.
11 Ibid., 23-24, 27.
12 Peter Browning, ed., To the Golden Shore (Lafayette: Great West Books, 1995), 164.
grants’ *Guide to Oregon and California.* These publications advertised a California nearly identical to that which the aforementioned illustrations portrayed and provided migrants with advice that gave them an added sense of confidence, only adding to the passion with which they entered California. The belief that hard work was the key to a miner’s success also played into the migrants’ sense of confidence, as it allowed them to dismiss any evidence that contradicted the myth as being related to the particular miner’s work ethic or drive. With this confidence, along with the extraordinary tales and images that the myth provided, newcomers came to California ready for nothing more than disappointment.

The fantastic stories coming from California quickly developed into an extravagant myth. Though some aspects of the myth originated in actual Gold Rush experiences—like that of Antonio Francisco Coronel who pulled over $2,000 worth of gold from the river in his first three days—much of the exaggeration likely stems from the amount of hope miners invested in the myth of California. The majority of the migrants came to California not under duress, but rather out of an intense lust for gold, fortune, and success. The myth was shaped around a single focal point—the gold to be found—rather than a vague promise of prosperity. Because these miners were hoping for riches rather than just an improved situation, the myth grew to epic and unrealistic proportions. Though many Americans questioned the validity of the extraordinary claims about California, the myth was able to maintain its strength due to the wealth that continued to pour out of California for some and the overwhelming lust that the myth—regardless of its validity—inspired in hopefuls.

Even after the Gold Rush flood slowed, the stream of newcomers to California continued. At the turn of the century—starting in about 1910—thousands of migrants began pouring into California, especially out of Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri. Many historians attribute this migration to the effects of agricultural mechanization, which left many Midwestern farmers out of work. Similarly, after World War I, prices for crops dropped drastically, pushing more farmers to California in search of job opportunities in a growing economy. The migration continued steadily until the 1930s, with the population of California doubling every 20 years. When the Great Depression struck in the 1930s, a new wave of about 300,000-400,000 new migrants rushed to California seeking job opportunities in the land of plenty. Devastated by both the economic downturn as well as the horrible drought—known as the Dust Bowl—that destroyed the Mid-West’s agricultural hopes, these migrants came from both rural and urban backgrounds in desperation, seeking work wherever they could find it.

---

17 Ibid., *American Exodus,* 8.
18 Ibid., 10.
19 Ibid., 11, 15.
grants’ Guide to Oregon and California. These publications advertised a California nearly identical to that which the aforementioned illustrations portrayed and provided migrants with advice that gave them an added sense of confidence, only adding to the passion with which they entered California. The belief that hard work was the key to a miner’s success also played into the migrants’ sense of confidence, as it allowed them to dismiss any evidence that contradicted the myth as being related to the particular miner’s work ethic or drive. With this confidence, along with the extraordinary tales and images that the myth provided, newcomers came to California ready for nothing more than disappointment.

The fantastic stories coming from California quickly developed into an extravagant myth. Though some aspects of the myth originated in actual Gold Rush experiences—like that of Antonio Francisco Coronel who pulled over $2,000 worth of gold from the river in his first three days—much of the exaggeration likely stems from the amount of hope miners invested in the myth of California. The majority of the migrants came to California not under duress, but rather out of an intense lust for gold, fortune, and success. The myth was shaped around a single focal point—the gold to be found—rather than a vague promise of prosperity. Because these miners were hoping for riches rather than just an improved situation, the myth grew to epic and unrealistic proportions. Though many Americans questioned the validity of the extraordinary claims about California, the myth was able to maintain its strength due to the wealth that continued to pour out of California for some and the overwhelming lust that the myth—regardless of its validity—inspired in hopefuls.

Even after the Gold Rush flood slowed, the stream of newcomers to California continued. At the turn of the century—starting in about 1910—thousands of migrants began pouring into California, especially out of Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri. Many historians attribute this migration to the effects of agricultural mechanization, which left many Midwestern farmers out of work. Similarly, after World War I, prices for crops dropped drastically, pushing more farmers to California in search of job opportunities in a growing economy. The migration continued steadily until the 1930s, with the population of California doubling every 20 years. When the Great Depression struck in the 1930s, a new wave of about 300,000-400,000 new migrants rushed to California seeking job opportunities in the land of plenty. Devastated by both the economic downturn as well as the horrible drought—known as the Dust Bowl—that destroyed the Mid-West’s agricultural hopes, these migrants came from both rural and urban backgrounds in desperation, seeking work wherever they could find it. Just

13 Blodgett, Land of Golden Dreams, 36.
15 Peter J. Blodgett, Land of Golden Dreams (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1999), 30.
17 Gregory, American Exodus, 8.
18 Ibid., 10.
19 Ibid., 11, 15.
as Gold Rush migrants expected an easier life in California, the migrants who arrived during the Dust Bowl came with hopes for an improved climate and a more robust job market. Songs about California praised it as a “poor man’s heaven” or a place where money grew on trees, with other songs promising an abundance of jobs: “They say, ‘Come on, you Okies, / Work is easy found / Bring along your cotton pack / You can pick the whole year round.’”

Much like the Gold Rush migrants, the newcomers to California during the Dust Bowl arrived with high hopes, only to have them dashed by reality.

During the Dust Bowl, visual advertisements created during the 1920s played, arguably, an even larger role in newcomers’ understanding of California than they did during the Gold Rush. Romantic scenes of California—many featuring lush and green pastures—had been spread across the country, adding to the hopes that newcomers had for California and building upon the existing myth. In one advertisement from 1925, the illustrator depicts Orange County as “Nature’s Prolific Wonderland,” complete not only with an ocean view, but also with fertile pastures as far as the eye can see [Appendix, Figure 4]. Other illustrations focus on California’s opportunities for job seekers. Two 1923 advertisements for Ventura County depict happy workers bringing their produce from the fields; behind them is a beautiful valley full of ripe fields ready for picking, with the caption: “Opportunity in California” [Appendix, Figure 5]. Others focus on California as a place for “settlers,” perhaps appealing to the American pioneer mentality. Two separate Southern Pacific illustrations from 1922 advertise “California for the Settler,” depicting a beautiful land of opportunity and happiness. In the first, a man holds his smiling daughter in a field with cows grazing in the background [Appendix, Figure 6]. The scene suggests that California offers every man the opportunity to raise a family comfortably while enjoying the bounties of the earth. In the second, ripe oranges, cows, thick pastures, and a small body of water in the background reinforce the notion of California as a lush paradise [Appendix, Figure 7].

These illustrations played a major role in the Dust Bowl migrants’ understanding of California. Claims of success that came back from migrants who left the Midwest for California in the 1920s—like those that Thomas Smith describes—provided an added sense of hope for the migrants, reassuring them that even if California was not as fantastic as the illustrations and advertisements had depicted it, it would still be a vast improvement from their situation and would provide them with the opportunities they dreamt of. Though the illustrations depict a mythical place of bounty, they do not present a specific promise—a factor that played an immense role in the Dust Bowl migrant’s ability to adapt the myth and survive in California. The myth did promise jobs, but beyond that the promises remained vague and unbinding, allowing the migrants to adapt their understanding with relative ease.

Because the myth of California was so instrumental

---

20 Ibid., 19-20.

as Gold Rush migrants expected an easier life in California, the migrants who arrived during the Dust Bowl came with hopes for an improved climate and a more robust job market. Songs about California praised it as a “poor man’s heaven” or a place where money grew on trees, with other songs promising an abundance of jobs: “They say, ‘Come on, you Okies, / Work is easy found / Bring along your cotton pack / You can pick the whole year round.’”

Much like the Gold Rush migrants, the newcomers to California during the Dust Bowl arrived with high hopes, only to have them dashed by reality.

During the Dust Bowl, visual advertisements created during the 1920s played, arguably, an even larger role in newcomers’ understanding of California than they did during the Gold Rush. Romantic scenes of California—many featuring lush and green pastures—had been spread across the country, adding to the hopes that newcomers had for California and building upon the existing myth. In one advertisement from 1925, the illustrator depicts Orange County as “Nature’s Prolific Wonderland,” complete not only with an ocean view, but also with fertile pastures as far as the eye can see [Appendix, Figure 4]. Other illustrations focus on California’s opportunities for job seekers. Two 1923 advertisements for Ventura County depict happy workers bringing their produce from the fields; behind them is a beautiful valley full of ripe fields ready for picking, with the caption: “Opportunity in California” [Appendix, Figure 5]. Others focus on California as a place for “settlers,” perhaps appealing to the American pioneer mentality. Two separate Southern Pacific illustrations from 1922 advertise “California for the Settler,” depicting a beautiful land of opportunity and happiness. In the first, a man holds his smiling daughter in a field with cows grazing in the background [Appendix, Figure 6]. The scene suggests that California offers every man the opportunity to raise a family comfortably while enjoying the bounties of the earth. In the second, ripe oranges, cows, thick pastures, and a small body of water in the background reinforce the notion of California as a lush paradise [Appendix, Figure 7].

These illustrations played a major role in the Dust Bowl migrants’ understanding of California. Claims of success that came back from migrants who left the Midwest for California in the 1920s—like those that Thomas Smith describes21—provided an added sense of hope for the migrants, reassuring them that even if California was not as fantastic as the illustrations and advertisements had depicted it, it would still be a vast improvement from their situation and would provide them with the opportunities they dreamt of. Though the illustrations depict a mythical place of bounty, they do not present a specific promise—a factor that played an immense role in the Dust Bowl migrant’s ability to adapt the myth and survive in California. The myth did promise jobs, but beyond that the promises remained vague and unbinding, allowing the migrants to adapt their understanding with relative ease.

Because the myth of California was so instrumental

---

20 Ibid., 19-20.

in the lives of the migrants during these time periods, dealing with the fact that the reality did not match up was a challenging endeavor. One of the first difficulties for migrants was the challenge to let go of the extreme stories from which the myth was based. Gold Rush emigrant Margaret Frink recalls one travelling companion, Mr. Avery, who struggled to let go of the myth. Frustrated with the pace of their wagon train, Avery decided to remove himself from the group and complete the rest of the journey on foot. Frink describes his determination with a sense of awe, saying: “We gave him all the provisions he could carry, and he started, with blankets, clothing, and provisions strapped on his back, to walk fifteen hundred miles to California.”

Frink’s husband notes at the end of the account that Avery’s faith in California ultimately failed him—he headed home only a month after his arrival, wasting an enormous sum of money, months of travel, and, likely, a well-established life back home.

Avery’s tale of disappointment and loss certainly pales in comparison to the plight of other migrants who—willingly or not—stayed in California. During the Dust Bowl, one man, suffering from sciatic rheumatism and acute bronchitis, was told by his doctor to move to California to improve his health. Upon arriving, he was forced to live in a tent in a camp for migrant workers, and his health suffered more than it had in Indiana.

For many others, the dream of California ended in death, a point overland pioneer Bernard J. Reid laments in a letter back home to his family. Describing California as a “far-famed land,” Reid angrily recalls the difficulties of the journey, attributing these tragedies to the myth itself: “When I now look back upon it, it appears like a long, dreadful dream . . . we were all grievously deceived (unintentionally perhaps), by the press and the leading merchants of St. Louis. It proved an infamous imposter . . . criminals of the deepest die, — for the deaths of several men and the tears of widows and orphans are the consequences of their bad faith, cupidity, and inhumanity.”

They came expecting to find the Promised Land, and instead found poverty, discrimination, hardship, and, sometimes, death.

Though somewhat theatrical, Reid’s anger was certainly warranted. Countless California hopefuls arrived only to find that the promises were lies and exaggerations, and dealing with this realization proved extremely difficult. Many migrants reacted immediately with anger—at the myth, at the people who propagated it, and at the state itself. For Ramón Gil Navarro, California was far from the land of his dreams. Migrating from Chile during the Gold Rush, Navarro anticipated making a great fortune in the gold fields and mines; however, his hopes were quickly dashed and he reacted rather aggressively towards California, describing it as the land of the damned and the place where hopes and dreams die: “Ay! How many have waited just like us for six months and have finally seen the illusion of it all, as when a man condemned to death

23 Notes, Charles L. Todd, August 6, 1940, box 3, folder 1, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
in the lives of the migrants during these time periods, dealing with the fact that the reality did not match up was a challenging endeavor. One of the first difficulties for migrants was the challenge to let go of the extreme stories from which the myth was based. Gold Rush emigrant Margaret Frink recalls one travelling companion, Mr. Avery, who struggled to let go of the myth. Frustrated with the pace of their wagon train, Avery decided to remove himself from the group and complete the rest of the journey on foot. Frink describes his determination with a sense of awe, saying: “We gave him all the provisions he could carry, and he started, with blankets, clothing, and provisions strapped on his back, to walk fifteen hundred miles to California.”  

Frink’s husband notes at the end of the account that Avery’s faith in California ultimately failed him—he headed home only a month after his arrival, wasting an enormous sum of money, months of travel, and, likely, a well-established life back home.

Avery’s tale of disappointment and loss certainly pales in comparison to the plight of other migrants who—willingly or not—stayed in California. During the Dust Bowl, one man, suffering from sciatic rheumatism and acute bronchitis, was told by his doctor to move to California to improve his health. Upon arriving, he was forced to live in a tent in a camp for migrant workers, and his health suffered more than it had in Indiana. For many others, the dream of California ended in death, a point overland pioneer

Bernard J. Reid laments in a letter back home to his family. Describing California as a “far-famed land,” Reid angrily recalls the difficulties of the journey, attributing these tragedies to the myth itself: “When I now look back upon it, it appears like a long, dreadful dream . . . we were all grievously deceived (unintentionally perhaps), by the press and the leading merchants of St. Louis. It proved an infamous imposter . . . criminals of the deepest die, — for the deaths of several men and the tears of widows and orphans are the consequences of their bad faith, cupidity, and inhumanity.”

They came expecting to find the Promised Land, and instead found poverty, discrimination, hardship, and, sometimes, death.

Though somewhat theatrical, Reid’s anger was certainly warranted. Countless California hopefuls arrived only to find that the promises were lies and exaggerations, and dealing with this realization proved extremely difficult. Many migrants reacted immediately with anger—at the myth, at the people who propagated it, and at the state itself. For Ramón Gil Navarro, California was far from the land of his dreams. Migrating from Chile during the Gold Rush, Navarro anticipated making a great fortune in the gold fields and mines; however, his hopes were quickly dashed and he reacted rather aggressively towards California, describing it as the land of the damned and the place where hopes and dreams die: “Ay! How many have waited just like us for six months and have finally seen the illusion of it all, as when a man condemned to death

23 Notes, Charles L. Todd, August 6, 1940, box 3, folder 1, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.

sees the place where all of his hopes for life will come to an end.”

Similarly, Navarro characterizes California as a land where “there are no pleasures” and a land in which every man is filled with lament: “It is impossible to portray the way these men suffered physically and morally and how they regretted having abandoned their families to come in search of a fortune that every day seems further and further away.”

Although Navarro’s situation was especially difficult as a foreigner, he attributes nearly all of his challenges to the myth, alleging that it set him and his fellow immigrants up for failure and greatly added to their woes. His resentment against California—as a place and as an idea—is very strong, and he argues that it is the same for all California hopefuls: “The ones arriving are filled with laughs, hopes, and their eyes seem to be envisioning a future filled with fortune. Among those leaving you can see the bitterness of frustrated hope and the negative effects of a backbreaking job they were not used to, a job that can humble the toughest of men. Their faces all reflect the privations and even miseries they have had while here.”

For Navarro, anything short of the myth was both a disappointment and, seemingly, a personal attack. Though Navarro’s situation warrants frustration, his anger is greatly exacerbated by the myth. Because Navarro came to California willingly to chase dreams of a fortune in gold, he was not emotionally prepared for any failures.

Navarro, along with other Gold Rush migrants who reacted with anger, placed his faith in California as a place where he would find gold and make his fortune—a very specific dream that made adaptation difficult.

Much like Navarro, many Dust Bowl migrants were extremely disappointed in the discrepancy between real California and mythical California. Though the entire nation was struggling with both the Depression and the environmental devastation of the Dust Bowl, California had been portrayed as a place that was exempt from the suffering. Although California did have job opportunities as promised, many migrants resented the treatment they received and the lies they were told. This anger prompted them to react aggressively, as Navarro had. One migrant, identified only as “Votaw,” sarcastically exclaimed to interviewers: “California has two good crops each year: suckers and lemons. Both should be picked green.”

In much the same spirit, an anonymous migrant told interviewers of how the myth had failed him: “They told us this was the land of milk and honey; but I guess the cow went dry and the tumblebugs got in the beehive!”

Though these migrants expressed their anger with humor, others were not so light-hearted. A migrant known as “Oklahoma Pete” angrily denounces the lies the myth propagated, saying: “Always heard at [sic] a feller didn’t need no coat in Californy [sic]. Betcha the feller what [sic] started at [sic] didn’t ever get up bout [sic] sun-up

25 Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 28.
26 Ibid., 35.
27 Ibid., 54.
28 Ibid., 22.
29 Letter selections, Assorted, box 3, folder 3, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
30 Ibid.
sees the place where all of his hopes for life will come to an end."  Similarly, Navarro characterizes California as a land where "there are no pleasures" and a land in which every man is filled with lament: "It is impossible to portray the way these men suffered physically and morally and how they regretted having abandoned their families to come in search of a fortune that every day seems further and further away."

Although Navarro’s situation was especially difficult as a foreigner, he attributes nearly all of his challenges to the myth, alleging that it set him and his fellow immigrants up for failure and greatly added to their woes. His resentment against California—as a place and as an idea—is very strong, and he argues that it is the same for all California hopefuls: "The ones arriving are filled with laughs, hopes, and their eyes seem to be envisioning a future filled with fortune. Among those leaving you can see the bitterness of frustrated hope and the negative effects of a backbreaking job they were not used to, a job that can humble the toughest of men. Their faces all reflect the privations and even miseries they have had while here." For Navarro, anything short of the myth was both a disappointment and, seemingly, a personal attack. Though Navarro’s situation warrants frustration, his anger is greatly exacerbated by the myth. Because Navarro came to California willingly to chase dreams of a fortune in gold, he was not emotionally prepared for any failures.

Navarro, along with other Gold Rush migrants who reacted with anger, placed his faith in California as a place where he would find gold and make his fortune—a very specific dream that made adaptation difficult.

Much like Navarro, many Dust Bowl migrants were extremely disappointed in the discrepancy between real California and mythical California. Though the entire nation was struggling with both the Depression and the environmental devastation of the Dust Bowl, California had been portrayed as a place that was exempt from the suffering. Although California did have job opportunities as promised, many migrants resented the treatment they received and the lies they were told. This anger prompted them to react aggressively, as Navarro had. One migrant, identified only as "Votaw," sarcastically exclaimed to interviewers: "California has two good crops each year: suckers and lemons. Both should be picked green." In much the same spirit, an anonymous migrant told interviewers of how the myth had failed him: "They told us this was the land of milk and honey; but I guess the cow went dry and the tumblebugs got in the beehive!"

---

25 Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 28.
26 Ibid., 35.
27 Ibid., 54.
28 Ibid., 22.
29 Letter selections, Assorted, box 3, folder 3, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
30 Ibid.
to pick peas."\textsuperscript{31} This anger not only speaks to the difficulties of migrant life but also to the sheer strength of their belief in the myth. Had these migrants not come expecting to find the jobs that the myth promised, their anger would have been significantly tempered.

Though most migrants began their California experience with anger and resentment, many found ways to adapt their understanding of the myth in order to survive in California. For some, giving up the specific promises of the myth proved to be too difficult, and these migrants oftentimes were unable to survive in California. For others—the migrants who were able to succeed and remain in California—adaptation proved to be the key to success. Though the way migrants understood California changed, it is evident in numerous accounts that the myth remained a major part of each migrant’s life, even if it had evolved to better match the reality.

Adapting to a new myth was a much more difficult task for Gold Rush migrants than for those of the Dust Bowl. Because California was still a relatively new area of American settlement for the former, the myths and stories about it still held the potential of validity, a potential that made it extremely difficult because so many came by choice rather than out of desperation.\textsuperscript{32} This difficulty is especially apparent in Bernard J. Reid’s account. Though Reid was extremely vocal about his anger towards California and the myth, his narrative evidences a lasting connection to the myth and a lingering hope that it could still prove to be true for him. Although Reid claims that the allure of California exists chiefly in the fact that it is a vast improvement over the difficult journey that migrants endure to reach it, he still refers to California as “the land of promise” upon first seeing it.\textsuperscript{33}

Additionally, when Reid finally arrives at the gold fields, he eagerly rushes to the riverbank to pan “just for an experiment” with a sense of excitement that is reminiscent of the excitement he felt as he took gold panning lessons before he began his journey.\textsuperscript{34} Though Reid describes the fields as “lonesome” and challenging, he nonetheless is unable to fully denounce California, demonstrating that the myth lingers deep within: “Am not discouraged yet, but find it very hard work for a little filthy lucre.”\textsuperscript{35} Reid’s description certainly cannot be considered a glowing review of California; however, his desire to test the validity of the myth suggests a deep and unrelenting connection to it. Even if Reid’s brief bout of gold panning served no purpose beyond material for a letter home—a souvenir of sorts to show his family and friends—it still demonstrates a willingness and desire to adapt the myth to his reality. Although Reid never fully recovered his faith in the myth, his unwillingness to completely relinquish his hope suggests the existence of a nearly instinctual desire to try and find a way to adapt the myth rather than giving up on it entirely.

Ramón Gil Navarro also found it extremely chal-

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{33} Reid, Overland to California, 134, 141.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 146, 26.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 147.
to pick peas.” This anger not only speaks to the difficulties of migrant life but also to the sheer strength of their belief in the myth. Had these migrants not come expecting to find the jobs that the myth promised, their anger would have been significantly tempered.

Though most migrants began their California experience with anger and resentment, many found ways to adapt their understanding of the myth in order to survive in California. For some, giving up the specific promises of the myth proved to be too difficult, and these migrants oftentimes were unable to survive in California. For others—the migrants who were able to succeed and remain in California—adaptation proved to be the key to success. Though the way migrants understood California changed, it is evident in numerous accounts that the myth remained a major part of each migrant’s life, even if it had evolved to better match the reality.

Adapting to a new myth was a much more difficult task for Gold Rush migrants than for those of the Dust Bowl. Because California was still a relatively new area of American settlement for the former, the myths and stories about it still held the potential of validity, a potential that made it extremely difficult because so many came by choice rather than out of desperation. This difficulty is especially apparent in Bernard J. Reid’s account. Though Reid was extremely vocal about his anger towards California and the myth, his narrative evidences a lasting connection to the myth and a lingering hope that it could still prove to be true for him. Although Reid claims that the allure of California exists chiefly in the fact that it is a vast improvement over the difficult journey that migrants endure to reach it, he still refers to California as “the land of promise” upon first seeing it.

Additionally, when Reid finally arrives at the gold fields, he eagerly rushes to the riverbank to pan “just for an experiment” with a sense of excitement that is reminiscent of the excitement he felt as he took gold panning lessons before he began his journey. Though Reid describes the fields as “lonesome” and challenging, he nonetheless is unable to fully denounce California, demonstrating that the myth lingers deep within: “Am not discouraged yet, but find it very hard work for a little filthy lucre.” Reid’s description certainly cannot be considered a glowing review of California; however, his desire to test the validity of the myth suggests a deep and unrelenting connection to it. Even if Reid’s brief bout of gold panning served no purpose beyond material for a letter home—a souvenir of sorts to show his family and friends—it still demonstrates a willingness and desire to adapt the myth to his reality. Although Reid never fully recovered his faith in the myth, his unwillingness to completely relinquish his hope suggests the existence of a nearly instinctual desire to try and find a way to adapt the myth rather than giving up on it entirely.

Ramón Gil Navarro also found it extremely chal-

---

31 Ibid.
challenging to fully give up hope in the myth of California. Navarro, like Reid, harbored a great deal of anger and resentment towards the myth due to the difficulties that he suffered throughout his time in California. Despite his anger, Navarro is incapable of losing hope in California—adapting the myth little by little to maintain faith when his previous hopes did not come to fruition. Navarro quickly adjusts to his new home and reevaluates his understanding of it relatively early on in his narrative, saying, “. . . there is nobody who is really miserable yet.”

Navarro reveals his evolved understanding of California much more explicitly later in the narrative, describing California as a land “where freedom reigns supreme in every way,” as well as a place of prosperity: “They say all of North American [sic] is going to empty out into California and that it has become a symbol of the land of prosperity for all those who pray that prosperity will be theirs someday.” As Navarro becomes less focused on the specifics of the myth of California, he is much happier and is finally able to enjoy the benefits and beauties of its reality.

Navarro’s adapted understanding of the myth of California only grows as he spends more time in the state. After a year in California, Navarro’s opinion of the state nearly returns to original mythical proportions, and he describes how he has great faith in his own ability to succeed and prosper in California. Though Navarro continues to face various hardships—including lost property, financial challenges, and romantic failures—he still finds hope and joy in the smallest pleasures of California: “My God, these moments of intense pleasure beyond imagination are just the little drops you send those souls who are here in this vale of tears, struggling with all vices for your love.”

Navarro’s ability to see beyond the “vale of tears” and focus on the “moments of intense pleasure” demonstrates a passionate desire to find happiness in California, suggesting that Navarro still holds hope that the myth’s promises will become a reality for him.

More than two years after his arrival in California, Navarro remains fervent in his belief that California will bring him overwhelming prosperity: “People make and lose millions, but that never discourages the spirit of its inhabitants. I do not know when, where, or how, but the day when we ourselves are owners of a stake in one of the mines cannot be far off.” Although Navarro never fully realized the promises of myth, his undying hope that California would bring him prosperity serves as further evidence of the power the adapted myth had over hopefuls during the Gold Rush, and foreshadows the way in which Dust Bowl migrants would later adapt the myth.

Though Reid and Navarro struggled to certain degrees to adapt the myth, others, like migrant Margaret Frink, maintained strong faith in the myth throughout both her journey and time in California, easily and seamlessly adapting her expectations. Frink, who came to California in 1850 at the age of 32 with her husband, believed the stories she heard about California almost to a fault, ignoring warnings from concerned neighbors about the difficulties of both the

---

36 Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 73.
37 Ibid., 73, 94.
38 Ibid., 111.
39 Ibid., 196.
lenging to fully give up hope in the myth of California. Navarro, like Reid, harbored a great deal of anger and resentment towards the myth due to the difficulties that he suffered throughout his time in California. Despite his anger, Navarro is incapable of losing hope in California—adapting the myth little by little to maintain faith when his previous hopes did not come to fruition. Navarro quickly adjusts to his new home and reevaluates his understanding of it relatively early on in his narrative, saying, “. . . there is nobody who is really miserable yet.”

Navarro reveals his evolved understanding of California much more explicitly later in the narrative, describing California as a land “where freedom reigns supreme in every way,” as well as a place of prosperity: “They say all of North American [sic] is going to empty out into California and that it has become a symbol of the land of prosperity for all those who pray that prosperity will be theirs someday.” As Navarro becomes less focused on the specifics of the myth of California, he is much happier and is finally able to enjoy the benefits and beauties of its reality.

Navarro’s adapted understanding of the myth of California only grows as he spends more time in the state. After a year in California, Navarro’s opinion of the state nearly returns to original mythical proportions, and he describes how he has great faith in his own ability to succeed and prosper in California. Though Navarro continues to face various hardships—including lost property, financial challenges, and romantic failures—he still finds hope and joy in the smallest pleasures of California: “My God, these moments of intense pleasure beyond imagination are just the little drops you send those souls who are here in this vale of tears, struggling with all vices for your love.”

Navarro’s ability to see beyond the “vale of tears” and focus on the “moments of intense pleasure” demonstrates a passionate desire to find happiness in California, suggesting that Navarro still holds hope that the myth’s promises will become a reality for him. More than two years after his arrival in California, Navarro remains fervent in his belief that California will bring him overwhelming prosperity: “People make and lose millions, but that never discourages the spirit of its inhabitants. I do not know when, where, or how, but the day when we ourselves are owners of a stake in one of the mines cannot be far off.” Although Navarro never fully realized the promises of myth, his undying hope that California would bring him prosperity serves as further evidence of the power the adapted myth had over hopefuls during the Gold Rush, and foreshadows the way in which Dust Bowl migrants would later adapt the myth.

Though Reid and Navarro struggled to certain degrees to adapt the myth, others, like migrant Margaret Frink, maintained strong faith in the myth throughout both her journey and time in California, easily and seamlessly adapting her expectations. Frink, who came to California in 1850 at the age of 32 with her husband, believed the stories she heard about California almost to a fault, ignoring warnings from concerned neighbors about the difficulties of both the

36 Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 73.
37 Ibid., 73, 94.
38 Ibid., 111.
39 Ibid., 196.
Despite their prosperity in Indiana, the allure of the myth overwhelmed Frink: “. . . we built a pleasant and convenient residence, having large grounds about it. But we were not yet satisfied. The exciting news coming back from California of the delightful climate and abundance of gold, caused us to resolve . . .” As Frink and her companions began their journey, the only difficulty that fazed them was the fear of reaching California too late and finding that the myth’s promises had run out. This fear of missing out on the myth prompted Frink’s wagon train to make questionable decisions and move at a dangerous pace, illustrating a very passionate and fervent belief that the promises of the myth were indeed a reality.

Because so many members of Frink’s party took the myth literally, adaptation of expectations became an even more arduous task. Frink and her party increased their speed dangerously, but some migrants—determined to reach the promises of the California myth as soon as possible—went even further, driving their animals to death. Others, like Mr. Avery, were so anxious to arrive in California that they risked their lives and set out on the trail on their own. Later along the trail, Frink describes a similarly determined woman trudging along alone with all her belongings on her back: “. . . a negro woman came tramping along through the heat and dust, carrying a cast-iron bake oven on her head, with her provisions and blanket piled on top—all she possessed in the world—bravely pushing on for California.” At one point on the trail, Frink and her party were forced to leave behind the majority of their belongings, lightening their load to nothing more than the “bare necessities of life.” Despite this, one party member, Mr. Bryant, chose to take along one particular additional item that demonstrates his unrelenting faith in the myth of California: “his pick, with which to dig gold when he got to California.” Frink comments on the passion that both she and her fellow migrants possess, saying: “One only hope sustains all these unhappy pilgrims, that they will be able to get into California alive, where they can take a rest, and where the gold which they feel sure of finding will repay them for all their hardships and suffering.” Although some of these migrants undoubtedly found happiness in California, there was a danger in such strong faith. Because their faith was so intricately linked to the specific facts of the myth—namely, in this case, the abundance of gold—some migrants, like Mr. Avery, were unable to adapt their understanding of the myth and, thus, were unable to survive in California.

When Frink finally arrived in California and learned of the shortcomings, she was understandably disappointed. She found the Californians—who mocked her for not understanding the culture and economy—rather harsh, and was wholly underwhelmed by the architecture of the state about which she had

41 Ibid., 59.
42 Ibid., 82.
43 Ibid., 81.
44 Ibid., 103.
46 Ibid., 134.
47 Ibid., 134.
48 Ibid., 144.
49 Ibid., 157.
Despite their prosperity in Indiana, the allure of the myth overwhelmed Frink: “. . . we built a pleasant and convenient residence, having large grounds about it. But we were not yet satisfied. The exciting news coming back from California of the delightful climate and abundance of gold, caused us to resolve . . .” As Frink and her companions began their journey, the only difficulty that fazed them was the fear of reaching California too late and finding that the myth’s promises had run out. This fear of missing out on the myth prompted Frink’s wagon train to make questionable decisions and move at a dangerous pace, illustrating a very passionate and fervent belief that the promises of the myth were indeed a reality.

Because so many members of Frink’s party took the myth literally, adaptation of expectations became an even more arduous task. Frink and her party increased their speed dangerously, but some migrants—determined to reach the promises of the California myth as soon as possible—went even further, driving their animals to death. Others, like Mr. Avery, were so anxious to arrive in California that they risked their lives and set out on the trail on their own. Later along the trail, Frink describes a similarly determined woman trudging along alone with all her belongings on her back: “. . . a negro woman came tramping along through the heat and dust, carrying a cast-iron bake oven on her head, with her provisions and blanket piled on top—all she possessed in the world—bravely pushing on for California.” At one point on the trail, Frink and her party were forced to leave behind the majority of their belongings, lightening their load to nothing more than the “bare necessities of life.” Despite this, one party member, Mr. Bryant, chose to take along one particular additional item that demonstrates his unrelenting faith in the myth of California: “his pick, with which to dig gold when he got to California.” Frink comments on the passion that both she and her fellow migrants possess, saying: “One only hope sustains all these unhappy pilgrims, that they will be able to get into California alive, where they can take a rest, and where the gold which they feel sure of finding will repay them for all their hardships and suffering.” Although some of these migrants undoubtedly found happiness in California, there was a danger in such strong faith. Because their faith was so intricately linked to the specific facts of the myth—namely, in this case, the abundance of gold—some migrants, like Mr. Avery, were unable to adapt their understanding of the myth and, thus, were unable to survive in California.

When Frink finally arrived in California and learned of the shortcomings, she was understandably disappointed. She found the Californians—who mocked her for not understanding the culture and economy—rather harsh, and was wholly underwhelmed by the architecture of the state about which she had

---

41 Ibid., 59.
42 Ibid., 82.
43 Ibid., 81.
44 Ibid., 103.
46 Ibid., 134.
47 Ibid., 134.
48 Ibid., 144.
49 Ibid., 157.
dreamed: “[Sutter’s Fort] was deserted and going to decay, its walls and buildings being constructed of large bricks dried in the sun.”⁵⁰ Despite these disappointments, Frink is able to adapt quickly, finding a great deal of happiness in California: “But after a year’s residence in the delightful valley of the Sacramento, we had satisfied ourselves that no pleasanter land for a home could be found, though we should roam the wide world over. . . . The future of California seemed to us full of promise, and here we resolved to rest from our pilgrimage.”⁵¹ Similarly, in the final lines of her narrative, Frink shows no signs of regret in her decision to come to California: “The progress of time only confirmed us more strongly in our choice of a home, and we never had occasion to regret the prolonged hardships of the toilsome journey that had its happy ending for us in this fair land of California.”⁵² Although Frink experienced hardships just as the other Gold Rush migrants did, she was able to temper her passionate belief in the myth enough to survive while still maintaining her belief in the magic of the myth. Though California did not live up to the fantastic promises of the myth, the spirit of the myth—paired with California’s extraordinary qualities and relative newness—allows Frink to evolve her understanding of the myth to focus on the benefits of California as opposed to the discrepancies between the reality and the myth, and find happiness in California.

Much like Frink and Navarro, many Dust Bowl migrants found ways of adapting their understanding of the myth, though their adaptations were much more realistic and less specific than the expectations of the Gold Rush migrants. Because these migrants came to California out of desperation rather than desire, they were much more forgiving and willing to find happiness in even the simplest improvements in California. Migrant Alma Brinlee describes the struggle to remain positive in her response for Charles Todd’s survey. Brinlee moved from Troutville, Oklahoma in 1937 at the age of 37 to escape the environmental and economic effects of the Dust Bowl, bringing with her a husband and a daughter. Brinlee and her family spent the first six months of their stay in a leaky tent, and her daughter suffered at school due to the harsh criticism she received for being an “Okie,” yet they remained in California with their spirits intact.⁵³ When asked about her reaction to California after a year’s time, Brinlee responded with hope for what California held for both herself and her family, saying, “I kept thinking we would return to Oklahoma, but I knew that we were better off in California.”⁵⁴ Though she faced flooding, persecution, and economic hardship, Brinlee still believed that California would provide more opportunities than their home in Oklahoma, despite the fact that the myth proved to be untrue. California certainly did offer a number of new opportunities for Brinlee and her family, but the sense of hope that she maintains despite the difficulties she and her family encounter speaks to the power of the myth and

⁵³ Survey Response, Alma Brinlee to Charles L. Todd, August 1978, box 2, folder 2, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
⁵⁴ Ibid.
dreamed: “[Sutter’s Fort] was deserted and going to decay, its walls and buildings being constructed of large bricks dried in the sun.”\(^{50}\) Despite these disappointments, Frink is able to adapt quickly, finding a great deal of happiness in California: “But after a year’s residence in the delightful valley of the Sacramento, we had satisfied ourselves that no pleasanter land for a home could be found, though we should roam the wide world over. . . . The future of California seemed to us full of promise, and here we resolved to rest from our pilgrimage.”\(^{51}\) Similarly, in the final lines of her narrative, Frink shows no signs of regret in her decision to come to California: “The progress of time only confirmed us more strongly in our choice of a home, and we never had occasion to regret the prolonged hardships of the toilsome journey that had its happy ending for us in this fair land of California.”\(^{52}\) Although Frink experienced hardships just as the other Gold Rush migrants did, she was able to temper her passionate belief in the myth enough to survive while still maintaining her belief in the magic of the myth. Though California did not live up to the fantastic promises of the myth, the spirit of the myth—paired with California’s extraordinary qualities and relative newness—allows Frink to evolve her understanding of the myth to focus on the benefits of California as opposed to the discrepancies between the reality and the myth, and find happiness in California.

Much like Frink and Navarro, many Dust Bowl migrants found ways of adapting their understanding of the myth, though their adaptations were much more realistic and less specific than the expectations of the Gold Rush migrants. Because these migrants came to California out of desperation rather than desire, they were much more forgiving and willing to find happiness in even the simplest improvements in California. Migrant Alma Brinlee describes the struggle to remain positive in her response for Charles Todd’s survey. Brinlee moved from Troutville, Oklahoma in 1937 at the age of 37 to escape the environmental and economic effects of the Dust Bowl, bringing with her a husband and a daughter. Brinlee and her family spent the first six months of their stay in a leaky tent, and her daughter suffered at school due to the harsh criticism she received for being an “Okie,” yet they remained in California with their spirits intact.\(^{53}\) When asked about her reaction to California after a year’s time, Brinlee responded with hope for what California held for both herself and her family, saying, “I kept thinking we would return to Oklahoma, but I knew that we were better off in California.”\(^{54}\) Though she faced flooding, persecution, and economic hardship, Brinlee still believed that California would provide more opportunities than their home in Oklahoma, despite the fact that the myth proved to be untrue. California certainly did offer a number of new opportunities for Brinlee and her family, but the sense of hope that she maintains despite the difficulties she and her family encounter speaks to the power of the myth and

\(^{50}\) Ibid., 158.  
\(^{51}\) Ibid., 166.  
\(^{52}\) Ibid., 167.  
\(^{53}\) Survey Response, Alma Brinlee to Charles L. Todd, August 1978, box 2, folder 2, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.  
\(^{54}\) Ibid.
Brinlee’s ability to successfully adapt. Because Brinlee anticipated California as being the place where their situation would improve, a lingering sense of hope for and faith in California remains that is evident in her determination to stay and her ability to adapt.\textsuperscript{55}

Migrant Frances Walker also persevered through the hardships in California with the hope that California would provide her with a better life than she had in Oklahoma. After dealing with the difficult weather and working within the torturous sharecropping system, Walker and her husband and children decided to move to California where “the living might just be a little easier.”\textsuperscript{56} Although Walker came to California with the hopes of “[seeing] for ourselves ‘the land of milk and honey,’” she was far from thrilled with her new home.\textsuperscript{57} Walker cites terrible homesickness, which prompted her to wonder “if it was worth it to live here as we did,” especially considering the poverty and the discrimination that she and her fellow migrants faced.\textsuperscript{58} Despite such difficulties, Walker acknowledges that the reality of California was certainly better than their life in Oklahoma, with higher wages, better weather, and increased opportunities for her children, demonstrating her process of adaptation of the myth.\textsuperscript{59} As she concludes her letter, Walker emphasizes that her family and her fellow migrants were a hardy people who came to California in search of “the land of opportunity, not solely because someone said so they came to see for themselves.”\textsuperscript{60} Though Walker had the means to return to Oklahoma, her willingness to stay in California and her happiness in the state demonstrate her ability to adapt the myth to fit her situation. California was not “the land of milk and honey” that she expected; however, because she did not come expecting specific benefits from California, Walker was able to successfully adapt the myth to better fit the opportunities California offered and maintain her faith in California.

Thomas Smith also placed a significant amount of hope in the real California despite its shortcomings. Smith spent much of his young adult life moving around the Midwest, taking on various odd railroad jobs. When the Depression struck and work was difficult to come by, Smith and his wife migrated to California, hoping that they would find their fortunes like other “Okies” who had gone before them and return with large sums of cash.\textsuperscript{61} His hope in California and the opportunities that it promised was so strong that Smith and his wife made the decision to migrate “just like that.”\textsuperscript{62} Their decision to move quickly, based on relatively vague stories, demonstrates a willingness to believe that would prove invaluable to Smith’s survival in California.

Upon arriving in California, Smith’s understanding of the myth evolves rapidly and, arguably, uncon-
Brinlee’s ability to successfully adapt. Because Brinlee anticipated California as being the place where their situation would improve, a lingering sense of hope for and faith in California remains that is evident in her determination to stay and her ability to adapt.\textsuperscript{55}

Migrant Frances Walker also persevered through the hardships in California with the hope that California would provide her with a better life than she had in Oklahoma. After dealing with the difficult weather and working within the torturous sharecropping system, Walker and her husband and children decided to move to California where “the living might just be a little easier.”\textsuperscript{56} Although Walker came to California with the hopes of “[seeing] for ourselves ‘the land of milk and honey,’” she was far from thrilled with her new home.\textsuperscript{57} Walker cites terrible homesickness, which prompted her to wonder “if it was worth it to live here as we did,” especially considering the poverty and the discrimination that she and her fellow migrants faced.\textsuperscript{58} Despite such difficulties, Walker acknowledges that the reality of California was certainly better than their life in Oklahoma, with higher wages, better weather, and increased opportunities for her children, demonstrating her process of adaptation of the myth.\textsuperscript{59} As she concludes her letter, Walker emphasizes that her family and her fellow migrants were a hardy people

who came to California in search of “the land of opportunity, not solely because someone said so they came to see for themselves.”\textsuperscript{60} Though Walker had the means to return to Oklahoma, her willingness to stay in California and her happiness in the state demonstrate her ability to adapt the myth to fit her situation. California was not “the land of milk and honey” that she expected; however, because she did not come expecting specific benefits from California, Walker was able to successfully adapt the myth to better fit the opportunities California offered and maintain her faith in California.

Thomas Smith also placed a significant amount of hope in the real California despite its shortcomings. Smith spent much of his young adult life moving around the Midwest, taking on various odd railroad jobs. When the Depression struck and work was difficult to come by, Smith and his wife migrated to California, hoping that they would find their fortunes like other “Okies” who had gone before them and return with large sums of cash.\textsuperscript{61} His hope in California and the opportunities that it promised was so strong that Smith and his wife made the decision to migrate “just like that.”\textsuperscript{62} Their decision to move quickly, based on relatively vague stories, demonstrates a willingness to believe that would prove invaluable to Smith’s survival in California.

Upon arriving in California, Smith’s understanding of the myth evolves rapidly and, arguably, uncon-

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Letter, Frances Walker to Charles L. Todd, December 28, 1974, box 1, folder 1, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Interview, Thomas Smith to Michael Neely, March 4 and 16, 1981, California Odyssey: Dust Bowl Migration Archives.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
One Only Hope”  177

sciously. Despite the challenges he encountered in California, Smith found happiness in the smallest things, perhaps best demonstrated by his unwavering fascination with watermelons growing in December, giant redwoods and sequoias, and the general size of the produce in California, all of which reassured him that California was a special—if not magical—place.63 When Smith was down to his last $20, his wife begged him to send a telegram to their family in Oklahoma to ask for money to help them return home, yet Smith insisted that they “stay on a little while longer.”64 Although Smith and his family struggled in California, when asked whether he regretted coming, Smith responded with hope and positivity: “We always had the idea that we would go back. . . . We kind of got oriented to the country. The times change, people change, ideas change, and you change your plans. . . . California has been good to us. I guess we’ll just stay.”65 Though Smith characterizes his decision to stay as one that happened by chance, his adamancy in remaining in California despite his near bankruptcy along with his determination to succeed illustrate how his ability to adapt the myth and maintain his hope in California were so invaluable.

Smith’s faith and unwillingness to relinquish the myth is only surpassed by the faith of Carlos Bulosan. Growing up in the Philippines, Bulosan relished stories of the prosperity in America, especially the story of Abraham Lincoln. Bulosan fervently believed that if Lincoln—“a poor boy [who] became a president of the United States”—could find greatness in America, then so could he.66 Determined to join in the opportunities, Bulosan eagerly saved funds for passage to America, finally arriving in the United States in 1930 amid the Great Depression. He arrived with great hope: “Everything seemed native and promising to me. It was like coming home after a long voyage, although as yet I had no home in this city.”67 Unfortunately, Bulosan quickly learned that America was not the land he expected: he was the victim of racism a number of times and was sold like a slave to a cannery upon his arrival.68 Despite these hardships, Bulosan’s faith in the myth that had sustained him for so long allowed him to adapt and slowly find happiness in America.

Although Bulosan had a very rudimentary understanding of America before arriving and thus did not understand where he wanted to be, it is evident through his travels that his heart lay in California—Bulosan returned to California countless times, unable to ignore the allure of the state. Like other Dust Bowl migrants, Bulosan’s faith in the myth prevented him from giving up, a sentiment he describes with passion whilst speaking to a migrant from Arkansas, saying: “. . . it’s only in giving the best we have that we can become a part of America.”69 Bulosan’s situation never truly improved—with racism running rampant up and down both the state and the West Coast—yet he never loses his faith. This undying faith—along with his incredible ability to adapt—is perhaps most evident.

---

63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
66 Carlos Bulosan, America is in the Heart (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1943), 69.
67 Ibid., 99.
69 Ibid., 248.
sciously. Despite the challenges he encountered in California, Smith found happiness in the smallest things, perhaps best demonstrated by his unwavering fascination with watermelons growing in December, giant redwoods and sequoias, and the general size of the produce in California, all of which reassured him that California was a special—if not magical—place.

When Smith was down to his last $20, his wife begged him to send a telegram to their family in Oklahoma to ask for money to help them return home, yet Smith insisted that they “stay on a little while longer.”

Although Smith and his family struggled in California, when asked whether he regretted coming, Smith responded with hope and positivity: “We always had the idea that we would go back. . . . We kind of got oriented to the country. The times change, people change, ideas change, and you change your plans. . . . California has been good to us. I guess we’ll just stay.”

Though Smith characterizes his decision to stay as one that happened by chance, his adamancy in remaining in California despite his near bankruptcy along with his determination to succeed illustrate how his ability to adapt the myth and maintain his hope in California were so invaluable.

Smith’s faith and unwillingness to relinquish the myth is only surpassed by the faith of Carlos Bulosan. Growing up in the Philippines, Bulosan relished stories of the prosperity in America, especially the story of Abraham Lincoln. Bulosan fervently believed that if Lincoln—“a poor boy [who] became a president of the United States”—could find greatness in America, then so could he. Determined to join in the opportunities, Bulosan eagerly saved funds for passage to America, finally arriving in the United States in 1930 amid the Great Depression. He arrived with great hope: “Everything seemed native and promising to me. It was like coming home after a long voyage, although as yet I had no home in this city.”

Unfortunately, Bulosan quickly learned that America was not the land he expected: he was the victim of racism a number of times and was sold like a slave to a cannery upon his arrival. Despite these hardships, Bulosan’s faith in the myth that had sustained him for so long allowed him to adapt and slowly find happiness in America.

Although Bulosan had a very rudimentary understanding of America before arriving and thus did not understand where he wanted to be, it is evident through his travels that his heart lay in California—Bulosan returned to California countless times, unable to ignore the allure of the state. Like other Dust Bowl migrants, Bulosan’s faith in the myth prevented him from giving up, a sentiment he describes with passion whilst speaking to a migrant from Arkansas, saying: “. . . it’s only in giving the best we have that we can become a part of America.”

Bulosan’s situation never truly improved—with racism running rampant up and down both the state and the West Coast—yet he never loses his faith. This undying faith—along with his incredible ability to adapt—is perhaps most evident

---

63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
67 Ibid., 99.
69 Ibid., 248.
in his lifelong desire to build a house in California, which he mentions throughout his narrative. After receiving a nasty beating from a police officer, Bulosan flees town on the train, yet still cannot put aside his hope for California: “I sat on top of an empty boxcar and watched the beautiful land passing by. I saw places where I thought I would someday like to build a home.”

Though Bulosan frequently curses California and the woe it brings him at times, he is still unable to lose hope entirely and continuously adapts his expectations for the myth. When near death, Bulosan demonstrates his deep connection with the myth through his fear of never seeing California again and, thus, never achieving the adapted dreams he had counted on, saying: “I was not afraid to die, but there were so many things to do. . . . I thought I should never live to see California again.” As he ends his narrative, Bulosan sums up his experience and the process of adapting the dream: “It came to me that no man—no one at all—could destroy my faith in America again. It was something that had grown out of my defeats and successes . . . It was something that grew out of the sacrifices and loneliness of my friends . . . something that grew out of our desire to know America, and to contribute something toward her final fulfillment.” Although Bulosan certainly struggled with the process of adaptation, his continued ability to adapt the myth testifies to both his resiliency as well as the myth’s allure.

70 Ibid., 157.
71 Ibid., 298.
72 Ibid., 326-27.

Migrant Harold Riley came to California at the young age of 7 in 1940. He kept his belief in California alive despite being “treated coldly.” He describes his struggle, saying, “[I] felt somewhat lost and frustrated, but hopeful.” Similarly, Lynne Prout—a migrant who came to California in 1933 at the age of 15—demonstrated the same sort of resilience and a lasting belief in California. Though Prout faced a California that was “not very hospitable” and nearly starved, she still regards her move to California as a high point in her life: “But as the years have passed I have come to view [this] era as the biggest experience of my life, and my mind constantly returns to it.” Although the migrants who came to California during the Dust Bowl faced incredible hardship, their ability to adapt the myth and maintain faith demonstrates how crucial the myth—and a continued belief in it—were to finding happiness in the land of plenty.

Though the myth has adapted and evolved enormously over time, it continues to capture the imaginations of countless even to this day, begging the question of why and how the myth persists. Although it is impossible to definitively say what allows for its survival, one potential contributing factor is a combination of the constant hope for a better future and the resilience of the human spirit. Because it is counterintuitive for humans to have no hope for

73 Survey Response, Harold Riley to Charles L. Todd, July 1978, box 2, folder 2, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
74 Letter, Lynne Prout to Charles L. Todd, October 17, 1978, box 2, folder 3, Dust Bowl Migration Archive, 1938-1981, North Bay Regional and Special Collections, Sonoma State University.
in his lifelong desire to build a house in California, which he mentions throughout his narrative. After receiving a nasty beating from a police officer, Bulosan flees town on the train, yet still cannot put aside his hope for California: “I sat on top of an empty boxcar and watched the beautiful land passing by. I saw places where I thought I would someday like to build a home.”

Though Bulosan frequently curses California and the woe it brings him at times, he is still unable to lose hope entirely and continuously adapts his expectations for the myth. When near death, Bulosan demonstrates his deep connection with the myth through his fear of never seeing California again and, thus, never achieving the adapted dreams he had counted on, saying: “I was not afraid to die, but there were so many things to do. . . . I thought I should never live to see California again.” As he ends his narrative, Bulosan sums up his experience and the process of adapting the dream: “It came to me that no man—no one at all—could destroy my faith in America again. It was something that had grown out of my defeats and successes . . . It was something that grew out of the sacrifices and loneliness of my friends . . . something that grew out of our desire to know America, and to become a part of her great tradition, and to contribute something toward her final fulfillment.” Although Bulosan certainly struggled with the process of adaptation, his continued ability to adapt the myth testifies to both his resiliency as well as the myth’s allure.

Migrant Harold Riley came to California at the young age of 7 in 1940. He kept his belief in California alive despite being “treated coldly.” He describes his struggle, saying, “[I] felt somewhat lost and frustrated, but hopeful.” Similarly, Lynne Prout—a migrant who came to California in 1933 at the age of 15—demonstrated the same sort of resilience and a lasting belief in California. Though Prout faced a California that was “not very hospitable” and nearly starved, she still regards her move to California as a high point in her life: “But as the years have passed I have come to view [this] era as the biggest experience of my life, and my mind constantly returns to it.” Although the migrants who came to California during the Dust Bowl faced incredible hardship, their ability to adapt the myth and maintain faith demonstrates how crucial the myth—and a continued belief in it—were to finding happiness in the land of plenty.

Though the myth has adapted and evolved enormously over time, it continues to capture the imaginations of countless even to this day, begging the question of why and how the myth persists. Although it is impossible to definitively say what allows for its survival, one potential contributing factor is a combination of the constant hope for a better future and the resilience of the human spirit. Because it is counterintuitive for humans to have no hope for...

70 Ibid., 157.
71 Ibid., 298.
72 Ibid., 326-27.
improvement in the future, California’s myth serves as the vessel to carry that hope along. As Margaret Frink explains, California was the “one only hope [that] sustains all these unhappy pilgrims”—the only thing that pushed them along on their journey.\textsuperscript{75} A Dust Bowl migrant camp in Visalia also reflects this sentiment, presented aptly in a picture over the stage in the main gathering area of the camp: “Picture over stage: painted by a camper. . . . Shows past, present, and future of the migrants. Past: ditch-bank camps; present: govt. [sic] camps with metal shelters; future: a question mark but rosy.”\textsuperscript{76} For many of the migrants, California truly was a question mark—they did not know what they would encounter once they arrived or if the opportunities reputed to be present would be a reality, yet the myth provided them with enough “rosyness” to allow them to persevere rather than despair.

Just as California provided the migrants with something upon which they could pin their hopes, it also provided these resilient individuals with a challenge—one from which they were unwilling to back down. Though there were some migrants, like Mr. Avery, who were not up to this challenge, many came with unrelenting attitudes, and this, paired with the hope they had already invested in California, created a powerful fighting spirit within the migrants that pushed them to achieve more than they would have otherwise. Frances Walker displayed this spirit, and believed that it pervaded the entire migrant community: “They thought when they came to California it was the land of opportunity, not solely because someone said so they came to see for themselves. California was there, a part of the vast Union, and maybe it was a challenge [sic].”\textsuperscript{77} Similarly, Ramón Gil Navarro describes seeing nearly all the newcomers arriving with a strong fighting spirit: “Among those arriving you can see a gesture of contempt for that misery and ravage among those departing and a look of disdainful challenge.”\textsuperscript{78}

Because so many saw the myth as a challenge, they were more willing to adapt it to match their experience, even if only for the sake of self-preservation. Although the incoming migrants were well-aware, undoubtedly, of the stories of failure that came from the state, their unrelenting spirits—along with the powerful emotions that the myth inspired—pushed them to, as Walker said, try California for themselves with the hope that the myth would come true for them if they fought hard enough. This fighting spirit not only helped migrants cope with the realities of California, but also helped build and sustain the myth of California.

Although hope and a spirit of challenge certainly help to explain how it has persisted, perhaps the most essential factor in the myth’s ability to continue exists in the innate majesty of the state itself. California may not have been the paradise that the myth described, but it was a paradise in its own right—it boasted during the Gold Rush and the Dust Bowl plentiful resources, a bustling economy, and new and exciting opportunities. Similarly, the state’s natural beauty

\textsuperscript{75} Frink, “Adventures of a Party of Goldseekers,” 144.
\textsuperscript{76} Notes, Charles L. Todd, August 6, 1940, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.
\textsuperscript{77} Letter, Frances Walker to Charles L. Todd, December 28, 1974, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.
\textsuperscript{78} Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 22.
improvement in the future, California’s myth serves as the vessel to carry that hope along. As Margaret Frink explains, California was the “one only hope [that] sustains all these unhappy pilgrims”—the only thing that pushed them along on their journey. A Dust Bowl migrant camp in Visalia also reflects this sentiment, presented aptly in a picture over the stage in the main gathering area of the camp: “Picture over stage: painted by a camper . . . Shows past, present, and future of the migrants. Past: ditch-bank camps; present: govt. [sic] camps with metal shelters; future: a question mark but rosy.”

For many of the migrants, California truly was a question mark—they did not know what they would encounter once they arrived or if the opportunities reputed to be present would be a reality, yet the myth provided them with enough “rosiness” to allow them to persevere rather than despair.

Just as California provided the migrants with something upon which they could pin their hopes, it also provided these resilient individuals with a challenge—one from which they were unwilling to back down. Though there were some migrants, like Mr. Avery, who were not up to this challenge, many came with unrelenting attitudes, and this, paired with the hope they had already invested in California, created a powerful fighting spirit within the migrants that pushed them to achieve more than they would have otherwise. Frances Walker displayed this spirit, and believed that it pervaded the entire migrant community: “They thought when they came to California it was the land of opportunity, not solely because someone said so they came to see for themselves. California was there, a part of the vast Union, and maybe it was a challenge [sic].” Similarly, Ramón Gil Navarro describes seeing nearly all the newcomers arriving with a strong fighting spirit: “Among those arriving you can see a gesture of contempt for that misery and ravage among those departing and a look of disdainful challenge.” Because so many saw the myth as a challenge, they were more willing to adapt it to match their experience, even if only for the sake of self-preservation. Although the incoming migrants were well-aware, undoubtedly, of the stories of failure that came from the state, their unrelenting spirits—along with the powerful emotions that the myth inspired—pushed them to, as Walker said, try California for themselves with the hope that the myth would come true for them if they fought hard enough. This fighting spirit not only helped migrants cope with the realities of California, but also helped build and sustain the myth of California.

Although hope and a spirit of challenge certainly help to explain how it has persisted, perhaps the most essential factor in the myth’s ability to continue exists in the innate majesty of the state itself. California may not have been the paradise that the myth described, but it was a paradise in its own right—it boasted during the Gold Rush and the Dust Bowl plentiful resources, a bustling economy, and new and exciting opportunities. Similarly, the state’s natural beauty

76 Notes, Charles L. Todd, August 6, 1940, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.
77 Letter, Frances Walker to Charles L. Todd, December 28, 1974, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.
78 Navarro, Gold Rush Diary, 22.
that has captivated visitors for years carries a sense of magic in and of itself. As Alma Brinlee states, California is “beautiful and green and prosperous for some.”

Even Navarro—despite the discrimination and hardships that he encountered in California—found himself utterly amazed by the sheer grandeur of California, saying, “Only in California, itself exceptional in just about everything in the world.” With California being so beautiful and extraordinary, it is only logical that fantastical myths would follow.

Today, many continue to struggle with the discrepancy between the myth and reality of California. Some see the difficulties in California—whether they be financial, political, or economic—as signs that California’s reign is coming to an end. John D. Sutter suggests that the dream is “fizzling out,” saying, “No longer is California the larger-than-life destination where anything’s possible—the pot of gold at the end of our collective path westward.” Though some migrants find themselves disillusioned with California’s reality, most still carry the myth with them. One migrant, Sara Flores, has adapted the myth to her circumstances well, saying: “It’s exactly what I pictured: a better life, a better opportunity. Disneyland.” Although the reality of California continues to fall short of the myth, migrants’ ability to adapt the myth over time—regardless of how bad the circumstances get—will ensure that it remains a staple in the American imagination.

Ultimately, California’s greatness stems not only from its natural beauty or the real opportunities it offers, but from the sense of wonder that the myth has surrounded it with, providing the state with countless newcomers determined to succeed and live the dream. Though the myth evolved dramatically since its inception, its ability to survive depends not only on the state’s natural beauty and wealth of opportunities but also on migrants’ continued faith in it. If migrants had been unable to adapt their expectations and understanding of the myth—giving up and returning home with the tales of woe—it is likely that the myth would not have survived, at least not in the same form. The myth continues to portray California as a magical and extraordinary place because of migrants’ willingness to see it as such.

Navarro, in the final lines of his diary, expresses great sorrow as he leaves the shores of California, describing it as the ultimate, larger-than-life land of adventure, saying: “Yesterday we lost sight of the beaches of California just when it was getting dark. With the last rays of sunshine, we lost sight of the golden land of California, the country of marvels, the country of the thousand and one nights, the country that was the scene of so much happiness and so much suffering of mine.” Although California is a land of chance, the myth persists strongly within the hearts of hopefuls around the world, and because of this, California will continue to exist as an island in the

---

79 Survey Response, Alma Brinlee to Charles L. Todd, August 1978, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid., 251.
that has captivated visitors for years carries a sense of magic in and of itself. As Alma Brinlee states, California is “beautiful and green and prosperous for some.”

Even Navarro—despite the discrimination and hardships that he encountered in California—found himself utterly amazed by the sheer grandeur of California, saying, “Only in California, itself exceptional in just about everything in the world.”

With California being so beautiful and extraordinary, it is only logical that fantastical myths would follow.

Today, many continue to struggle with the discrepancy between the myth and reality of California. Some see the difficulties in California—whether they be financial, political, or economic—as signs that California’s reign is coming to an end. John D. Sutter suggests that the dream is “fizzling out,” saying, “No longer is California the larger-than-life destination where anything’s possible—the pot of gold at the end of our collective path westward.” Though some migrants find themselves disillusioned with California’s reality, most still carry the myth with them. One migrant, Sara Flores, has adapted the myth to her circumstances well, saying: “It’s exactly what I pictured: a better life, a better opportunity. Disneyland.”

Although the reality of California continues to fall short of the myth, migrants’ ability to adapt the myth over time—regardless of how bad the circumstances get—will ensure that it remains a staple in the American imagination.

Ultimately, California’s greatness stems not only from its natural beauty or the real opportunities it offers, but from the sense of wonder that the myth has surrounded it with, providing the state with countless newcomers determined to succeed and live the dream. Though the myth evolved dramatically since its inception, its ability to survive depends not only on the state’s natural beauty and wealth of opportunities but also on migrants’ continued faith in it. If migrants had been unable to adapt their expectations and understanding of the myth—giving up and returning home with the tales of woe—it is likely that the myth would not have survived, at least not in the same form. The myth continues to portray California as a magical and extraordinary place because of migrants’ willingness to see it as such.

Navarro, in the final lines of his diary, expresses great sorrow as he leaves the shores of California, describing it as the ultimate, larger-than-life land of adventure, saying: “Yesterday we lost sight of the beaches of California just when it was getting dark. With the last rays of sunshine, we lost sight of the golden land of California, the country of marvels, the country of the thousand and one nights, the country that was the scene of so much happiness and so much suffering of mine.”

Although California is a land of chance, the myth persists strongly within the hearts of hopefuls around the world, and because of this, California will continue to exist as an island in the

---

79 Survey Response, Alma Brinlee to Charles L. Todd, August 1978, Dust Bowl Migration Archive.


82 Ibid.

83 Ibid., 251.
American imagination—a land filled with hope.

Kayla Unger is a senior History and English double major, with an emphasis in United States history. The research for this paper stems from a long-time interest in California and the stories that it inspires. Kayla would like to thank Professor Robert Senkewicz for his assistance and support throughout the research and writing process (in addition to the push to become a History major).

American imagination—a land filled with hope.

Kayla Unger is a senior History and English double major, with an emphasis in United States history. The research for this paper stems from a long-time interest in California and the stories that it inspires. Kayla would like to thank Professor Robert Senkewicz for his assistance and support throughout the research and writing process (in addition to the push to become a History major).
FIGURE 2


FIGURE 3

FIGURE 2

N. Currier, *California Gold*, 1850,
in Peter J. Blodgett, *Land of Golden Dreams*  
(San Marino: Huntington Library, 1999), 31.

FIGURE 3

Alonzo Delano, *The Idle and Industrious Miner*, 1854,  
in Peter J. Blodgett, *Land of Golden Dreams*  
(San Marino: Huntington Library, 1999), 31.


Silenzio: The Effects of World War II Policy on Italian-American Identity

Luca Signore

Martini Battistessa had lived in Richmond, California for 20 years. On a chilly February evening in 1942, he calmly walked into a local bar and offered a friend fifty dollars to shoot him in the head. The friend laughed at him and Battistessa left. Battistessa’s naturalization request had been denied: he was now classified as an enemy alien to the United States and would have to abandon his house. He walked to the nearby railroad tracks. The conductor of the south-bound train felt a harsh judder, and then silence.¹

In the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 600,000 Italian-Americans were branded as enemy aliens.² For many, like Martini Battistessa, the stigma of being labeled as such was too much to bear. The remaining Italian-Americans would later be forced to register as enemy aliens, and carry with them an identifying pink booklet. They were required to forfeit contraband items such as shortwave radios and firearms. They were subjected to a dusk-to-dawn curfew in certain areas. Ten thousand were forced to leave their homes based on being located in strategic military zones. Finally, “257 of those deemed most dangerous were then interned for the duration of the war.”³

The internment of Italian-Americans in the Second World War is a subject that is often overlooked or barely mentioned by World War II scholars. Perhaps this is due, in part, to the staunch difference between the number of Italian-Americans and Japanese-Americans that were interned. Despite this quantitative disparity, the treatment of Italian-Americans during this time exemplifies a period which forced them to believe “that if the penalty they have incurred is not for something they have done, then it must be due to what they are.”⁴ Thus, the Italian-American internment is both a footnote and a tragedy.

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this work is to add a voice to the limited historiography of the Italian-American internment. The majority of the works that discuss the Italian-American internment characterize it through a comparison to the Japanese internment.⁵ While statistics of the Japanese internment are essential in providing context for the Italian-American experience, this story deserves attention as a separate entity, for the reason that, at the time of their evacuation, relocation, and internment, over five million people of Italian

---

*Silenzio*: The Effects of World War II Policy on Italian-American Identity

Luca Signore

Martini Battistessa had lived in Richmond, California for 20 years. On a chilly February evening in 1942, he calmly walked into a local bar and offered a friend fifty dollars to shoot him in the head. The friend laughed at him and Battistessa left. Battistessa’s naturalization request had been denied: he was now classified as an enemy alien to the United States and would have to abandon his house. He walked to the nearby railroad tracks. The conductor of the southbound train felt a harsh judder, and then silence.¹

In the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 600,000 Italian-Americans were branded as enemy aliens.² For many, like Martini Battistessa, the stigma of being labeled as such was too much to bear. The remaining Italian-Americans would later be forced to register as enemy aliens, and carry with them an identifying pink booklet. They were required to forfeit contraband items such as shortwave radios and firearms. They were subjected to a dusk-to-dawn curfew in certain areas. Ten thousand were forced to leave their homes based on being located in strategic military zones. Finally, “257 of those deemed most dangerous were then interned for the duration of the war.”³

The internment of Italian-Americans in the Second World War is a subject that is often overlooked or barely mentioned by World War II scholars. Perhaps this is due, in part, to the staunch difference between the number of Italian-Americans and Japanese-Americans that were interned. Despite this quantitative disparity, the treatment of Italian-Americans during this time exemplifies a period which forced them to believe “that if the penalty they have incurred is not for something they have done, then it must be due to what they are.”⁴ Thus, the Italian-American internment is both a footnote and a tragedy.

**Purpose and Background**

The purpose of this work is to add a voice to the limited historiography of the Italian-American internment. The majority of the works that discuss the Italian-American internment characterize it through a comparison to the Japanese internment.⁵ While statistics of the Japanese internment are essential in providing context for the Italian-American experience, this story deserves attention as a separate entity, for the reason that, at the time of their evacuation, relocation, and internment, over five million people of Italian

---

descent were living in the United States. The Italian-American internment must be examined separately from the Japanese internment because their experiences and roles in the United States at the time were vastly different. In truth, the similarities between the Italian-American and Japanese internment end at the word “internment.” It would be both inaccurate and insensitive to suggest that the suffering of interned Italian-Americans was on the same scale as that of the Japanese. Despite this, both of these groups had their basic human freedoms revoked by the country to which they had pledged allegiance. Many of the Italian-Americans who lived this dark story are no longer alive. However, through the study of their lives their voice can still be heard. The aim of this paper is to highlight the unique circumstances which led to the way the Italian-American internment was carried out. The importance of the Italian-American internment lies not in the numbers, but rather in its role in shaping Italian-American identity.

Because the U.S. is my country,” and yet he was detained for several months in 1942. The internment, and the stigma which it begot, resulted in many individuals severing their ties with Italy. The Italian-American internment is still relevant today because of its role in shaping Italian-American identity.

Possibly the most important factor to consider in the analysis of the Second World War’s effect on Italian-American identity is assimilation. James A. Crispino defines three forms of assimilation: Anglo-Conformity, Melting Pot, and Cultural Pluralism. According to Crispino, the three forms of assimilation blend into each other, in the aforementioned order, to form the “straight-line theory,” which he claims is upheld in the case of Italian-Americans. Crispino based his analysis of assimilation on seven measures of assimilation: Cultural, Structural, Marital, Identification, Attitude Receptional, Behavior Receptional, and Civic. Crispino’s claim that Italian-American assimilation upholds the straight-line theory fails to incorporate the Italian-American internment as a motivating factor. The straight-line theory may apply to Italian-Americans living outside of the West Coast, regardless, California and its neighboring states were affected to the greatest extent, from an ethnic standpoint, because of the war.

Assimilation, for Italian-Americans, cannot be

_____

8 Ibid, XVI.
10 Crispino, The Assimilation of Ethnic, V.
11 Crispino, The Assimilation of Ethnic, 33-34.
descent were living in the United States.\textsuperscript{6}

The Italian-American internment must be examined separately from the Japanese internment because their experiences and roles in the United States at the time were vastly different. In truth, the similarities between the Italian-American and Japanese internment end at the word “internment.” It would be both inaccurate and insensitive to suggest that the suffering of interned Italian-Americans was on the same scale as that of the Japanese. Despite this, both of these groups had their basic human freedoms revoked by the country to which they had pledged allegiance. Many of the Italian-Americans who lived this dark story are no longer alive. However, through the study of their lives their voice can still be heard. The aim of this paper is to highlight the unique circumstances which led to the way the Italian-American internment was carried out. The importance of the Italian-American internment lies not in the numbers, but rather in its role in shaping Italian-American identity. Prior to the war, many Italian immigrants considered themselves “dual” citizens. Joe Cervetto, when questioned on whether he preferred Italy or the United States said, “You have a mother, and you have a wife. You love both of them, different love. You cannot go in bed with your mother, but love your mother, and you love your wife. You can’t say I want one to love or the other. It’s the same thing like your country.”\textsuperscript{7} Cervetto went on to say, “I said I would never go against the United States. Because the U.S. is my country,” and yet he was detained for several months in 1942.\textsuperscript{8} The internment, and the stigma which it begot, resulted in many individuals severing their ties with Italy. The Italian-American internment is still relevant today because of its role in shaping Italian-American identity.

Possibly the most important factor to consider in the analysis of the Second World War’s effect on Italian-American identity is assimilation. James A. Crispino defines three forms of assimilation: Anglo-Conformity, Melting Pot, and Cultural Pluralism.\textsuperscript{9} According to Crispino, the three forms of assimilation blend into each other, in the aforementioned order, to form the “straight-line theory,” which he claims is upheld in the case of Italian-Americans.\textsuperscript{10} Crispino based his analysis of assimilation on seven measures of assimilation: Cultural, Structural, Marital, Identification, Attitude Receptional, Behavior Receptional, and Civic.\textsuperscript{11} Crispino’s claim that Italian-American assimilation upholds the straight-line theory fails to incorporate the Italian-American internment as a motivating factor.\textsuperscript{12} The straight-line theory may apply to Italian-Americans living outside of the West Coast, regardless, California and its neighboring states were affected to the greatest extent, from an ethnic standpoint, because of the war.

Assimilation, for Italian-Americans, cannot be

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{7} DiStasi, “One Voice at a Time,” introduction to \textit{Una Storia Segreta: The Secret}, XVI.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid, XVI.
\textsuperscript{9} James A. Crispino, \textit{The Assimilation of Ethnic Groups: The Italian Case}(Staten Island, NY: The Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1980), V.
\textsuperscript{10} Crispino, \textit{The Assimilation of Ethnic}, V.
\textsuperscript{11} Crispino, \textit{The Assimilation of Ethnic}, 33-34.
\textsuperscript{12} Crispino, \textit{The Assimilation of Ethnic}, 99.
\end{flushright}
approached in the same manner as that of other white European groups. Italian-Americans, even before World War II, were not considered to be “white.” Instead, Italian-Americans pertained to “a rather precarious racial middle ground between African-Americans and whites.” Thus, analysis of racial tensions during World War II often excludes Italian-Americans. In this paper, assimilation will be considered using two different approaches. First, a de jure analysis will examine the context in which economic and political acceptance is evaluated, and, secondly, a de facto approach will place Italian-American identity on the spectrum of whiteness.

The Italian-American Experience Prior to World War II

In order to better understand the context of the Italian-American internment, it is imperative that one examines the experiences of Italian immigrants prior to the war. Italians accounted for an enormous percentage of the United States’ immigrant population. Over two million emigrated from Italy between 1924 and the outbreak of war. However, it is important to note that only 28 percent of Italian immigrants in the United States were naturalized by 1920. Three-fourths and two-thirds, respectively, of German and English immigrants were naturalized by this time. Thus, the Italian immigrant population was “the least assimilated numerically.” This statistic suggests that Italian immigrants were reluctant to “cast off all vestiges of old-world culture” for the “speedy adoption of American citizenship.” The fact that Italian citizenship is handed down through jus sanguinis – the acquirement of citizenship based on your heritage, not your place of birth – provides a possible explanation for this phenomenon. The Italian government included a page of instructions with its passports which stated: “The immigrant should never abandon his feeling of the value of being an Italian.” This document outlined the expectation that Italian immigrants “transmit to your descendants the sacred flame of the love of the distant fatherland.” The Italian immigrant before the Second World War was then forced to decide between accepting the expectations of Italian citizenship and assimilating fully into American society. The fact that many Italian immigrants did successfully integrate into the American economy before the war suggests that they were not required to abandon their Italian citizenship and culture in order to live comfortably.

The story of Guido Branzini serves as an example for the relative prosperity of Italian immigrants prior

---

14 Ibid, 155.
18 Ibid, 4.
19 Ibid, 6.
21 Ibid, 133.
approached in the same manner as that of other white European groups. Italian-Americans, even before World War II, were not considered to be “white.” Instead, Italian-Americans pertained to “a rather precarious racial middle ground between African-Americans and whites.” Thus, analysis of racial tensions during World War II often excludes Italian-Americans. In this paper, assimilation will be considered using two different approaches. First, a de jure analysis will examine the context in which economic and political acceptance is evaluated, and, secondly, a de facto approach will place Italian-American identity on the spectrum of whiteness.

The Italian-American Experience Prior to World War II

In order to better understand the context of the Italian-American internment, it is imperative that one examines the experiences of Italian immigrants prior to the war. Italians accounted for an enormous percentage of the United States’ immigrant population. Over two million emigrated from Italy between 1924 and the outbreak of war. However, it is important to note that only 28 percent of Italian immigrants in the United States were naturalized by 1920. Three-fourths and two-thirds, respectively, of German and English immigrants were naturalized by this time. Thus, the Italian immigrant population was “the least assimilated numerically.” This statistic suggests that Italian immigrants were reluctant to “cast off all vestiges of old-world culture” for the “speedy adoption of American citizenship.” The fact that Italian citizenship is handed down through jus sanguinis – the acquirement of citizenship based on your heritage, not your place of birth – provides a possible explanation for this phenomenon. The Italian government included a page of instructions with its passports which stated: “The immigrant should never abandon his feeling of the value of being an Italian.” This document outlined the expectation that Italian immigrants “transmit to your descendants the sacred flame of the love of the distant fatherland.” The Italian immigrant before the Second World War was then forced to decide between accepting the expectations of Italian citizenship and assimilating fully into American society. The fact that many Italian immigrants did successfully integrate into the American economy before the war suggests that they were not required to abandon their Italian citizenship and culture in order to live comfortably.

The story of Guido Branzini serves as an example for the relative prosperity of Italian immigrants prior

\[\text{References}\]

14 Ibid, 155.
18 Ibid, 4.
19 Ibid, 6.
21 Ibid, 133.
the war. Branzini emigrated from Italy in 1923 in search of the American dream. He worked in a variety of agricultural jobs and saved enough money to return to Italy to marry his childhood sweetheart.\textsuperscript{23} The fact that he was able to earn the money necessary to make three trips between California and Italy in a span of a few years indicates that he had both the finances and time necessary for such travels. Upon his return to Italy he would declare “Io trovata l’America,” I’ve found America, to his family.\textsuperscript{24} The American dream was more of an ideal than a reality for the majority of immigrants during this time. Guido would earn enough money to buy a refrigerator, a gas stove, a new car for his family, and, eventually, to open his own produce market.\textsuperscript{25} Guido Branzini’s self-proclaimed attainment of the American dream illustrates the ability of some Italian immigrants to assimilate into American society.

Another example of Italian immigrant prosperity is found in the story of Italian fishermen living on the California coast. At the time, the West Coast fishing industry was one the largest in the world and provided food for the entire United States.\textsuperscript{26} Many Italian immigrants were fishermen before leaving Italy. Fortunately for them, the Californian coastline and climate resembles that of Italy and allowed a smooth transition into fishing in their new homes.\textsuperscript{27} They practiced a “variant of campanilismo” which dictated that immigrants from the same village live and work in close proximity.\textsuperscript{28} Crews on Italian immigrant fishing ships were often comprised of family members “to reduce friction and enhance the cooperation needed.”\textsuperscript{29} Thus, the immigrant Italian fishermen illustrate the reluctance of many to assimilate fully into American society and culture, while still integrating into the American economy.

An important distinction must be made between Italian immigrants in big East Coast cities and those on the West Coast. The Italian immigrants in the East were primarily farmers from the south of Italy.\textsuperscript{30} Those on the West Coast were also farmers and fishermen but significantly wealthier than those who went to the East Coast. This is evidenced by the fact that it cost around $120 to travel from New York to San Francisco in 1870, during the peak of Italian immigration to the United States.\textsuperscript{31} This amount, based on current inflation rates, is around $3500 today.\textsuperscript{32} A farmer from the South of Italy, where unification heavily favored the North economically, would not have been able to afford such a journey. One could argue that Italians who immigrated to the West Coast were, on average,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid, 32.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid, 33.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} Lawrence DiStasi, ”A Fish Story,” in \textit{Una Storia Segreta: The Secret}, 63.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} Andrew Rolle, \textit{The Italian Americans: Troubled Roots} (New York: The Free Press, 1980), 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} DiStasi, ”A Fish Story,” in \textit{Una Storia Segreta: The Secret}, 65.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Ibid, 65.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Rolle, \textit{The Italian Americans}, 4.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Ibid, 4.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} WolframAlpha, accessed March 19, 2014, http://www.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=%24120+1860+USD.
\end{itemize}
the war. Branzini emigrated from Italy in 1923 in search of the American dream. He worked in a variety of agricultural jobs and saved enough money to return to Italy to marry his childhood sweetheart.\(^{23}\) The fact that he was able to earn the money necessary to make three trips between California and Italy in a span of a few years indicates that he had both the finances and time necessary for such travels. Upon his return to Italy he would declare “io trovata l’America,” I’ve found America, to his family.\(^{24}\) The American dream was more of an ideal than a reality for the majority of immigrants during this time. Guido would earn enough money to buy a refrigerator, a gas stove, a new car for his family, and, eventually, to open his own produce market.\(^{25}\) Guido Branzini’s self-proclaimed attainment of the American dream illustrates the ability of some Italian immigrants to assimilate into American society.

Another example of Italian immigrant prosperity is found in the story of Italian fishermen living on the California coast. At the time, the West Coast fishing industry was one the largest in the world and provided food for the entire United States.\(^{26}\) Many Italian immigrants were fishermen before leaving Italy. Fortunately for them, the Californian coastline and climate resembles that of Italy and allowed a smooth transition into fishing in their new homes.\(^{27}\) They practiced a “variant of campanilismo” which dictated that immigrants from the same village live and work in close proximity.\(^{28}\) Crews on Italian immigrant fishing ships were often comprised of family members “to reduce friction and enhance the cooperation needed.”\(^{29}\) Thus, the immigrant Italian fishermen illustrate the reluctance of many to assimilate fully into American society and culture, while still integrating into the American economy.

An important distinction must be made between Italian immigrants in big East Coast cities and those on the West Coast. The Italian immigrants in the East were primarily farmers from the south of Italy.\(^{30}\) Those on the West Coast were also farmers and fishermen but significantly wealthier than those who went to the East Coast. This is evidenced by the fact that it cost around $120 to travel from New York to San Francisco in 1870, during the peak of Italian immigration to the United States.\(^{31}\) This amount, based on current inflation rates, is around $3500 today.\(^{32}\) A farmer from the South of Italy, where unification heavily favored the North economically, would not have been able to afford such a journey. One could argue that Italians who immigrated to the West Coast were, on average,

---


\(^{24}\) Ibid, 32.

\(^{25}\) Ibid, 33.


\(^{29}\) Ibid, 65.

\(^{30}\) Rolle, *The Italian Americans*, 4.

\(^{31}\) Ibid, 4.

more highly integrated into the American economy than those who ended up in large East Coast cities. For example, Andrea Sbaboro, an Italian banker, founded the Italian-Swiss Agricultural Colony, a wine-producer that would eventually supply half of California’s wine. Another Italian immigrant, Amadeo P. Giannini, founded Banca d’Italia, which later became Bank of America. An Italian immigrant support group founded in San Francisco raised $1,400 to aid fellow Italians in New York. Thus, the Italian immigrants on the West Coast, those which were most affected by relocation and internment, were integral to the local economy. This distinction is important because it is relevant to the discussion of whether Italian immigrants were “accepted” in the United States prior to the war.

**Italians and Other Immigrant Groups**

The Italian immigrants on the East Coast, from the first wave of immigration to the eve of World War II, were in constant strife with the Irish immigrants. The Irish came from the first large wave of immigrants to the United States, whereas the Italians primarily came in the second. The Irish were able to establish themselves as the top immigrant population in many of the East Coast’s large cities and conflicted with newer groups like the Italians. The West Coast Italians initially immigrated during the California Gold Rush in the late 1840s, which coincided with a large group of Chinese immigrants coming to California in search of gold. The Italian and Chinese immigrants, much like the East Coast Italians and the Irish, often clashed. Italian immigrants chided the Chinese for being illiterate and for not bringing their families with them to the United States. However, the illiteracy rate among the Chinese was a meager 7% compared to the 53.9% of Southern Italians living in San Francisco. Furthermore, the majority of Italian immigrants who came to California had left their families behind in search of the American dream. On the West Coast, the Chinese were discriminated against on a larger scale than Italian immigrants, and the aforementioned statistics suggest that this was mainly due to hypocritical racial prejudices. Thus, Italian immigrants occupied a more favorable position within the spectrum of whiteness.

---

34 Ibid, 73.
35 “Italian Immigration: Question Discussed by Italian Residents of This City,” *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), July 31, 1888.
37 Ibid, 23.
40 “Chinese vs. Italians,” *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), December 13, 1851.
42 Ibid 43.
more highly integrated into the American economy than those who ended up in large East Coast cities. For example, Andrea Sbaboro, an Italian banker, founded the Italian-Swiss Agricultural Colony, a wine-producer that would eventually supply half of California’s wine.\footnote{Humbert S. Nelli, From Immigrants to Ethnics: The Italian Americans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 74.} Another Italian immigrant, Amadeo P. Giannini, founded Banca d’Italia, which later became Bank of America.\footnote{Ibid, 73.} An Italian immigrant support group founded in San Francisco raised $1,400 to aid fellow Italians in New York.\footnote{“Italian Immigration: Question Discussed by Italian Residents of This City,” Evening Bulletin (San Francisco), July 31, 1888.} Thus, the Italian immigrants on the West Coast, those which were most affected by relocation and internment, were integral to the local economy. This distinction is important because it is relevant to the discussion of whether Italian immigrants were “accepted” in the United States prior to the war.

**Italians and Other Immigrant Groups**

The Italian immigrants on the East Coast, from the first wave of immigration to the eve of World War II, were in constant strife with the Irish immigrants.\footnote{Micaela di Leonardo, The Varieties of Ethnic Experience: Kinship, Class, and Gender among California Italian-Americans (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 55.} The Irish came from the first large wave of immigrants to the United States, whereas the Italians primarily came in the second. The Irish were able to establish themselves as the top immigrant population in many of the East Coast’s large cities and conflicted with newer groups like the Italians.\footnote{Rolle, The Italian Americans, 176.} The West Coast Italians initially immigrated during the California Gold Rush in the late 1840s, which coincided with a large group of Chinese immigrants coming to California in search of gold.\footnote{“Chinese vs. Italians,” Evening Bulletin (San Francisco), December 13, 1851.} The Italian and Chinese immigrants, much like the East Coast Italians and the Irish, often clashed.\footnote{Wendy Rouse Jorae, The Children of Chinatown: Growing Up Chinese American in San Francisco, 1850-1920 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 43.} Italian immigrants chided the Chinese for being illiterate and for not bringing their families with them to the United States.\footnote{Francis J. Brown and Joseph Slabye Roucek, eds. Our Racial and National Minorities: Their History, Contributions, and Present Problems (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1937), 358.} However, the illiteracy rate among the Chinese was a meager 7% compared to the 53.9% of Southern Italians living in San Francisco.\footnote{Jorae, The Children of Chinatown, 97.} Furthermore, the majority of Italian immigrants who came to California had left their families behind in search of the American dream.\footnote{Ibid 43.} On the West Coast, the Chinese were discriminated against on a larger scale than Italian immigrants, and the aforementioned statistics suggest that this was mainly due to hypocritical racial prejudices.\footnote{Ibid 23.} Thus, Italian immigrants occupied a more favorable position within the spectrum of whiteness.

\footnote{33 Humbert S. Nelli, From Immigrants to Ethnics: The Italian Americans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 74.} \footnote{34 Ibid, 73.} \footnote{35 “Italian Immigration: Question Discussed by Italian Residents of This City,” Evening Bulletin (San Francisco), July 31, 1888.} \footnote{36 Crispino, The Assimilation of Ethnic, 24.}
It soon became evident to Italian immigrants that they stood to benefit from discrimination against the Chinese. California’s Anthony Caminetti, one of the first Italian Americans elected to the House of Representatives, actively lobbied for Oriental exclusion. Gino Angeluzzi’s father, an Italian immigrant, remembered a boyhood game in San Francisco “of tying the long hair of Chinese people in a knot and running like hell!” This sense of racial superiority found among many West Coast Italian-Americans supports the notion of being able to attain whiteness through a shared dislike for Asian immigrant groups. The idea of Americanization through racism suggests that the adoption of racist stereotypes and language from the dominant culture may actually help transition into it. This practice is evident in the accounts of many Italian-Americans who spoke of the “Japs” as enemies. Many Italian-Americans refused to see the treatment of Japanese-Americans as a justifiable version of what was happening to them. However, the use of racial slurs and prejudices against the groups that were generally disliked in mainstream American culture allowed many Italian-Americans to become more “white” and, through an unusual transitivity, more American.

The stories of Guido Branzini and the Italian immigrant fishermen demonstrate two distinct versions of early Italian-American identity. For some Italian immigrants, such as Guido Branzini, the identities they assumed in the United States were characterized by public assimilation while maintaining Italian traditions in the private sphere. The fishermen, on the other hand, had no desire or urgency to assimilate into American society because they lived with, worked with, and married other Italian immigrants. Similarly, other Italian immigrants were not interested in obtaining citizenship because “Italians just stayed in their own little group” and “that’s all they needed.” Even though many Italian immigrants integrated into the United States, whether economically, socially, or culturally, this was not viewed as a strong reason for obtaining citizenship. Thus, the Italian immigrant before World War II was unlikely to apply for citizenship due to his loyalty to Italy and a lack of incentive to do so. This, then, illustrates Italian-American identity prior to the war as being plural in the sense that Italian immigrants either could not, or refused to, recognize the possibility of having to choose between Italy and the United States. Or, in the words of Joe Cervetto, picking between their mother and their wife. However, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066 they would be forced to do exactly this.

---

45 Rolle, The Italian Americans, 72.
46 Ibid, 72.
49 Mary Tolomei, interview, in The Unknown Internment: An Oral, 98.
It soon became evident to Italian immigrants that they stood to benefit from discrimination against the Chinese. California’s Anthony Caminetti, one of the first Italian Americans elected to the House of Representatives, actively lobbied for Oriental exclusion. Gino Angeluzzi’s father, an Italian immigrant, remembered a boyhood game in San Francisco “of tying the long hair of Chinese people in a knot and running like hell!” This sense of racial superiority found among many West Coast Italian-Americans supports the notion of being able to attain whiteness through a shared dislike for Asian immigrant groups. The idea of Americanization through racism suggests that the adoption of racist stereotypes and language from the dominant culture may actually help transition into it. This practice is evident in the accounts of many Italian-Americans who spoke of the “Japs” as enemies. Many Italian-Americans refused to see the treatment of Japanese-Americans as a justifiable version of what was happening to them. However, the use of racial slurs and prejudices against the groups that were generally disliked in mainstream American culture allowed many Italian-Americans to become more “white” and, through an unusual transitivity, more American.

The stories of Guido Branzini and the Italian immigrant fishermen demonstrate two distinct versions of early Italian-American identity. For some Italian immigrants, such as Guido Branzini, the identities they assumed in the United States were characterized by public assimilation while maintaining Italian traditions in the private sphere. The fishermen, on the other hand, had no desire or urgency to assimilate into American society because they lived with, worked with, and married other Italian immigrants. Similarly, other Italian immigrants were not interested in obtaining citizenship because “Italians just stayed in their own little group” and “that’s all they needed.” Even though many Italian immigrants integrated into the United States, whether economically, socially, or culturally, this was not viewed as a strong reason for obtaining citizenship. Thus, the Italian immigrant before World War II was unlikely to apply for citizenship due to his loyalty to Italy and a lack of incentive to do so. This, then, illustrates Italian-American identity prior to the war as being plural in the sense that Italian immigrants either could not, or refused to, recognize the possibility of having to choose between Italy and the United States. Or, in the words of Joe Cervetto, picking between their mother and their wife. However, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066 they would be forced to do exactly this.

---

45 Rolle, *The Italian Americans*, 72.
46 Ibid, 72.
47 Vecoli, “Italian Americans and Race,” in *Merica*, 100.
49 Mary Tolomei, interview, in *The Unknown Internment: An Oral*, 98.
Outbreak of War and Italian Detainment

Executive Order No. 9066 was signed on February 19, 1942 by President Roosevelt as a result of mounting public pressure to act. This pressure stemmed from the paranoia that came after the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor. How could Americans feel safe if one of the biggest naval ports could be decimated without warning? This newfound sense of vulnerability would result in a widespread distrust of immigrants who originated from the Axis countries. In fact, a total of 267 Italians were arrested in the United States before the day that Executive Order No. 9066 was signed.

From the minute news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor hit the rest of the United States, people began to put pressure on the government to act. The first step that the government took was “issuing the orders for summary apprehension of German, Italian, and Japanese aliens determined...to be dangerous to the public peace and safety of the United States,” on January 7th, 1941. The United States government justified this action under Section 21, Title 50 of the U.S. Code, containing the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. The Alien Enemies Act defined an enemy alien as “a person who is a citizen, a subject, an alien, or a denizen of a nation that is at war with the United States.” This order was carried out under the super-

vision of Edward Ennis, who was Director of the Enemy Alien Control Unit of the Justice Department. On the first day, 77 Italians were arrested. By December 10th, 147 Italians were in custody. 25 of the Italians were interned.

The next step of the U.S. government’s plan on the West Coast was undertaken by Attorney General Francis Biddle. Biddle extended the reach of enemy alien regulation on January 14, 1942, when he announced that each enemy alien over the age of fourteen must be issued identification cards including a picture, fingerprints, and a signature. This requirement came into effect on February 2, 1942. The registration of enemy aliens in Los Angeles had to be extended by two days because over 6,800 people showed up on the first day. Finally, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066, which legitimized the arrest, detainment, relocation, and internment of enemy aliens in Military District One. The man responsible for the defense and safety of the district was Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt. General DeWitt would prove to be relentless and brutal in his prosecution of enemy aliens. General DeWitt’s “single-minded concern about enemy aliens” was a result of deep-rooted belief in fifth columnists - potential internal saboteurs - among the enemy alien population.

The signing of Executive Order No. 9066 would prove to be the culmination of both government and public pressure. Various organizations voiced their opinions

53 Fox, The Unknown Internment: An Oral, 41.
56 Ibid, 7.
57 Ibid, 8.
58 Ibid, 8.
59 Ibid, 10.
60 Ibid, 12.
Outbreak of War and Italian Detainment

Executive Order No. 9066 was signed on February 19, 1942 by President Roosevelt as a result of mounting public pressure to act. This pressure stemmed from the paranoia that came after the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor. How could Americans feel safe if one of the biggest naval ports could be decimated without warning? This newfound sense of vulnerability would result in a widespread distrust of immigrants who originated from the Axis countries. In fact, a total of 267 Italians were arrested in the United States before the day that Executive Order No. 9066 was signed.

From the minute news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor hit the rest of the United States, people began to put pressure on the government to act. The first step that the government took was “issuing the orders for summary apprehension of German, Italian, and Japanese aliens determined...to be dangerous to the public peace and safety of the United States,” on January 7th, 1941. The United States government justified this action under Section 21, Title 50 of the U.S. Code, containing the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. The Alien Enemies Act defined an enemy alien as “a person who is a citizen, a subject, an alien, or a denizen of a nation that is at war with the United States.” This order was carried out under the supervision of Edward Ennis, who was Director of the Enemy Alien Control Unit of the Justice Department. On the first day, 77 Italians were arrested. By December 10th, 147 Italians were in custody. 25 of the Italians were interned.

The next step of the U.S. government’s plan on the West Coast was undertaken by Attorney General Francis Biddle. Biddle extended the reach of enemy alien regulation on January 14, 1942, when he announced that each enemy alien over the age of fourteen must be issued identification cards including a picture, fingerprints, and a signature. This requirement came into effect on February 2, 1942. The registration of enemy aliens in Los Angeles had to be extended by two days because over 6,800 people showed up on the first day. Finally, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066, which legitimized the arrest, detainment, relocation, and internment of enemy aliens in Military District One. The man responsible for the defense and safety of the district was Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt. General DeWitt would prove to be relentless and brutal in his prosecution of enemy aliens. General DeWitt’s “single-minded concern about enemy aliens” was a result of deep-rooted belief in fifth columnists - potential internal saboteurs - among the enemy alien population.

The signing of Executive Order No. 9066 would prove to be the culmination of both government and public pressure. Various organizations voiced their opinions...

---

56 Ibid, 7.
57 Ibid, 8.
58 Ibid, 8.
59 Ibid, 10.
60 Ibid, 12.
and urged the government to take action. The Native Sons of the Golden West called for the arrest and internment of all enemy aliens on the West Coast. The Young Democratic Club of Los Angeles also favored the relocation of Germans and Italians born in the United States. Opposite to those who favored either relocation or internment for Italian enemy aliens were those who saw the Italians as friends. A *New York Times* article from October 13, 1942, urged Americans to realize that the Italians in the United States do not represent Mussolini, but rather Mazzini and Garibaldi. Furthermore, the piece supported the removal of literacy tests for citizenship applications in order to facilitate the process for Italian aliens. Despite this and other forms of opposition to the detainment, relocation, and internment of enemy aliens, Executive Order No. 9066 began a large-scale process of arresting, detaining, and, in some cases, interning Italian enemy aliens.

It is important to note that what the *Los Angeles Times* called a “great manhunt” for enemy aliens began long before the signing of Executive Order 9066. As early as 1939, when war erupted in Europe, the Federal Bureau of Investigation began tracking those who voiced pro-Axis or pro-fascist beliefs. Even before the order to arrest enemy aliens, the FBI intercepted their mail. The mail seized by the FBI was generally benign and posed no threat to national security. One woman’s letter was investigated because she told the recipient that she enjoyed the blue skies she saw from her terrace because they reminded her of Italy. Another letter between an Italian-American soldier and his family was seized despite it mostly containing advice from the subject’s father about avoiding “diseased” women in foreign ports. While these letters highlight the harmless nature of many of the seized documents, they also exemplify the government’s paranoia about potential “fifth columnists.”

In some cases, this paranoia was justified. The FBI seized a letter from O. Scalise to Ruggero Santini which contained phrases such as “Our dear, good Italy,” “The orderly regime of Fascism,” and “Our beloved Duce.” A woman wrote to her friend about how she “can still feel the thrill” after shaking Mussolini’s hand. Another letter expressed anti-Semitic remarks such as “The Hebrews must all have their throats cut! Even Christ if He returns to life,” and that the “Crazy Criminal in Washington” will use the Jews to “harm the Axis.” Many of those who wrote letters such as these were eventually detained and questioned by the FBI.

The FBI compiled a list of enemy aliens deemed dangerous to the United States. This list was given to

---

61 Ibid, 12.
67 Ibid
Silenzio

and urged the government to take action. The Native Sons of the Golden West called for the arrest and internment of all enemy aliens on the West Coast. The Young Democratic Club of Los Angeles also favored the relocation of Germans and Italians born in the United States. Opposite to those who favored either relocation or internment for Italian enemy aliens were those who saw the Italians as friends. A *New York Times* article from October 13, 1942, urged Americans to realize that the Italians in the United States do not represent Mussolini, but rather Mazzini and Garibaldi. Furthermore, the piece supported the removal of literacy tests for citizenship applications in order to facilitate the process for Italian aliens. Despite this and other forms of opposition to the detainment, relocation, and internment of enemy aliens, Executive Order No. 9066 began a large-scale process of arresting, detaining, and, in some cases, interning Italian enemy aliens.

It is important to note that what the *Los Angeles Times* called a “great manhunt” for enemy aliens began long before the signing of Executive Order 9066. As early as 1939, when war erupted in Europe, the Federal Bureau of Investigation began tracking those who voiced pro-Axis or pro-fascist beliefs. Even before the order to arrest enemy aliens, the FBI intercepted their mail. The mail seized by the FBI was generally benign and posed no threat to national security. One woman’s letter was investigated because she told the recipient that she enjoyed the blue skies she saw from her terrace because they reminded her of Italy. Another letter between an Italian-American soldier and his family was seized despite it mostly containing advice from the subject’s father about avoiding “diseased” women in foreign ports. While these letters highlight the harmless nature of many of the seized documents, they also exemplify the government’s paranoia about potential “fifth columnists.”

In some cases, this paranoia was justified. The FBI seized a letter from O. Scalise to Ruggero Santini which contained phrases such as “Our dear, good Italy,” “The orderly regime of Fascism,” and “Our beloved Duce.” A woman wrote to her friend about how she “can still feel the thrill” after shaking Mussolini’s hand. Another letter expressed anti-Semitic remarks such as “The Hebrews must all have their throats cut! Even Christ if He returns to life,” and that the “Crazy Criminal in Washington” will use the Jews to “harm the Axis.” Many of those who wrote letters such as these were eventually detained and questioned by the FBI.

The FBI compiled a list of enemy aliens deemed dangerous to the United States. This list was given to

---

61 Ibid, 12.
67 Ibid
federal agents around the country with orders to arrest, detain, and question the enemy aliens. Those placed on the list were given different ratings according to their perceived danger to the United States. Those who were deemed most dangerous were given a rating of “A.” Those the government deemed not as dangerous but worthy of surveillance were given a rating of “B.” Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Proclamation 2527, which declared that “an invasion or predatory incursion is threatened upon the territory of the United States by Italy.” The Executive Order 9066 gave the U.S. government the ability to intern anyone they deemed dangerous – both enemy aliens and citizens. The arrest of over 1,500 Italian resident aliens was carried out for the duration of their classification as enemy aliens. The reasons for the arrests range from reasonable – within the context of the war – to completely ludicrous. Those who were arrested were usually detained at either the Sharp Park INS detention center near San Francisco, or at Terminal Island near Los Angeles. They were often never told of the reasoning behind their arrest, except that there was a presidential warrant for it. They were then detained at one of the centers for multiple days while they awaited trial, or they were shipped off to internment camps. Filippo

Molinari, the sales representative for L’Italia in San Jose, was arrested without explanation and sent to the Missoula internment camp still in his pajamas and slippers. The detainment and questioning of Italian-Americans during this time is especially pertinent to the wider discussion of its effect on identity because it reveals the contrasting natures of the American and Italian notions of citizenship. Specifically, it demonstrates America’s expectation that enemy aliens completely sever ties with their country of origin as an act of loyalty. Many Italian-Americans found themselves in this dilemma, often having to decide between their homeland and adopted home. In order to fully understand the implications of such a dilemma it is important to consider what it meant to be Italian at the time. The Italian government, unlike the American one, did not take issue with its citizens assuming another country’s nationality. Importance was placed on cultural ties – including language, history, and geography – rather than legal ties. Furthermore, the Italian government viewed the immigration of its citizens to other nations as a way of exporting a “world-extensive and strong Italy.” This is especially relevant to the issue at hand when one considers the arrests of Italian-Americans for maintaining connections with Italy.

Pietro Perata was arrested for allegedly having “made statements detrimental to the best interests of the U.S.” Perata stated that he “favored the U.S. in this

---

72 Ibid, 3.
75 Ibid, 13.
77 Ibid, 8.
federal agents around the country with orders to arrest, detain, and question the enemy aliens. Those placed on the list were given different ratings according to their perceived danger to the United States. Those who were deemed most dangerous were given a rating of “A.” Those the government deemed not as dangerous but worthy of surveillance were given a rating of “B.” Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Proclamation 2527, which declared that “an invasion or predatory incursion is threatened upon the territory of the United States by Italy.” The Executive Order 9066 gave the U.S. government the ability to intern anyone they deemed dangerous – both enemy aliens and citizens. The arrest of over 1,500 Italian resident aliens was carried out for the duration of their classification as enemy aliens. The reasons for the arrests range from reasonable – within the context of the war – to completely ludicrous. Those who were arrested were usually detained at either the Sharp Park INS detention center near San Francisco, or at Terminal Island near Los Angeles. They were often never told of the reasoning behind their arrest, except that there was a presidential warrant for it. They were then detained at one of the centers for multiple days while they awaited trial, or they were shipped off to internment camps. Filippo Molinari, the sales representative for L’Italia in San Jose, was arrested without explanation and sent to the Missoula internment camp still in his pajamas and slippers.

The detainment and questioning of Italian-Americans during this time is especially pertinent to the wider discussion of its effect on identity because it reveals the contrasting natures of the American and Italian notions of citizenship. Specifically, it demonstrates America’s expectation that enemy aliens completely sever ties with their country of origin as an act of loyalty. Many Italian-Americans found themselves in this dilemma, often having to decide between their homeland and adopted home. In order to fully understand the implications of such a dilemma it is important to consider what it meant to be Italian at the time. The Italian government, unlike the American one, did not take issue with its citizens assuming another country’s nationality. Importance was placed on cultural ties – including language, history, and geography – rather than legal ties. Furthermore, the Italian government viewed the immigration of its citizens to other nations as a way of exporting a “world-extensive and strong Italy.” This is especially relevant to the issue at hand when one considers the arrests of Italian-Americans for maintaining connections with Italy.

Pietro Perata was arrested for allegedly having “made statements detrimental to the best interests of the U.S.” Perata stated that he “favored the U.S. in this

72 Ibid, 3.
73 Lothrop, ”The Untold Story: The Effect,” 13.
75 Ibid, 13.
77 Ibid, 8.
war” but that “he still did not want to see Italy lose because that was his homeland. Perata was given a rating of “A” and detained. Angelo Fanucchi was given an “A” rating because he spent three years in the Italian Army. The report also highlighted the fact that he had a sister living Italy, though he had not corresponded with or sent money to Italy for several years. Fanucchi had even professed his loyalty to the United Stated and offered to assist the war effort. The United States issued an Executive Subpoena for his arrest. Giuseppe Peppino Lepore, when questioned, “affirmed loyalty to U.S. and stated he was not in favor of the Fascist government.” Lepore sent $15 to $20 per month to Italy to support his two sons. This led the FBI to report that Lepore “is greatly concerned over his children’s welfare and therefore might be sympathetic towards the Italian cause.” Lepore was given a rating of “A” and detained. Louis Berizzi told the hearing board that he “believed in democratic principles and did not believe in Fascism.” However, he also expressed concern for his family, saying that he “did not like the idea of having [his] mother bombed.” The board interpreted Berizzi’s statement to mean that he did not want Italy, his so-called “mother,” bombed. Berizzi was interned.

Impact of Wartime Policy on Italian-Americans

In essence, the United States government was asking many Italian-Americans to not only cut their ties with their origins, but also with their family – the most important entity in traditional Italian culture. Mr. Bertaldo, an Italian living Oklahoma City, was required to “assure agents that neither he nor his wife had any relatives in Italy and they had not received any correspondence from there for several years.” For Giuseppe di Prima, the war forced him to pick between two different families. Di Prima, fearing the outbreak of war between the United States and Italy, opted to return to Italy “rather than risk the American draft and the possibility of having to fight against relatives in Italy.” He brought his immediate family with him but was forced to leave behind his sister and his nephews. Di Prima referred to this event as his family being “divided.” The outbreak of the war, and the subsequent regulation of enemy aliens, was especially damaging to Italian-American identity because it often affected familial ties, one of the important – if not the most important – tenets of Italian culture.

The FBI decided the fate of the Italians who were interviewed based on their perception of how dangerous they could be to the United States’ war effort. The majority of those interviewed by the FBI were

---

83 Ibid, 9.
84 Ibid, 9.
war” but that “he still did not want to see Italy lose because that was his homeland. Perata was given a rating of “A” and detained. Angelo Fanucchi was given an “A” rating because he spent three years in the Italian Army. The report also highlighted the fact that he had a sister living Italy, though he had not corresponded with or sent money to Italy for several years. Fanucchi had even professed his loyalty to the United Stated and offered to assist the war effort. The United States issued an Executive Subpoena for his arrest. Giuseppe Peppino Lepore, when questioned, “affirmed loyalty to U.S. and stated he was not in favor of the Fascist government.” Lepore sent $15 to $20 per month to Italy to support his two sons. This led the FBI to report that Lepore “is greatly concerned over his children’s welfare and therefore might be sympathetic towards the Italian cause.” Lepore was given a rating of “A” and detained. Louis Berizzi told the hearing board that he “believed in democratic principles and did not believe in Fascism.” However, he also expressed concern for his family, saying that he “did not like the idea of having [his] mother bombed.” The board interpreted Berizzi’s statement to mean that he did not want Italy, his so-called “mother,” bombed. Berizzi was interned.

Impact of Wartime Policy on Italian-Americans

In essence, the United States government was asking many Italian-Americans to not only cut their ties with their origins, but also with their family – the most important entity in traditional Italian culture. Mr. Bertaldo, an Italian living Oklahoma City, was required to “assure agents that neither he nor his wife had any relatives in Italy and they had not received any correspondence from there for several years.” For Giuseppe di Prima, the war forced him to pick between two different families. Di Prima, fearing the outbreak of war between the United States and Italy, opted to return to Italy “rather than risk the American draft and the possibility of having to fight against relatives in Italy.” He brought his immediate family with him but was forced to leave behind his sister and his nephews. Di Prima referred to this event as his family being “divided.” The outbreak of the war, and the subsequent regulation of enemy aliens, was especially damaging to Italian-American identity because it often affected familial ties, one of the important – if not the most important – tenets of Italian culture.

The FBI decided the fate of the Italians who were interviewed based on their perception of how dangerous they could be to the United States’ war effort. The majority of those interviewed by the FBI were

---

83 Ibid, 9.
84 Ibid, 9.
initially given an “A” rating but either unconditionally released or paroled. The phrase “USA declined prosecution” appears as the final sentence in these reports.\(^8\) The government’s reluctance to prosecute Italians on a large scale shows that many Italian-Americans were impacted by the wartime policy, though a relatively small portion was interned. Additionally, an analysis of why the majority of Italian-Americans were not interned elucidates the role of the United States’ enemy exclusion policy in shaping Italian-American identity.

The Italians who were not interned, but who were unable to obtain American citizenship, were forced to relocate away from military zones.\(^8\) For many, the exclusion forced them to move from their homes. Celestina Stagnaro Loero, a seventy-six year-old, 4-foot-10, 140 pound woman, was forced to move from her house on the Santa Cruz coast. She had lived in that same house for forty-one years and raised two sons there, both of whom were enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Furthermore, the Stagnaro family was a prominent fishing family who had strong connections to the Monterey Bay. Loero moved herself and all of her belongings to a house inland off Highway 1 within forty-eight hours.\(^8\) Gervasio Comelli was also classified as an enemy alien during the war. He, unlike Loero, lived far enough away from Santa Cruz to avoid relocation. However, his farm was located within the restricted zone west of Highway 1. He was unable to work his farm and forced to find a job in a tannery instead.\(^8\) Another Italian had an estate with a winery in Arcata, California. When he was forced to leave his home he lost not only his house, but also his livelihood.\(^9\)

The stories of these people highlight perhaps the greatest paradox of the Italian-American internment: those who were interned often suffered less from an economic standpoint than those who were forced to relocate. Obviously, those interned were denied the very freedom on which America was founded. That being said, Italians in the internment camps sometimes earned more money through menial tasks, such as ironing and folding clothes, than they did in their civilian jobs.\(^9\) On the other hand, twenty percent of the Italians employed by the half-million-dollar-a-year San Francisco fishing industry were forced to leave their jobs because they worked in a restricted zone.\(^9\) Ironically, the economic hardship faced by Italian-Americans during the war hurt the United States economy equally and eventually influenced the decision not to relocate and intern Italian-Americans to the same extent as the Japanese.\(^9\) Japanese-Americans accounted for only one percent of the Pacific states’ population and primarily worked in the agricultural sector. The Italian community was active in various

\(^9\) Ibid, 103.
\(^9\) Ibid, 103.
\(^9\) Ibid, 102.
initially given an “A” rating but either unconditionally released or paroled. The phrase “USA declined prosecution” appears as the final sentence in these reports.\textsuperscript{86} The government’s reluctance to prosecute Italians on a large scale shows that many Italian-Americans were impacted by the wartime policy, though a relatively small portion was interned. Additionally, an analysis of why the majority of Italian-Americans were not interned elucidates the role of the United States’ enemy exclusion policy in shaping Italian-American identity.

The Italians who were not interned, but who were unable to obtain American citizenship, were forced to relocate away from military zones.\textsuperscript{87} For many, the exclusion forced them to move from their homes. Celestina Stagnaro Loero, a seventy-six year-old, 4-foot-10, 140 pound woman, was forced to move from her house on the Santa Cruz coast. She had lived in that same house for forty-one years and raised two sons there, both of whom were enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Furthermore, the Stagnaro family was a prominent fishing family who had strong connections to the Monterey Bay. Loero moved herself and all of her belongings to a house inland off Highway 1 within forty-eight hours.\textsuperscript{88} Gervasio Comelli was also classified as an enemy alien during the war. He, unlike Loero, lived far enough away from Santa Cruz to avoid relocation. However, his farm was located within the restricted zone west of Highway 1. He was unable to work his farm and forced to find a job in a tannery instead.\textsuperscript{89} Another Italian had an estate with a winery in Arcata, California. When he was forced to leave his home he lost not only his house, but also his livelihood.\textsuperscript{90}

The stories of these people highlight perhaps the greatest paradox of the Italian-American internment: those who were interned often suffered less from an economic standpoint than those who were forced to relocate. Obviously, those interned were denied the very freedom on which America was founded. That being said, Italians in the internment camps sometimes earned more money through menial tasks, such as ironing and folding clothes, than they did in their civilian jobs.\textsuperscript{91} On the other hand, twenty percent of the Italians employed by the half-million-dollar-a-year San Francisco fishing industry were forced to leave their jobs because they worked in a restricted zone.\textsuperscript{92} Ironically, the economic hardship faced by Italian-Americans during the war hurt the United States economy equally and eventually influenced the decision not to relocate and intern Italian-Americans to same extent as the Japanese.\textsuperscript{93} Japanese-Americans accounted for only one percent of the Pacific states’ population and primarily worked in the agricultural sector. The Italian community was active in various

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid, 103.
\textsuperscript{90} Lily Boemker, interview, in *The Unknown Internment: An Oral*, 78.
\textsuperscript{91} Marino Sichi, interview, in *The Unknown Internment: An Oral*, 96.
\textsuperscript{92} Fox, *The Unknown Internment: An Oral*, 68.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, 102.
sectors of the economy, and evacuation policies for them would “have direct Nation-wide import” and hinder the United States’ war effort.\textsuperscript{94}

The experience of the 257 Italians who were interned illustrates the controversial nature of the United States’ internment policy. Internment for Italian-Americans was radically different from that of the Germans and Japanese. Arturo Toscanini, an Italian-American orchestra conductor, gave Italian internees books and instruments through donations.\textsuperscript{95} Those in the Missoula camp were allowed to put on a play for the residents of Missoula, Montana.\textsuperscript{96} Italian internees were given food that was rationed for the rest of the United States.\textsuperscript{97} Others were grateful that they were interned rather than deported because they feared going back to Italy and being forced to join the Italian Army.\textsuperscript{98} Alessandro de Luca, an internee at Missoula, when asked, “How do you like Missoula?” replied, “Very much, and you may tell the Chamber of Commerce here that we do.”\textsuperscript{99} Enrico Giuseppe Bongi, an Italian living in San Francisco, told the FBI that he “had been working hard” that year and that he would like to go to an internment camp so that he could rest and play bocce with his friends.\textsuperscript{100} However, as the days passed in the internment camps, the Italians’ sojourn became less leisurely. Internees, despite the “luxuries” they enjoyed, became incredibly bored with life in the camps. Some believed that being bored in the camps was a more favorable alternative to “going home to a country embroiled in war.”\textsuperscript{101} Marino Sichi, the internee who earned more money by ironing shirts than he did as a free man, admitted “I didn’t want to stay there. All kidding aside, it wasn’t any fun.”\textsuperscript{102} The effect of the actual internment of Italian-Americans during World War II cannot be measured by the number of people interned. Rather, it must be measured through its role in altering and shaping postwar Italian-American identity.

The threat to intern Italians on the same scale as the Japanese was spearheaded by General DeWitt. DeWitt, a fierce xenophobe, was adamant on carrying out the relocation in a timely manner due to belief that retaliatory raids from Italy and Germany were imminent.\textsuperscript{103} President Roosevelt disagreed with DeWitt and claimed that “it is one thing to safeguard American industry, and particularly defense industry, against sabotage; but it is very much another to throw out of work people who, except for the accident of birth, are sincerely patriotic.”\textsuperscript{104} Thus, in the eyes of President Roosevelt, Italian-Americans had been transformed

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[Ibid, 129.]
\item[97] Chester G. Hanson, "Italian Prisoners 'Overcome' by Food," \textit{Los Angeles Times}, September 24, 1943.
\item[99] Missoula Sentinel, 8 May 1941.
\item[101] Carol Van Valkenburg, \textit{An Alien Place} (Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing, 2009), 19.
\item[102] Sichi, interview, in \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 96.
\item[103] Fox, \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 33.
\item[104] Ibid, 102.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
sectors of the economy, and evacuation policies for them would “have direct Nation-wide import” and hinder the United States’ war effort.\(^94\)

The experience of the 257 Italians who were interned illustrates the controversial nature of the United States’ internment policy. Internment for Italian-Americans was radically different from that of the Germans and Japanese. Arturo Toscanini, an Italian-American orchestra conductor, gave Italian internees books and instruments through donations.\(^95\) Those in the Missoula camp were allowed to put on a play for the residents of Missoula, Montana.\(^96\) Italian internees were given food that was rationed for the rest of the United States.\(^97\) Others were grateful that they were interned rather than deported because they feared going back to Italy and being forced to join the Italian Army.\(^98\) Alessandro de Luca, an internee at Missoula, when asked, “How do you like Missoula?” replied, “Very much, and you may tell the Chamber of Commerce here that we do.”\(^99\) Enrico Giuseppe Bongi, an Italian living in San Francisco, told the FBI that he “had been working hard” that year and that he would like to go to an internment camp so that he could rest and play bocce with his friends.\(^100\) However, as the days passed in the internment camps, the Italians’ sojourn became less leisurely. Internees, despite the “luxuries” they enjoyed, became incredibly bored with life in the camps. Some believed that being bored in the camps was a more favorable alternative to “going home to a country embroiled in war.”\(^101\) Marino Sichi, the internee who earned more money by ironing shirts than he did as a free man, admitted “I didn’t want to stay there. All kidding aside, it wasn’t any fun.”\(^102\) The effect of the actual internment of Italian-Americans during World War II cannot be measured by the number of people interned. Rather, it must be measured through its role in altering and shaping postwar Italian-American identity.

The threat to intern Italians on the same scale as the Japanese was spearheaded by General DeWitt. DeWitt, a fierce xenophobe, was adamant on carrying out the relocation in a timely manner due to belief that retaliatory raids from Italy and Germany were imminent.\(^103\) President Roosevelt disagreed with DeWitt and claimed that “it is one thing to safeguard American industry, and particularly defense industry, against sabotage; but it is very much another to throw out of work people who, except for the accident of birth, are sincerely patriotic.”\(^104\) Thus, in the eyes of President Roosevelt, Italian-Americans had been transformed

\(^94\) Ibid, 129.
\(^97\) Chester G. Hanson, “Italian Prisoners ‘Overcome’ by Food,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 24, 1943.
\(^99\) Missoula Sentinel, 8 May 1941.
\(^104\) Ibid, 102.
from potential saboteurs to “sincerely patriotic” in less than twelve months. The United States’ internment policy during World War II was, therefore, motivated by “economics, politics, and morale...with race as a reinforcing factor.” Economically, and from a morale standpoint, it made no sense to imprison 600,000 people who could contribute to the war effort. In terms of politics, losing the vote of the largest immigrant group in the United States would hurt the political interests of President Roosevelt in the wake of the 1944 election. 

The question of race inevitably draws comparison to the Japanese-American internment. However, the “spectrum of whiteness,” which is paramount in the understanding of the Italian-American experience during World War II, is often overlooked. By October, 1943, all 600,000 unnaturalized Italians were freed from the stigma of being classified as enemy aliens. When Italy surrendered on September 8, 1943, the majority of the Italian internees were released.

The internment of enemy aliens during World War II has clear roots in racial prejudices. In 1924, seventeen years before the attack on Pearl Harbor and subsequent stigmatization of enemy aliens, the United States halted immigration, especially from Asia. The decision to intern certain people based on their nationality caused Italian-Americans to evaluate their position on the spectrum of whiteness. To claim any kind of allegiance to Italy would be seen as allegiance to the Axis, and, by association, allegiance to Japan. The importance of the internment in shaping postwar Italian-American identity is apparent in the fact that, while only a small portion was sent to the camps, it put their loyalties into question. The question of loyalty is especially pertinent to the wider discussion of identity because it demonstrates an incompatibility of Italian cultural identity with American political loyalty. The role of language in Italian cultural identity exemplifies this incompatibility.

Before the United States entered World War II, the two-sided nature of Italian-American loyalty was, for the most part, accepted. While there was animosity towards Italian immigrants in many parts of the country – exemplified through the use of the word “wop” and the prevalence of beatings and lynchings – those living in the West Coast were assimilated to a much greater extent. The experience of West Coast Italians was characterized by assimilation into the American economy and “the acceptance of American values while retaining respect for Italian tradition and culture.” Italian-Americans could speak Italian, celebrate Italian holidays, and teach their traditions to their children, as long as they were politically loyal to the United States. The San Francisco Italian-American community created several institutions which allowed them to continue their traditions while being assimilated into the greater community. The Italian-American community founded the Italian Mutual Aid Society.

---

105 Ibid, 185.
106 Ibid, 184-185.
107 Van Valkenburg, An Alien Place, 49.
from potential saboteurs to “sincerely patriotic” in less than twelve months. The United States’ internment policy during World War II was, therefore, motivated by “economics, politics, and morale...with race as a reinforcing factor.” Economically, and from a morale standpoint, it made no sense to imprison 600,000 people who could contribute to the war effort. In terms of politics, losing the vote of the largest immigrant group in the United States would hurt the political interests of President Roosevelt in the wake of the 1944 election. The question of race inevitably draws comparison to the Japanese-American internment. However, the “spectrum of whiteness,” which is paramount in the understanding of the Italian-American experience during World War II, is often overlooked. By October, 1943, all 600,000 unnaturalized Italians were freed from the stigma of being classified as enemy aliens. When Italy surrendered on September 8, 1943, the majority of the Italian internees were released.

The internment of enemy aliens during World War II has clear roots in racial prejudices. In 1924, just seventeen years before the attack on Pearl Harbor and subsequent stigmatization of enemy aliens, the United States halted immigration, especially from Asia. The decision to intern certain people based on their nationality caused Italian-Americans to evaluate their position on the spectrum of whiteness. To claim any kind of allegiance to Italy would be seen as allegiance to the Axis, and, by association, allegiance to Japan. The importance of the internment in shaping postwar Italian-American identity is apparent in the fact that, while only a small portion was sent to the camps, it put their loyalties into question. The question of loyalty is especially pertinent to the wider discussion of identity because it demonstrates an incompatibility of Italian cultural identity with American political loyalty. The role of language in Italian cultural identity exemplifies this incompatibility.

Before the United States entered World War II, the two-sided nature of Italian-American loyalty was, for the most part, accepted. While there was animosity towards Italian immigrants in many parts of the country – exemplified through the use of the word “wop” and the prevalence of beatings and lynchings – those living in the West Coast were assimilated to a much greater extent. The experience of West Coast Italians was characterized by assimilation into the American economy and “the acceptance of American values while retaining respect for Italian tradition and culture.” Italian-Americans could speak Italian, celebrate Italian holidays, and teach their traditions to their children, as long as they were politically loyal to the United States. The San Francisco Italian-American community created several institutions which allowed them to continue their traditions while being assimilated into the greater community. The Italian-American community founded the Italian Mutual Aid Society...
which established educational programs for its members and hired Italian-speaking physicians to serve the community.\textsuperscript{112} Also available to the Italian-American community were parochial schools which taught Italian.\textsuperscript{113} The importance of language cannot be overlooked. The use and teaching of Italian allowed Italian-Americans to keep alive “the sacred flame of the love of the distant Fatherland” while integrating into American society. World War II forced Italian-Americans to largely abandon the use of the Italian language in order to prove their loyalty to the United States.

Italian-Americans, unlike the Japanese, were not easily identified by physical characteristics, and thus, their language became a “marker of their foreignness.”\textsuperscript{114} The FBI, when conducting searches of Italian-American homes, looked for Italian language newspapers, letters, other documents written in Italian, and shortwave radios that could transmit Italian language broadcasts.\textsuperscript{115} Julia Besozzi was questioned by the FBI because she was a member of the Board of Directors at the \textit{Scuola Italiana Marconi}.\textsuperscript{116} Mario Augusto Parisi was arrested and excluded from Military Areas 1 and 2 because he operated a movie theater that showed Italian language films.\textsuperscript{117} Speaking Italian became a “basis enough for suspicion and further investigation.”\textsuperscript{118} According to the FBI, the use of the Italian language was a major element of Mussolini’s nationalistic approach to fascism.\textsuperscript{119} To speak Italian in the United States was to propagate Mussolini’s message abroad. Furthermore, it meant to the FBI that those who were speaking Italian agreed with Mussolini’s policies. Interestingly enough, there were many Italian-Americans who did praise Mussolini, although not for his actions in World War II.

Many Italian-Americans believed that Mussolini was a good leader, but that his mistake was allying with Nazi Germany.\textsuperscript{120} They praised him for the excellent retirement system he established and for modernizing Italy’s roads and railroads.\textsuperscript{121} Others blamed him for their treatment in the United States, saying “if it wasn’t for Mussolini they wouldn’t have fought against America.”\textsuperscript{122} This is another instance of Italian-American pluralistic loyalty. They praised Mussolini for improving the living conditions in Italy before the war, and then they chided him for getting Italy involved with Hitler.\textsuperscript{123} Interestingly enough, the United States government praised Mussolini in the 1930s for “bringing economic and social progress to his people” and as “a savior of capitalism in a world struggling against communist revolution.”\textsuperscript{124} Indeed, praise for Mussolini

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{112} Rolle, \textit{The Italian Americans}, 39.
  \item \textsuperscript{113} Nelli, \textit{From Immigrants to Ethnics}, 73.
  \item \textsuperscript{114} Carnevale, "'No Italian Spoken for the Duration," 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid, 10.
  \item \textsuperscript{116} Federal Bureau of Investigation, Report on Julia Besozzi, Misc. Doc. (1942).
  \item \textsuperscript{117} Federal Bureau of Investigation, Report on Mario Augusto Parisi, Misc. Doc. (1942).
  \item \textsuperscript{118} Carnevale, "'No Italian Spoken for the Duration," 10.
  \item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid, 11.
  \item \textsuperscript{120} Joe Cervetto, interview, in \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 161.
  \item \textsuperscript{121} Umberto Tonini, interview by the author.
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Mary Cardinalli, interview, in \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 181.
  \item \textsuperscript{123} Fox, \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 26.
  \item \textsuperscript{124} Ibid, 36.
\end{itemize}
which established educational programs for its members and hired Italian-speaking physicians to serve the community.\textsuperscript{112} Also available to the Italian-American community were parochial schools which taught Italian.\textsuperscript{113} The importance of language cannot be overlooked. The use and teaching of Italian allowed Italian-Americans to keep alive “the sacred flame of the love of the distant Fatherland” while integrating into American society. World War II forced Italian-Americans to largely abandon the use of the Italian language in order to prove their loyalty to the United States.

Italian-Americans, unlike the Japanese, were not easily identified by physical characteristics, and thus, their language became a “marker of their foreignness.”\textsuperscript{114} The FBI, when conducting searches of Italian-American homes, looked for Italian language newspapers, letters, other documents written in Italian, and shortwave radios that could transmit Italian language broadcasts.\textsuperscript{115} Julia Besozzi was questioned by the FBI because she was a member of the Board of Directors at the \textit{Scuola Italiana Marconi}.\textsuperscript{116} Mario Augusto Parisi was arrested and excluded from Military Areas 1 and 2 because he operated a movie theater that showed Italian language films.\textsuperscript{117} Speaking Italian became a “basis enough for suspicion and further investigation.”\textsuperscript{118}

According to the FBI, the use of the Italian language was a major element of Mussolini’s nationalistic approach to fascism.\textsuperscript{119} To speak Italian in the United States was to propagate Mussolini’s message abroad. Furthermore, it meant to the FBI that those who were speaking Italian agreed with Mussolini’s policies. Interestingly enough, there were many Italian-Americans who did praise Mussolini, although not for his actions in World War II.

Many Italian-Americans believed that Mussolini was a good leader, but that his mistake was allying with Nazi Germany.\textsuperscript{120} They praised him for the excellent retirement system he established and for modernizing Italy’s roads and railroads.\textsuperscript{121} Others blamed him for their treatment in the United States, saying “if it wasn’t for Mussolini they wouldn’t have fought against America.”\textsuperscript{122} This is another instance of Italian-American pluralistic loyalty. They praised Mussolini for improving the living conditions in Italy before the war, and then they chided him for getting Italy involved with Hitler.\textsuperscript{123} Interestingly enough, the United States government praised Mussolini in the 1930s for “bringing economic and social progress to his people” and as “a savior of capitalism in a world struggling against communist revolution.”\textsuperscript{124} Indeed, praise for Mussolini

\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{112} Rolle, \textit{The Italian Americans}, 39.
  \item\textsuperscript{113} Nelli, \textit{From Immigrants to Ethnics}, 73.
  \item\textsuperscript{114} Carnevale, “”No Italian Spoken for the Duration,”” 9.
  \item\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, 10.
  \item\textsuperscript{116} Federal Bureau of Investigation, Report on Julia Besozzi, Misc. Doc. (1942).
  \item\textsuperscript{117} Federal Bureau of Investigation, Report on Mario Augusto Parisi, Misc. Doc. (1942).
  \item\textsuperscript{118} Carnevale, “”No Italian Spoken for the Duration,”” 10.
  \item\textsuperscript{119} Ibid, 11.
  \item\textsuperscript{120} Joe Cervetto, interview, in \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 161.
  \item\textsuperscript{121} Umberto Tonini, interview by the author.
  \item\textsuperscript{122} Mary Cardinalli, interview, in \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 26.
  \item\textsuperscript{123} Fox, \textit{The Unknown Internment: An Oral}, 26.
  \item\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, 36.
\end{itemize}
was not only tolerated, but even accepted before the war. When war finally broke out in Europe, the United States conveniently forgot that Fascism “had been a national phenomenon rather than an ethnic importation.”125 This further complicated life for Italian-Americans. When Germany became America’s enemy, so did Italy and Mussolini. To praise him, if even for providing a better life for relatives in Italy, put an Italian-American’s loyalty into question. Before the war, one could identify themselves as Italian but not be seen as fascist. However, the FBI equated the use of Italian with potential disloyalty, a move which further distanced Italian-Americans from Italy.126

The issue of language has had perhaps the most significant and long-lasting effect on postwar Italian-American identity. The number of Italian speakers in the United States decreased from 1.8 million in 1930 to 1.2 million in 1950.127 Italian-American shopkeepers placed signs in their windows which read “No Italian Spoken for the Duration of the War.”128 The Societa Italiane di Mutuo Beneficenze (The Italian Society of Mutual Charities) became “Victory Benefit Association.”129 Many Italian-Americans changed their names to Americanized forms.130 When speaking, traditional Italian hand gesticulations were replaced with American ones such as shoulder shrugging, face twitching, and waist turning.131 The message was clear: if Italian-Americans wanted to become loyal Americans, they would have to abandon the use of the Italian language. The stigma of speaking Italian is inextricably linked to the sense of shame that Italian-Americans experienced during the war.

The notion of shame is central to the question of Italian-American identity during World War II. Clara Bronzini, an Italian-American whose husband’s market was shut down because it was located in a restricted zone, would say “non abbiamo fatto niente a nessuno” – we have done nothing to no one.132 To many Italian-Americans, not only those who were interned, World War II brought about a sense of shame that questioned the very essence of their being. If they were being punished despite not doing anything wrong, they reasoned, then the issue must be their identity. The release of 600,000 Italian-Americans from the stigma of being labeled as “enemy aliens” presented an opportunity for them to prove their loyalty to the United States.133

Many of the Italian-Americans who were interned decided to join the United States military upon their release. Overall, 400,000 Italian-Americans contributed to the United States war effort.134 Some joined the Army as interpreters, a job which allowed them to use their language without the stigma of being seen as

125 Ibid, 36.
126 Carnevale, “’No Italian Spoken for the Duration,” 16.
128 Carnevale, ”No Italian Spoken for the Duration,” 13.
130 Ibid, 13.
133 Carnevale, ”No Italian Spoken for the Duration,” 19.
134 Luconi, From Paesani to White, 102.
was not only tolerated, but even accepted before the war. When war finally broke out in Europe, the United States conveniently forgot that Fascism “had been a national phenomenon rather than an ethnic importation.” This further complicated life for Italian-Americans. When Germany became America’s enemy, so did Italy and Mussolini. To praise him, if even for providing a better life for relatives in Italy, put an Italian-American’s loyalty into question. Before the war, one could identify themselves as Italian but not be seen as fascist. However, the FBI equated the use of Italian with potential disloyalty, a move which further distanced Italian-Americans from Italy.

The issue of language has had perhaps the most significant and long-lasting effect on postwar Italian-American identity. The number of Italian speakers in the United States decreased from 1.8 million in 1930 to 1.2 million in 1950. Italian-American shopkeepers placed signs in their windows which read “No Italian Spoken for the Duration of the War.” The Societa Italiane di Mutuo Beneficenze (The Italian Society of Mutual Charities) became “Victory Benefit Association.” Many Italian-Americans changed their names to Americanized forms. When speaking, traditional Italian hand gesticulations were replaced with American ones such as shoulder shrugging, face twitching, and waist turning. The message was clear: if Italian-Americans wanted to become loyal Americans, they would have to abandon the use of the Italian language. The stigma of speaking Italian is inextricably linked to the sense of shame that Italian-Americans experienced during the war.

The notion of shame is central to the question of Italian-American identity during World War II. Clara Bronzini, an Italian-American whose husband’s market was shut down because it was located in a restricted zone, would say “non abbiamo fatto niente a nessuno” — we have done nothing to no one. To many Italian-Americans, not only those who were interned, World War II brought about a sense of shame that questioned the very essence of their being. If they were being punished despite not doing anything wrong, they reasoned, then the issue must be their identity. The release of 600,000 Italian-Americans from the stigma of being labeled as “enemy aliens” presented an opportunity for them to prove their loyalty to the United States.

Many of the Italian-Americans who were interned decided to join the United States military upon their release. Overall, 400,000 Italian-Americans contributed to the United States war effort. Some joined the Army as interpreters, a job which allowed them to use their language without the stigma of being seen as enemies.

125 Ibid, 36.
126 Carnevale, “No Italian Spoken for the Duration,” 16.
130 Ibid, 13.
133 Carnevale, “No Italian Spoken for the Duration,” 19.
134 Luconi, From Paesani to White, 102.
disloyal. Ironically, many young Italian-American men went to fight for the United States – and died for the United States – while their parents were being relocated from their homes.135 Those who could not contribute physically to the war effort donated through the purchase of war bonds; the Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA) bought over $3.3 million worth of war bonds.136 Others, when released from relocation or internment, moved out of the predominantly Italian neighborhoods and into diverse suburban areas.137 Two-thirds of schools that offered Italian language classes ceased to offer them, and forty percent of Italian language periodicals were discontinued.138 Having shed the label of “enemy alien,” Italian-Americans found themselves and their lifestyles drastically changed by the war.139 The war allowed Italian-Americans to assimilate into mainstream American culture, however, this assimilation did not account for cultural pluralism. The options for Italian immigrants were clear: “become American in your speech, your habits, your dress, or you will be viewed with suspicion.”140 If Italian-Americans wanted to become accepted as loyal Americans, they would have to abandon many traditional aspects of their identity.

Legacy of the Italian-American Internment

The final aspect of Italian-American identity during World War II that must be examined is its legacy. In order for Italian-Americans to become accepted in the United States they were asked to forget: forget their traditions, forget their language, forget their identity.141 The majority chose to forget. The result of this is a permanent cultural amnesia about having to abandon ties to one country in order to maintain loyalty to the other. Paul Pisciano, an Italian-American architect, noted “Since the war, Italo-Americans have undergone this amazing transformation... We stopped being Italo and started becoming Americans.”142 It is because of this amnesia, because this stigma of not being American, that the story of the Italian-American internment was left largely untold.

The experience of Italian-Americans during World War II contributes to the greater discussion of assimilation and whiteness. The overarching question here is “who decides who is white?” Some historians claim that Italian-Americans “opted” for whiteness.143 In reality, Italian-Americans were presented with an ultimatum rather than a choice. The Italian-American internment must also be considered with regards to the question of assimilation. It is my belief that Crispino’s straight-line theory does not apply to Italian-Americans. Crispino claims that Italian-Americans progressed from Anglo-conformity assimilation to melting pot assimilation, and finally to cultural plural-

136 Luconi, From Paesani to White, 102.
137 Carnevale, "No Italian Spoken for the Duration," 25.
138 Ibid, 25.
139 Vecoli, "Italian Americans and Race," in 'Merica, 102.
140 DiStasi, "One Voice at a Time," introduction to Una Storia Segreta: The Secret, XVI.
141 Ibid, XVII
143 Vecoli, "Italian Americans and Race," in 'Merica, 104.
disloyal. Ironically, many young Italian-American men went to fight for the United States – and died for the United States – while their parents were being relocated from their homes.\textsuperscript{135} Those who could not contribute physically to the war effort donated through the purchase of war bonds; the Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA) bought over $3.3 million worth of war bonds.\textsuperscript{136} Others, when released from relocation or internment, moved out of the predominantly Italian neighborhoods and into diverse suburban areas.\textsuperscript{137} Two-thirds of schools that offered Italian language classes ceased to offer them, and forty percent of Italian language periodicals were discontinued.\textsuperscript{138} Having shed the label of “enemy alien,” Italian-Americans found themselves and their lifestyles drastically changed by the war.\textsuperscript{139} The war allowed Italian-Americans to assimilate into mainstream American culture, however, this assimilation did not account for cultural pluralism. The options for Italian immigrants were clear: “become American in your speech, your habits, your dress, or you will be viewed with suspicion.”\textsuperscript{140} If Italian-Americans wanted to become accepted as loyal Americans, they would have to abandon many traditional aspects of their identity.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{135} Lawrence DiStasi, "War within War: Italian Americans and the Military in World War II," in Un\texta\texttextit{a Storia Segreta: The Secret}, 272.
\item \textsuperscript{136} Luconi, From Paesani to White, 102.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Carnevale, "No Italian Spoken for the Duration," 25.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Ibid, 25.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Vecoli, “Italian Americans and Race,” in ‘Merica, 102.
\item \textsuperscript{140} DiStasi, “One Voice at a Time,” introduction to Un\texta\texttextit{a Storia Segreta: The Secret}, XVI.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Ibid, XVII
\item \textsuperscript{142} DiStasi, "How World War II Iced ItalianAmerican Culture," in Un\texta\texttextit{a Storia Segreta: The Secret}, 307.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Vecoli, “Italian Americans and Race,” in ‘Merica, 104.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
However, given the historical evidence, it appears that many Italian-Americans already practiced a form of cultural pluralism. World War II, the stigma it created, and the internment all contribute to the decline of Italian-American cultural pluralism and represent the beginning of Italian-American Anglo-conformity. It was not until the 1960s, during the period of ethnic revival, that Italian-American cultural pluralism began to resurface, although the subject of internment was still handled in the same manner: “Don’t talk about it.”

Herein lies the legacy of the internment. In silence. A silence that, paradoxically, speaks the truth of the Italian-American experience during World War II. In this silence we find the internment of a few, and the shame and suffering of a people.

Luca Signore is a European History major with a secondary major in Italian Studies. He is a member of Santa Clara’s cross country and track teams. He enjoys studying European history, particularly the World War II era. He decided on this research topic because of his Italian ancestry. Luca is graduating in June 2014 and will join the Teach for America corps in Chicago. He would like to dedicate his work to his parents, Enzo and Sandra, who have sacrificed so much to give him the opportunities he has had.

---

**Recipes for an Instant American—Just Add a Side of Victory Cabbage and Jell-O: The Americanization of the United States through Cookbooks**

Colleen Zellitti

**Introduction**

Glancing down any city block, there are bound to be numerous restaurants and eateries. Intricately intertwined with daily life, food is something that many Americans do not even give a second thought. Upon closer examination it can be noted that whether it is a small town or big city, variety pervades. Thai, Korean, Mexican, Chinese, Brazilian, French, Italian and fusion are just some of the options available to the everyday diner. Add the countless food blogs and foodies of the Internet, and it is evident that Americans place a heavy emphasis on food. The United States built itself using foreign foundations and American identity has taken cues from a large amount of cultures, traditions and ethnicities. Throughout the waves of immigration social reformers realized an important fact—“the absence of a widely accepted national cuisine.” As Donna Gabaccia revealed, “the United States had become an independent nation without creating a national cuisine that matched its sense of uniqueness.” It can be discerned that even before the immi-
However, given the historical evidence, it appears that many Italian-Americans already practiced a form of cultural pluralism. World War II, the stigma it created, and the internment all contribute to the decline of Italian-American cultural pluralism and represent the beginning of Italian-American Anglo-conformity. It was not until the 1960s, during the period of ethnic revival, that Italian-American cultural pluralism began to resurface, although the subject of internment was still handled in the same manner: “Don’t talk about it.”

Herein lies the legacy of the internment. In silence. A silence that, paradoxically, speaks the truth of the Italian-American experience during World War II. In this silence we find the internment of a few, and the shame and suffering of a people.

Luca Signore is a European History major with a secondary major in Italian Studies. He is a member of Santa Clara’s cross country and track teams. He enjoys studying European history, particularly the World War II era. He decided on this research topic because of his Italian ancestry. Luca is graduating in June 2014 and will join the Teach for America corps in Chicago. He would like to dedicate his work to his parents, Enzo and Sandra, who have sacrificed so much to give him the opportunities he has had.

---

144 Crispino, The Assimilation of Ethnic, V.

---

Recipes for an Instant American—Just Add a Side of Victory Cabbage and Jell-O: The Americanization of the United States through Cookbooks

Colleen Zellitti

Introduction

Glancing down any city block, there are bound to be numerous restaurants and eateries. Intricately intertwined with daily life, food is something that many Americans do not even give a second thought. Upon closer examination it can be noted that whether it is a small town or big city, variety pervades. Thai, Korean, Mexican, Chinese, Brazilian, French, Italian and fusion are just some of the options available to the everyday diner. Add the countless food blogs and foodies of the Internet, and it is evident that Americans place a heavy emphasis on food. The United States built itself using foreign foundations and American identity has taken cues from a large amount of cultures, traditions and ethnicities. Throughout the waves of immigration social reformers realized an important fact—"the absence of a widely accepted national cuisine.

As Donna Gabaccia revealed, “the United States had become an independent nation without creating a national cuisine that matched its sense of uniqueness.”

It can be discerned that even before the immi-
grants flooded the country there was no true American diet, a realization that became further pronounced during the Cold War.

During these times no one could confidently state a meal that was accepted nationwide, because our “eating habits were firmly regional.” What resulted was an era of cultured frenzy, a frantic attempt to reclassify what it meant to be an American in terms of food and eating habits. Through the use of cookbooks and home magazines, Americans of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries projected what it meant to be an American to both incoming immigrants and already established Americans. While promoting an ideal of American identity towards new immigrants, American society was at the same time constructing an ideal image of themselves, which would be reinforced especially during the ideological battlefront of the Cold War.

American cuisine is something commonly referenced, but rarely concretely defined. Due in part to the fact that America has the reputation of being a melting pot of cultures, food has not escaped this phenomenon. With each new wave of immigration came a new set of recipes, ingredients and meals. Ethnic food became labeled as inferior, not through any specific evidence, but because it was different, new and consumed by peasants. By the beginning of the Cold War, however, the United States scrambled to create a uniquely American image of what it meant to be American, including what to eat. In turn, from the early entry of immigrants to the present day, Americans have sculpted the image that is projected to the rest of the world, one that is comprised of an array of cultures and traditions, but molded to fit an idealized image.

Historians and scholars, past and present, have studied ethnic foods in relation to American diets. Authors Jennifer Jensen Wallach and Donna Gabaccia are known as the forerunners of food history, and their respective books, *We Are What We Eat* and *How America Eats*, examine the United States’ relationship to food beginning with the early colonists. Wallach argues that, “by studying what Americans have eaten...we are further enlightened to the conflicting ways in which Americans have chosen to define themselves, their culture, their beliefs, and the changes those definitions have undergone over time.”

*Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking* by Jessamyn Neuhaus carefully studies the era of frozen and convenience foods, making Betty Crocker the star of her book. Exploring the time when Americans became fascinated by casseroles and visually imaginative dishes, Neuhaus argues that cookbooks provide valuable insight about national opinions and sentiments during the era. In a similar fashion, Sherrie Inness is known for her extensive research on gender roles in the kitchen and reinforces the stereotypes of cooking literature through satirization such as, “Of Casseroles and Canned Foods: Building the Happy Housewife in the Fifties,” reinforcing the idea of

---


---

3 Ibid.
grants flooded the country there was no true American diet, a realization that became further pronounced during the Cold War.

During these times no one could confidently state a meal that was accepted nationwide, because our “eating habits were firmly regional.” What resulted was an era of cultured frenzy, a frantic attempt to reclassify what it meant to be an American in terms of food and eating habits. Through the use of cookbooks and home magazines, Americans of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries projected what it meant to be an American to both incoming immigrants and already established Americans. While promoting an ideal of American identity towards new immigrants, American society was at the same time constructing an ideal image of themselves, which would be reinforced especially during the ideological battlefront of the Cold War.

American cuisine is something commonly referenced, but rarely concretely defined. Due in part to the fact that America has the reputation of being a melting pot of cultures, food has not escaped this phenomenon. With each new wave of immigration came a new set of recipes, ingredients and meals. Ethnic food became labeled as inferior, not through any specific evidence, but because it was different, new and consumed by peasants. By the beginning of the Cold War, however, the United States scrambled to create a uniquely American image of what it meant to be American, including what to eat. In turn, from the early entry of immigrants to the present day, Americans have sculpted the image that is projected to the rest of the world, one that is comprised of an array of cultures and traditions, but molded to fit an idealized image.

Historians and scholars, past and present, have studied ethnic foods in relation to American diets. Authors Jennifer Jensen Wallach and Donna Gabaccia are known as the forerunners of food history, and their respective books, We Are What We Eat and How America Eats, examine the United States’ relationship to food beginning with the early colonists. Wallach argues that, “by studying what Americans have eaten…we are further enlightened to the conflicting ways in which Americans have chosen to define themselves, their culture, their beliefs, and the changes those definitions have undergone over time.”

Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking by Jessamyn Neuhaus carefully studies the era of frozen and convenience foods, making Betty Crocker the star of her book. Exploring the time when Americans became fascinated by casseroles and visually imaginative dishes, Neuhaus argues that cookbooks provide valuable insight about national opinions and sentiments during the era. In a similar fashion, Sherrie Inness is known for her extensive research on gender roles in the kitchen and reinforces the stereotypes of cooking literature through satirization such as, “Of Casseroles and Canned Foods: Building the Happy Housewife in the Fifties,” reinforcing the idea of

---

female-dominated kitchens and the reliance on women to create impeccable households.\(^6\)

Other historians have focused solely on immigrant food history, as Jane Ziegleman highlighted in *97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement*.\(^7\) She provided a unique collection of immigrant families living in a New York tenement house, their stories relayed through a series of accounts alongside contemporary research, showing the difficulties immigrants faced in maintaining cultural ties through food while trying to assimilate as Americans.

The *Settlement House Cookbook, New Discoveries*, and a series of cookbooks from the Culinary Institute provided suggestions and recipes exactly how Americans received them.\(^8\) Without any modern insight or edits, the books remain as they were, filled with recipes, instructions and plenty of less-than-politically correct language that was standard of the times. *Life Magazine* and early editions of *Ladies’ Home Journal* provided recipes, advertisements, and articles that help to develop a picture of everyday food culture and “American-ness” during this period.

The cookbooks and food advertisements during the wave of immigration and the Cold War remain crucial documents in terms of American identity. While it can be argued that America today is a melting pot of cultures, it is worthwhile to examine how food customs have reflected this ideal. Following the research of food ritual in a social history context, alongside the push for immigrant assimilation and the ideal nuclear family, this paper aims to present cooking literature as the most followed and universal form of Americanization. Becoming and staying American began in the kitchen.

**Seeking the American Dream...With Provisions**

Seeking a chance for better jobs, housing and food, individuals and families flocked to the United States for a chance at the famed American Dream. Upon arrival immigrants learned that in order to have a chance at success, conformity was essential. Facing prejudice and discrimination, immigrants were expected to leave behind foreign customs and culture. They had to learn English, understand social norms, change their clothes and, most notably, alter their diets. Some immigrant groups found assimilation more challenging than others, and as Jane Ziegleman noted, “native foods provided them with the comfort of the familiar in an alien environment, a form of emotional ballast for the uprooted.”\(^9\) Already forced to give up their homes and all things familiar, immigrants to the United States were also expected to leave behind the last taste of home and eat a diet that was approved by Americans. As the United States was entering an era

---


female-dominated kitchens and the reliance on women to create impeccable households.\textsuperscript{6}

Other historians have focused solely on immigrant food history, as Jane Ziegleman highlighted in \textit{97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement}.\textsuperscript{7} She provided a unique collection of immigrant families living in a New York tenement house, their stories relayed through a series of accounts alongside contemporary research, showing the difficulties immigrants faced in maintaining cultural ties through food while trying to assimilate as Americans.

The \textit{Settlement House Cookbook, New Discoveries}, and a series of cookbooks from the Culinary Institute provided suggestions and recipes exactly how Americans received them.\textsuperscript{8} Without any modern insight or edits, the books remain as they were, filled with recipes, instructions and plenty of less-than-politically correct language that was standard of the times. \textit{Life Magazine} and early editions of \textit{Ladies’ Home Journal} provided recipes, advertisements, and articles that help to develop a picture of everyday food culture and “American-ness” during this period.

The cookbooks and food advertisements during the wave of immigration and the Cold War remain crucial documents in terms of American identity. While it can be argued that America today is a melting pot of cultures, it is worthwhile to examine how food customs have reflected this ideal. Following the research of food ritual in a social history context, alongside the push for immigrant assimilation and the ideal nuclear family, this paper aims to present cooking literature as the most followed and universal form of Americanization. Becoming and staying American began in the kitchen.

\textbf{Seeking the American Dream...With Provisions}

Seeking a chance for better jobs, housing and food, individuals and families flocked to the United States for a chance at the famed American Dream. Upon arrival immigrants learned that in order to have a chance at success, conformity was essential. Facing prejudice and discrimination, immigrants were expected to leave behind foreign customs and culture. They had to learn English, understand social norms, change their clothes and, most notably, alter their diets. Some immigrant groups found assimilation more challenging than others, and as Jane Ziegleman noted, “native foods provided them with the comfort of the familiar in an alien environment, a form of emotional ballast for the uprooted.”\textsuperscript{9} Already forced to give up their homes and all things familiar, immigrants to the United States were also expected to leave behind the last taste of home and eat a diet that was approved by Americans. As the United States was entering an era

\textsuperscript{6} Jessamyn Neuhaus, \textit{Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America} (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), Table of Contents.


\textsuperscript{9} Ziegleman, \textit{97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement}, XII.
of reforms and new ideas, it became important to create a universal standard for all Americans. A push to adhere to developing American values forced individuals to come face to face with these new ideals.

To better ease the process of assimilation, Americans supplied immigrants with a variety of books that would guide them in the right direction. Instructing that, “the immigrant must find himself in an American environment, must attach himself to American institutions, must contribute his gifts to their support and to their further development,” the *Second Book in English For Coming Citizens* aimed to teach language to immigrants. Published in 1921, the *Second Book* presented English in the context of a story, presumably to make more sense than rote repetition. In the name of Americanization, the story follows one immigrant, Anton Bodnar, who begins as a young student in rural Poland. By the end of the book Anton became, “a fellow citizen,” fully knowledgeable of American history, rights and customs. Each chapter concludes with a series of questions that ensured the reader not only understood the overall story but also the corresponding etiquette. Following the chapter “The School Party,” the reader is asked the following: “Tell how the party was arranged. Why was the party a failure at the beginning? Name the different nationalities at the party,” among several other questions. It is evident that the authors of the guidebooks wanted immigrants to thoroughly understand American culture and language beyond repetition of words and phrases.

There was a desire to teach lessons that an immigrant could face on a daily basis and to convey how Americans acted. In the introduction, H.H. Goldberger stated, “educators are agreed today that Americanization is a dual and reciprocal process, requiring the active participation of the foreign as well as of the native born,” showing that in order to better Americanize the immigrants, Americans themselves had to present an image they wanted replicated. Despite the suggestion that assimilation was a collaborative effort, there was still a sense of American superiority, as one passage indicates:

...a fat Russian danced with a tall, thin Polish girl. Anton found his arms around a stout, middle-aged Jewish woman. John was dancing with a pretty American girl whom he had been admiring all evening. Alexander...was stepping on the feet of a pretty little Italian lady...

The Russian, Jewish, and Italian immigrants are given less-favorable adjectives, while the young American girl is simply deemed “pretty.” Thus began the first indication that ultimately, it is more attractive to be American. In order to attain the American ideal immigrants turned to the numerous books published by Americans, some of them of immigrant stock themselves, which focused on the heart of the home—the kitchen.

**The Excitement of Household Discoveries**

---

10 Henry H. Goldberger, *Second Book in English for Coming Citizens* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1921), V.
11 Ibid, 118.
12 Ibid, V.
of reforms and new ideas, it became important to create a universal standard for all Americans. A push to adhere to developing American values forced individuals to come face to face with these new ideals.

To better ease the process of assimilation, Americans supplied immigrants with a variety of books that would guide them in the right direction. Instructing that, “the immigrant must find himself in an American environment, must attach himself to American institutions, must contribute his gifts to their support and to their further development,” the Second Book in English For Coming Citizens aimed to teach language to immigrants. Published in 1921, the Second Book presented English in the context of a story, presumably to make more sense than rote repetition. In the name of Americanization, the story follows one immigrant, Anton Bodnar, who begins as a young student in rural Poland. By the end of the book Anton became, “a fellow citizen,” fully knowledgeable of American history, rights and customs. Each chapter concludes with a series of questions that ensured the reader not only understood the overall story but also the corresponding etiquette. Following the chapter “The School Party,” the reader is asked the following: “Tell how the party was arranged. Why was the party a failure at the beginning? Name the different nationalities at the party,” among several other questions. It is evident that the authors of the guidebooks wanted immigrants to thoroughly understand American culture and language beyond repetition of words and phrases.

There was a desire to teach lessons that an immigrant could face on a daily basis and to convey how Americans acted. In the introduction, H.H. Goldberger stated, “educators are agreed today that Americanization is a dual and reciprocal process, requiring the active participation of the foreign as well as of the native born,” showing that in order to better Americanize the immigrants, Americans themselves had to present an image they wanted replicated. Despite the suggestion that assimilation was a collaborative effort, there was still a sense of American superiority, as one passage indicates:

. . .a fat Russian danced with a tall, thin Polish girl. Anton found his arms around a stout, middle-aged Jewish woman. John was dancing with a pretty American girl whom he had been admiring all evening. Alexander...was stepping on the feet of a pretty little Italian lady...

The Russian, Jewish, and Italian immigrants are given less-favorable adjectives, while the young American girl is simply deemed “pretty.” Thus began the first indication that ultimately, it is more attractive to be American. In order to attain the American ideal immigrants turned to the numerous books published by Americans, some of them of immigrant stock themselves, which focused on the heart of the home—the kitchen.

The Excitement of Household Discoveries

10 Henry H. Goldberger, Second Book in English for Coming Citizens (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1921), V.
11 Ibid, 118.
12 Ibid, V.
Extensive household manuals were published to further educate immigrants and ensure their proper transformation to become Americans. *New Household Discoveries*, by Sidney Morse, offers over eight hundred pages of household hints, ranging from “the art of correct table service” to “stale bread and how to utilize it.” The preface reminds Americans, primarily women, that it is patriotic and essentially their duty as citizens to run an efficient household, ideas that resurface throughout the coming decades. Quoting President Wilson, the book opens with the idea that, “every housewife who practices strict economy puts herself in the ranks of those who serve the nation.” The author notes that the “object of this book...[is] to show American housekeepers [tips and tricks]” and by deliberately addressing the readers as American, he suggests that anyone who follows the instructions would properly conform. By referring to the homemakers as American, there is no attempt to incorporate immigrants or acknowledge their presence. Rather, it is assumed that the immigrants are American, having successfully assimilated into a new life. In turn, the *New Household Discoveries* can also be viewed as a resource that immigrants referenced in hopes that it would make them the perfect model citizens, the ideal American homemakers, capable of setting perfect dinner tables and mastering the art of soup-making.

Labeling immigration as a “trauma,” many families were reluctant to adapt to new ways. “No matter their ethnicity, immigrant wives, mothers, and grandmothers of nearly every nationality shared a common role in America. They were the “culture bearers,” charged with preserving the ethnic, religious, and cultural memories of their families. This usually meant creating “proper” homes and cooking “beloved foods of memory.” When examining the pages of such household manuals and cookbooks, it quickly became evident that if they were to successfully Americanize, it was necessary for immigrants, and especially women, to leave behind the past. Viewed as the dominant culture bearers and expected to produce the next generation of citizens, women were given little choice to Americanize. Cookbooks, magazines, and advertisements primarily targeted females to become model American housewives, starting in the kitchen.

A chapter on “Menus and Menu Making” opens with a variety of weekly menu options before introducing subcategories, one being a specific section for “Entertainers.” Differentiating the ordinary meal planner from that of the entertainer, the guide reminds that, “there is no way in which a woman can entertain her friends more satisfactorily than by giving a well-prepared luncheon or dinner, or an attractive tea or reception.” Suggesting that the best way of gaining accolades and recognition is through a flawless banquet spread, the *New Household Discoveries* creates an idealized picture of an American woman, one that

---

15 Ibid, *Publisher’s Note*.
16 Ibid, Introduction.
18 Morse, *New Household Discoveries*, 62.
Extensive household manuals were published to further educate immigrants and ensure their proper transformation to become Americans. *New Household Discoveries*, by Sidney Morse, offers over eight hundred pages of household hints, ranging from “the art of correct table service” to “stale bread and how to utilize it.” The preface reminds Americans, primarily women, that it is patriotic and essentially their duty as citizens to run an efficient household, ideas that resurface throughout the coming decades. Quoting President Wilson, the book opens with the idea that, “every housewife who practices strict economy puts herself in the ranks of those who serve the nation.” The author notes that the “object of this book...[is] to show American housekeepers [tips and tricks]” and by deliberately addressing the readers as American, he suggests that anyone who follows the instructions would properly conform. By referring to the homemakers as American, there is no attempt to incorporate immigrants or acknowledge their presence. Rather, it is assumed that the immigrants are American, having successfully assimilated into a new life. In turn, the *New Household Discoveries* can also be viewed as a resource that immigrants referenced in hopes that it would make them the perfect model citizens, the ideal American homemakers, capable of setting perfect dinner tables and mastering the art of soup-making.

Labeling immigration as a “trauma,” many families were reluctant to adapt to new ways. “No matter their ethnicity, immigrant wives, mothers, and grandmothers of nearly every nationality shared a common role in America. They were the “culture bearers,” charged with preserving the ethnic, religious, and cultural memories of their families. This usually meant creating “proper” homes and cooking “beloved foods of memory.” When examining the pages of such household manuals and cookbooks, it quickly became evident that if they were to successfully Americanize, it was necessary for immigrants, and especially women, to leave behind the past. Viewed as the dominant culture bearers and expected to produce the next generation of citizens, women were given little choice to Americanize. Cookbooks, magazines, and advertisements primarily targeted females to become model American housewives, starting in the kitchen.

A chapter on “Menus and Menu Making” opens with a variety of weekly menu options before introducing subcategories, one being a specific section for “Entertainers.” Differentiating the ordinary meal planner from that of the entertainer, the guide reminds that, “there is no way in which a woman can entertain her friends more satisfactorily than by giving a well-prepared luncheon or dinner, or an attractive tea or reception.” Suggesting that the best way of gaining accolades and recognition is through a flawless banquet spread, the *New Household Discoveries* creates an idealized picture of an American woman, one that

---

15 Ibid, *Publisher’s Note*.
16 Ibid, Introduction.
18 Morse, *New Household Discoveries*, 62.
remains organized, proper, and capable of running everything from an afternoon luncheon to a sophisticated five course dinner. According to the *New Household Discoveries*, the American woman succeeds in these tasks, as they are cost effective and efficient. In order to achieve this status, immigrants needed to understand and possess the ability to follow the rules that were projected on all Americans.

Revealing that “much of the comfort, cheerfulness, and refinement of family life depends upon proper table service,” the *New Household Discoveries* states the importance of a perfectly set table. Similarly, in the *Settlement Cookbook: The Way to a Man’s Heart*, immigrant women were instructed to “have a table with square ends [and]...place the center of the table-cloth in the center of the table, smooth it into place, and have the folds straight with the edge of the table.” Compiled by Lizzie Black Kander of the Abraham Lincoln Settlement House in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the *Way to a Man’s Heart* is one of numerous examples of cookbooks that were published by women for women. The intention of such cookbooks was to instruct immigrants to cook meals that incorporated ethnic food alongside ingredients that would be accepted by all cooks in the region.

**The Women of America Will Show You How to Be American**

Throughout the 1900s, American progressives worked diligently to implement reforms and create a hygienic standard of living that also accorded with social norms of cleanliness. With an increase in population and thus an increase in women keeping house, cookbooks were “intended for poor and immigrant women.” It was through recipes that women were able to learn what should and should not be done in the proper American household. Organizing a place where young immigrant women could learn necessary household skills, Kander founded the Abraham Lincoln Settlement House in Milwaukee during the early 1900s. Various ethnicities, primarily Jewish and Italian, gathered at the center to, “adjust to their new land.” A successfully assimilated immigrant, Kander centered her efforts on Americanizing the new wave of immigrants. Her work in Milwaukee proved to be lucrative, as her cookbook sold out in the first year. Kander’s settlement house offered a community where immigrants were able to access necessary accommodations such as bathing and lessons on cleanliness. The primary focus of Kander’s Americanization efforts were found in the kitchen, as “multiple generations of Jewish immigrants had learned to abandon their traditional cooking practices, and adapt and assimilate to middle-class customs and values.”

---

19 Ibid, 72.
21 Neuhaus, *Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, 17.
23 Since the original publication, the Settlement House Cookbook has sold 1.5 million copies under forty different editions.
remains organized, proper, and capable of running everything from an afternoon luncheon to a sophisticated five course dinner. According to the *New Household Discoveries*, the American woman succeeds in these tasks, as they are cost effective and efficient. In order to achieve this status, immigrants needed to understand and possess the ability to follow the rules that were projected on all Americans.

Revealing that “much of the comfort, cheerfulness, and refinement of family life depends upon proper table service,” the *New Household Discoveries* states the importance of a perfectly set table.\(^{19}\) Similarly, in the *Settlement Cookbook: The Way to a Man’s Heart*, immigrant women were instructed to “have a table with square ends [and]...place the center of the table-cloth in the center of the table, smooth it into place, and have the folds straight with the edge of the table.”\(^{20}\) Compiled by Lizzie Black Kander of the Abraham Lincoln Settlement House in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the *Way to a Man’s Heart* is one of numerous examples of cookbooks that were published by women for women. The intention of such cookbooks was to instruct immigrants to cook meals that incorporated ethnic food alongside ingredients that would be accepted by all cooks in the region.

**The Women of America Will Show You How to Be American**

Throughout the 1900s, American progressives worked diligently to implement reforms and create a hygienic standard of living that also accorded with social norms of cleanliness. With an increase in population and thus an increase in women keeping house, cookbooks were “intended for poor and immigrant women.”\(^{21}\) It was through recipes that women were able to learn what should and should not be done in the proper American household. Organizing a place where young immigrant women could learn necessary household skills, Kander founded the Abraham Lincoln Settlement House in Milwaukee during the early 1900s. Various ethnicities, primarily Jewish and Italian, gathered at the center to, “adjust to their new land.”\(^{22}\) A successfully assimilated immigrant, Kander centered her efforts on Americanizing the new wave of immigrants. Her work in Milwaukee proved to be lucrative, as her cookbook sold out in the first year.\(^{23}\) Kander’s settlement house offered a community where immigrants were able to access necessary accommodations such as bathing and lessons on cleanliness. The primary focus of Kander’s Americanization efforts were found in the kitchen, as “multiple generations of Jewish immigrants had learned to abandon their traditional cooking practices, and adapt and assimilate to middle-class customs and values.”\(^{24}\) Believing that

\(^{19}\) Ibid, 72.


\(^{21}\) Neuhaus, *Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, 17.

\(^{22}\) Roberta Saltzman, “From Sanitary Fairs to ”The Settlement:“ Early Charity Cookbooks,” New York Public Library.

\(^{23}\) Since the original publication, the Settlement House Cookbook has sold 1.5 million copies under forty different editions.

the ultimate status of assimilation was through food customs, Kander published the first edition of her cookbook in 1903.

Kander’s recipes proved to be successful in educating immigrants in the kitchen. Divided into clear sections, such as Canning Fruit and Fried Cakes, the cookbook also included many new ingredients of the time, including Mixtures with Baking Powder. The recipes aided immigrants in the Americanization process because they were exposed to new ingredients and utensils that were quickly becoming popular among Americans. In this sense, the cooks were placed on a level playing field, no one having a distinct advantage over another. Another unique aspect of The Settlement Cook Book can be found in the “Course of Instruction.” Kander offered cooking classes at the Settlement because she believed that, “the immigrant mother had to be recruited to adopt ‘American’ standards as her own,” something that Kander felt qualified to aide.25 In order to keep attendance at the classes, Kander modified many ethnic dishes that immigrants cherished and made them acceptable in American standards, such as kuchen and matzos pudding.

In turn, The Settlement Cook Book contains “Course of Instruction: As Given By ‘The Settlement’ Cooking Classes,” ensuring that women would have access to specific techniques and directions, even outside of the classroom. With a heavy Jewish and Germanic influence, Kander’s recipes include Matzos Balls and Cabbage Salad but even Spaghetti Italienne, presumably borrowed from the Italian immigrants who found themselves at the Settlement. Furthermore, Kander utilized the value of Americanizing food through her cooking classes where she instructed immigrants that while keeping a pristine house was important, it was more important to do so as an American: “the goal in Milwaukee was not to catch a man, but to become an American.”26 By cooking a Potato and Meat Pie or learning to poach a perfect egg, a young woman was instructed to successfully navigate the kitchen, no matter her nationality and matrimony.

Organizations, such as churches and clubs and volunteer groups, such as the Junior League utilized the demands for cookbooks to raise money, and by 1915 six thousand different charity cookbooks had been published.27 Highlighting regional recipes and customs, the charity cookbooks reveal how different areas accepted immigrants in America. The Blue Grass Cookbook from Kentucky included foods that were, “fried, after Southern style, half submerged in a rich cream of gravy,” while the Friday Club of Yarmouth Massachusetts supplied recipes for pot roast and date and walnut sandwiches in its Cape Cod Cookbook.28 While some books focus solely on “whiteness,” others include a variety of tastes and traditions, such as the Settlement Cookbook. While many immigrants utilized programs such as those offered by Kander, some groups were able to find success and acceptance much easier than others. Upon arrival to their new homes,

25 Ibid, 41.

26 Ibid, 36.

27 Michelle, Green, “A League of Their Own: Community Cookbooks,” Food and Wine.

28 Minnie C. Fox, The Blue Grass Cook Book (New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, 1904) VIII.
the ultimate status of assimilation was through food customs, Kander published the first edition of her cookbook in 1903.

Kander’s recipes proved to be successful in educating immigrants in the kitchen. Divided into clear sections, such as Canning Fruit and Fried Cakes, the cookbook also included many new ingredients of the time, including Mixtures with Baking Powder. The recipes aided immigrants in the Americanization process because they were exposed to new ingredients and utensils that were quickly becoming popular among Americans. In this sense, the cooks were placed on a level playing field, no one having a distinct advantage over another. Another unique aspect of The Settlement Cook Book can be found in the “Course of Instruction.” Kander offered cooking classes at the Settlement because she believed that, “the immigrant mother had to be recruited to adopt ‘American’ standards as her own,” something that Kander felt qualified to aide. In order to keep attendance at the classes, Kander modified many ethnic dishes that immigrants cherished and made them acceptable in American standards, such as kuchen and matzos pudding.

In turn, The Settlement Cook Book contains “Course of Instruction: As Given By ‘The Settlement’ Cooking Classes,” ensuring that women would have access to specific techniques and directions, even outside of the classroom. With a heavy Jewish and Germanic influence, Kander’s recipes include Matzos Balls and Cabbage Salad but even Spaghetti Italienne, presumably borrowed from the Italian immigrants who found themselves at the Settlement. Furthermore, Kander utilized the value of Americanizing food through her cooking classes where she instructed immigrants that while keeping a pristine house was important, it was more important to do so as an American: “the goal in Milwaukee was not to catch a man, but to become an American.” By cooking a Potato and Meat Pie or learning to poach a perfect egg, a young woman was instructed to successfully navigate the kitchen, no matter her nationality and matrimony.

Organizations, such as churches and clubs and volunteer groups, such as the Junior League utilized the demands for cookbooks to raise money, and by 1915 six thousand different charity cookbooks had been published. Highlighting regional recipes and customs, the charity cookbooks reveal how different areas accepted immigrants in America. The Blue Grass Cookbook from Kentucky included foods that were, “fried, after Southern style, half submerged in a rich cream of gravy,” while the Friday Club of Yarmouth Massachusetts supplied recipes for pot roast and date and walnut sandwiches in its Cape Cod Cookbook. While some books focus solely on “whiteness,” others include a variety of tastes and traditions, such as the Settlement Cookbook. While many immigrants utilized programs such as those offered by Kander, some groups were able to find success and acceptance much easier than others. Upon arrival to their new homes,

25 Ibid, 41.
26 Ibid, 36.
27 Michelle, Green, “A League of Their Own: Community Cookbooks,” Food and Wine.
28 Minnie C. Fox, The Blue Grass Cook Book (New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, 1904) VIII.
immigrants quickly realized that, “old world foods carried foreignness,” and in order to remove the damaging stigma, changes had to be made quickly. One ethnicity in particular, Germans, had a unique experience with the Americanization process, one that left lasting impressions on the country.

**Bratwurst, Beer, and Baseball**

Making their way from the German countryside to the bustle of American cities, German immigrants found a niche for employment but difficulties in leaving behind the food of their ancestors. Deemed the, “model immigrant,” Germans found success in tailoring and other professional endeavors, and were accepted by many Americans. Although Americans rejected many foreign aspects, German food items endured a noticeable give-and-take platform. With each new point of contact, an exchange of ideas occurred. Upon arrival the immigrants encountered a housing shortage as the construction of new living spaces lagged behind the influx of residents. Tenement houses became the standard home for immigrants and the subpar conditions forced creativity in meal planning, such as one-pot meals and careful use of water. Southern Germans relied on a diet heavy on “flour foods,” such as dumplings and noodles, while those in the North ate potatoes, beans, and lentils. Once in America, a blending of German foods occurred, so much so that Americans adopted many items and incorporated them into their own diet, despite the initial rejection of such dietary standards.

A significant indicator of German assimilation in America can be found in the cookbook *Praktisches Kochbuch*. Published for several years in Germany, author Henriette Davidis provided German families with the ins and outs of German cuisine. In 1879, the cookbook was published once again, this time in Milwaukee. Translated into English as the *Practical Cookbook for Germans in America*, the recipes allowed Germans to maintain ties with their home but, more importantly, gave non-Germans access to foreign foods that were common in many immigrant households. Changing only the measurements to American units, Davidis’ German cookbook remained authentic with recipes for meats (*fleisch*) and potatoes (*kartoffeln*). Reversing the roles and placing the American as foreigner, the publisher noted that, “the German (metrical) weights and measures have been changed to conform to those in vogue and best understood in this country.” With a table of contents listing entries such as salads, sauces, and desserts, *Germans in America* appeared similar to any other American cookbook, except for a translation index in the back and a variety of sauerkraut dishes. The mutual exchange of ideas can be seen in *Germans in America*, evidenced by a section entitled “Soufflés: And Various Dishes Made of Macaroni and Noodles,” highlighting the melding of

---

29 Kander and Schoenfeld, *The Way to a Man’s Heart: The Settlement Cookbook*, XIII.
30 Ziegleman, *97 Orchard*, 37; 4.
31 Ibid, 8.
32 Ibid, 22.
34 Henriette Davidis, *Pickled Herring and Pumpkin Pie: A Nineteenth-Century Cookbook for German Immigrants to America* (1911; repr. Madison: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, 2003), VI.
immigrants quickly realized that, “old world foods carried foreignness,” and in order to remove the damaging stigma, changes had to be made quickly. One ethnicity in particular, Germans, had a unique experience with the Americanization process, one that left lasting impressions on the country.

**Bratwurst, Beer, and Baseball**

Making their way from the German countryside to the bustle of American cities, German immigrants found a niche for employment but difficulties in leaving behind the food of their ancestors. Deemed the, “model immigrant,” Germans found success in tailoring and other professional endeavors, and were accepted by many Americans. Although Americans rejected many foreign aspects, German food items endured a noticeable give-and-take platform. With each new point of contact, an exchange of ideas occurred. Upon arrival the immigrants encountered a housing shortage as the construction of new living spaces lagged behind the influx of residents. Tenement houses became the standard home for immigrants and the subpar conditions forced creativity in meal planning, such as one-pot meals and careful use of water. Southern Germans relied on a diet heavy on “flour foods,” such as dumplings and noodles, while those in the North ate potatoes, beans, and lentils. Once in America, a blending of German foods occurred, so much so that Americans adopted many items and incorporated them into their own diet, despite the initial rejection of such dietary standards.

A significant indicator of German assimilation in America can be found in the cookbook *Praktisches Kochbuch*. Published for several years in Germany, author Henriette Davidis provided German families with the ins and outs of German cuisine. In 1879, the cookbook was published once again, this time in Milwaukee. Translated into English as the *Practical Cookbook for Germans in America*, the recipes allowed Germans to maintain ties with their home but, more importantly, gave non-Germans access to foreign foods that were common in many immigrant households. Changing only the measurements to American units, Davidis’ German cookbook remained authentic with recipes for meats (fleisch) and potatoes (kartoffeln). Reversing the roles and placing the American as foreigner, the publisher noted that, “the German (metrical) weights and measures have been changed to conform to those in vogue and best understood in this country.” With a table of contents listing entries such as salads, sauces, and desserts, *Germans in America* appeared similar to any other American cookbook, except for a translation index in the back and a variety of sauerkraut dishes. The mutual exchange of ideas can be seen in *Germans in America*, evidenced by a section entitled “Soufflés: And Various Dishes Made of Macaroni and Noodles,” highlighting the melding of

---

29 Kander and Schoenfeld, *The Way to a Man’s Heart: The Settlement Cook Book*, XIII.
30 Ziegleman, *97 Orchard*, 37; 4.
31 Ibid, 8.
32 Ibid, 22.
34 Henriette Davidis, *Pickled Herring and Pumpkin Pie: A Nineteenth-Century Cookbook for German Immigrants to America* (1911; repr. Madison: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, 2003), VI.
recipes for an instant american 241

ethnic foods that could be enjoyed by many cultures. 35

An 1889 advertisement in Ladies’ Home Journal reminded readers that there was no substitute for Fleischmann’s yeast. Proving to be a name-specified ingredient in many recipes, the yeast monopolized the market and made other brands less favorable through marketing campaigns and advertisements. As it turns out, Fleischmann, an immigrant from Germany, had stepped out of the stereotypical lederhosen and into the pockets of American women’s aprons. Even cooking and baking ingredients took on an ethnic flavor, as Americans willingly believed the tagline, “Fleischmann’s Yeast Has No Equal,” suggesting a dependence on the product. 36

In her dissertation, From Stew to Melting Pot: Immigrant Women and the Cookbooks They Wrote in the Age of Immigration, 1873-1916, Jill Schaarschmidt Nussel, discussed the idea of “white food” asserting her idea that the plethora of white sauces found in cookbooks during this time acted as a, “mask of smoothness…[and a] harmony in a world of disorder.” 37 Whether or not cookbook authors intentionally included chapters devoted to “white sauces” instead of other colored sauces, or it just so happened that most sauces were cream based, Nussel’s observation is noteworthy because it raises the idea that through cooking specific foods and coating them in rich sauces, immigrants were able to Americanize themselves, even if it remained only on the surface. Forced to come to terms with exactly what it meant to be an American, cooks attempted to define culture through what was served for dinner.

Studying the New Americans…and the Old Ones

In 1922 the Carnegie Corporation launched a project titled the Americanization Study to, “explore educational opportunities for adults, primarily new immigrants.” 38 One of the biggest opportunities for education came in the form of dietary health and standards. Claiming that the diet of a typical American was better for overall health than foreign foods, author Bertha M. Wood carefully categorized each immigrant culture alongside the flaws of their diet. For instance, those coming from Mexico ate, “beans, rice, potatoes, peas, chili peppers, and less meat,” which caused stomach problems and an imbalanced diet. 39 The Portuguese were at risk for hypertension because of the salted fish and spices they consumed. Referring to traditionally heavy Italian dishes, food scientists noted a, “a real tax on digestion.” 40 A social worker further commented, “still eating spaghetti, not yet assimilated,” suggesting that an immigrant only became American when all traces of cultural food disinte-

35 Davidis, Pickled Herring and Pumpkin Pie, 250.
37 Jill Schaarschmidt Nussel, From Stew to Melting Pot: Immigrant Women and the Cookbooks They Wrote in the Age of Immigration, 1873-1916 (Toledo: University of Toledo), 2006, 74.
38 Carnegie Corporation of New York, ‘Founding and Early Years.’
39 Michael M. Davis, forward to Foods of the Foreign Born in Relation to Health by Bertha M. Wood (Boston: Whitecomb and Barrows, 1922), 250.
40 Harvey Levenstein, Revolution at the Table: The Transformations of the American Diet (Berkeley: University of California Press), 104.
Recipes for an Instant American 241

ethnic foods that could be enjoyed by many cultures. 35

An 1889 advertisement in Ladies’ Home Journal reminded readers that there was no substitute for Fleischmann’s yeast. Proving to be a name-specified ingredient in many recipes, the yeast monopolized the market and made other brands less favorable through marketing campaigns and advertisements. As it turns out, Fleischmann, an immigrant from Germany, had stepped out of the stereotypical lederhosen and into the pockets of American women’s aprons. Even cooking and baking ingredients took on an ethnic flavor, as Americans willingly believed the tagline, “Fleischmann’s Yeast Has No Equal,” suggesting a dependence on the product. 36

In her dissertation, From Stew to Melting Pot: Immigrant Women and the Cookbooks They Wrote in the Age of Immigration, 1873-1916, Jill Schaarschmidt Nussel, discussed the idea of “white food” asserting her idea that the plethora of white sauces found in cookbooks during this time acted as a, “mask of smoothness...[and a] harmony in a world of disorder.” 37 Whether or not cookbook authors intentionally included chapters devoted to “white sauces” instead of other colored sauces, or it just so happened that most sauces were cream based, Nussel’s observation is noteworthy because it raises the idea that through cooking specific foods and coating them in rich sauces, immigrants were able to Americanize themselves, even if it remained only on the surface. Forced to come to terms with exactly what it meant to be an American, cooks attempted to define culture through what was served for dinner.

Studying the New Americans...and the Old Ones

In 1922 the Carnegie Corporation launched a project titled the Americanization Study to, “explore educational opportunities for adults, primarily new immigrants.” 38 One of the biggest opportunities for education came in the form of dietary health and standards. Claiming that the diet of a typical American was better for overall health than foreign foods, author Bertha M. Wood carefully categorized each immigrant culture alongside the flaws of their diet. For instance, those coming from Mexico ate, “beans, rice, potatoes, peas, chili peppers, and less meat,” which caused stomach problems and an imbalanced diet. 39 The Portuguese were at risk for hypertension because of the salted fish and spices they consumed. Referring to traditionally heavy Italian dishes, food scientists noted a, “a real tax on digestion.” 40 A social worker further commented, “still eating spaghetti, not yet assimilated,” suggesting that an immigrant only became American when all traces of cultural food disinte-

35 Davidis, Pickled Herring and Pumpkin Pie, 250.
37 Jill Schaarschmidt Nussel, From Stew to Melting Pot: Immigrant Women and Cookbooks They Wrote in the Age of Immigration, 1873-1916 (Toledo: University of Toledo), 2006, 74.
38 Carnegie Corporation of New York, “Founding and Early Years.”
39 Michael M. Davis, forward to Foods of the Foreign Born in Relation to Health by Bertha M. Wood (Boston: Whitecomb and Barrows, 1922), 250.
40 Harvey Levenstein, Revolution at the Table: The Transformations of the American Diet (Berkeley: University of California Press), 104.
grated, or transformed into an accepted version. Reflecting on the notion of family affection, Italians confused American food scientists because, “despite their legendary frugality, [Italian] immigrants imported vast amounts of pasta, olive oil, and cheese from Italy, fearing that to use American substitutes would be regarded as a sign of not caring for the family.” With a primary concern of Americanization directed towards money management, immigrants who did not adjust were viewed as “financially irresponsible.” Ultimately, it became evident that food rituals for immigrants were a source of family love and acceptance. Steeped in rich tradition and filled with special meanings, many ethnic foods carried special connotations to immigrant families.

Of special concern to many researchers were the diets of immigrant children. Heavily promoting milk as essential for children’s health, scientists were shocked when one mother of a sick baby revealed she gave it, “soup and buttermilk” in her home country, but with a limited income in America, the child was given “beer and coffee.” Suggesting that children eat, “a diet of milk, strained cereal, and fruit juices,” Americans were dissatisfied to learn that Italian children were, “put on the adults’ diet as soon as they [were] out of swaddling clothes,” and preached that a child could be the epitome of health if the diet was “readjusted,” meaning conformed to American standards.

Beyond the surface of Wood’s cultural generalizations, some positive attributes can be found in the cookbook. The scientists concluded that, “knowledge of the foods of the foreign born and of their native dietaries is the foundation of all success in this endeavor,” alluding to a willingness to better understand immigrants food customs. Food clinics with trained nurses and skilled dietitians were suggested as remedies for immigrants struggling to adopt an American diet. Even though the overarching goal was to thoroughly Americanize the immigrants, a realization that the challenge of “attaining a satisfactory diet, particularly when the income is small,” existed, but the task at hand remained important—to be accepted meant subscribing to the American standards, no matter the cost.

**Forming A Common Identity**

As the country continued to progress and undergo a series of reforms, immigrants who did not follow suit fell behind and became alienated. By maintaining the foreign label and rejecting habits that would make them American, immigrants who held firmly to their birth culture found it difficult to survive. Laura Shehene notes that, “In America, a chasm lay between past and future: between cooking rice perfectly and going to school, between ritual Sabbath dinners and

---

41 Ibid, 105.
42 Ibid, 108.
43 Wood and Davis, *Foods of the Foreign Born in Relation to Health*, III.
44 Ibid, 250.
46 Ibid, 275.
grated, or transformed into an accepted version. Reflecting on the notion of family affection, Italians confused American food scientists because, “despite their legendary frugality, [Italian] immigrants imported vast amounts of pasta, olive oil, and cheese from Italy, fearing that to use American substitutes would be regarded as a sign of not caring for the family.” With a primary concern of Americanization directed towards money management, immigrants who did not adjust were viewed as “financially irresponsible.” Ultimately, it became evident that food rituals for immigrants were a source of family love and acceptance. Steeped in rich tradition and filled with special meanings, many ethnic foods carried special connotations to immigrant families.

Of special concern to many researchers were the diets of immigrant children. Heavily promoting milk as essential for children’s health, scientists were shocked when one mother of a sick baby revealed she gave it, “soup and buttermilk” in her home country, but with a limited income in America, the child was given “beer and coffee.” Suggesting that children eat, “a diet of milk, strained cereal, and fruit juices,” Americans were dissatisfied to learn that Italian children were, “put on the adults’ diet as soon as they [were] out of swaddling clothes,” and preached that a child could be the epitome of health if the diet was “readjusted,” meaning conformed to American standards.

Beyond the surface of Wood’s cultural generalizations, some positive attributes can be found in the cookbook. The scientists concluded that, “knowledge of the foods of the foreign born and of their native dietaries is the foundation of all success in this endeavor,” alluding to a willingness to better understand immigrants food customs. Food clinics with trained nurses and skilled dietitians were suggested as remedies for immigrants struggling to adopt an American diet. Even though the overarching goal was to thoroughly Americanize the immigrants, a realization that the challenge of “attaining a satisfactory diet, particularly when the income is small,” existed, but the task at hand remained important—to be accepted meant subscribing to the American standards, no matter the cost.

**Forming A Common Identity**

As the country continued to progress and undergo a series of reforms, immigrants who did not follow suit fell behind and became alienated. By maintaining the foreign label and rejecting habits that would make them American, immigrants who held firmly to their birth culture found it difficult to survive. Laura Shehonne notes that, “In America, a chasm lay between past and future: between cooking rice perfectly and going to school, between ritual Sabbath dinners and

---

41 Ibid, 105.
42 Ibid, 108.
43 Wood and Davis, *Foods of the Foreign Born in Relation to Health*, III.
44 Ibid, 250.
46 Ibid, 275.
middle-class mobility, between the old mamma in the kitchen and the ‘New Woman’ of the 1920s who motored about in cars.” Because the idea had been previously unchallenged, little to no thought was placed on the notion of a uniquely American diet. Upon the arrival of massive waves of immigrants, though, it became a common belief that how and what Americans ate was superior to that of other countries. Thus, the cookbooks and magazines published during this time presented an idealized image of American cuisine, one that did not yet fully exist. The publication of such cookbooks remained active, but following World War II and the United States entry into the Cold War years, the push to be an American became a primary concern, this time leaving no ambiguity where dinner and identity were concerned.

**War, Recovery, and a New America**

Throughout the war years and the Depression, Americans were faced with strict rationing and limited food access. Proving their worth as selfless citizens for a country that was not even their own, immigrant families sacrificed for the war efforts just as American servicemen did. The idea of Americanizing the immigrant population was placed on the backburner and a point of cultural exchange occurred. Although Italian-Americans were deemed financially wasteful for importing goods, and thought to eat too much pasta, by the 1920s Italian food became a norm in American households. Spaghetti became a regular school night dinner, although the addition of meatballs gave it a unique American twist.

In the same process, German foods became synonymous with American tradition. Hot dogs, hamburgers and beer define baseball culture, but years before, the Germans had been ridiculed and asked, “how could you be so mean to grind up all those doggies in your hot dog machine,” referring to the suspicion towards immigrant practices. During World War I, cookbooks encouraged families to eat patriotically, and so ethnic foods such as German sauerkraut were given patriotic monikers like Victory Cabbage. It became a citizen’s duty to proudly represent America, and, in order to do so, foreign items underwent transformations to easily slide into American households.

Following the devastation of World Wars I and II, the United States embarked on a mission of recovery. The country itself escaped harm, but the mindset of the American public weighed heavy with many years of wartime chaos. The dropping of the atomic bomb signaled the end of World War II, and while the war was over, a new fear loomed—the nuclear threat. Fear, paranoia, and extreme caution marked the mid-century for Americans. In order to fight communism and present itself as a strong unified front, the United States deployed its most accessible weapon—the family. A mother, father, and two children living in a


50 Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*, 123.
middle-class mobility, between the old mamma in the kitchen and the ‘New Woman’ of the 1920s who motored about in cars.” Because the idea had been previously unchallenged, little to no thought was placed on the notion of a uniquely American diet. Upon the arrival of massive waves of immigrants, though, it became a common belief that how and what Americans ate was superior to that of other countries. Thus, the cookbooks and magazines published during this time presented an idealized image of American cuisine, one that did not yet fully exist. The publication of such cookbooks remained active, but following World War II and the United States entry into the Cold War years, the push to be an American became a primary concern, this time leaving no ambiguity where dinner and identity were concerned.

War, Recovery, and a New America

Throughout the war years and the Depression, Americans were faced with strict rationing and limited food access. Proving their worth as selfless citizens for a country that was not even their own, immigrant families sacrificed for the war efforts just as American servicemen did. The idea of Americanizing the immigrant population was placed on the backburner and a point of cultural exchange occurred. Although Italian-Americans were deemed financially wasteful for importing goods, and thought to eat too much pasta, by the 1920s Italian food became a norm in American households. Spaghetti became a regular school night dinner, although the addition of meatballs gave it a unique American twist.

In the same process, German foods became synonymous with American tradition. Hot dogs, hamburgers and beer define baseball culture, but years before, the Germans had been ridiculed and asked, “how could you be so mean to grind up all those doggies in your hot dog machine,” referring to the suspicion towards immigrant practices. During World War I, cookbooks encouraged families to eat patriotically, and so ethnic foods such as German sauerkraut were given patriotic monikers like Victory Cabbage. It became a citizen’s duty to proudly represent America, and, in order to do so, foreign items underwent transformations to easily slide into American households.

Following the devastation of World Wars I and II, the United States embarked on a mission of recovery. The country itself escaped harm, but the mindset of the American public weighed heavy with many years of wartime chaos. The dropping of the atomic bomb signaled the end of World War II, and while the war was over, a new fear loomed—the nuclear threat. Fear, paranoia, and extreme caution marked the mid-century for Americans. In order to fight communism and present itself as a strong unified front, the United States deployed its most accessible weapon—the family. A mother, father, and two children living in a


50 Gabaccia, We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans, 123.
single family home marked with a green lawn and shiny new car in the driveway embodied the American Dream. It became a patriotic duty to produce a nuclear family and to conform to this new notion. To widely circulate these ideals, publishers reached the household in the same way as before, through cookbooks and magazines. Just as the immigrants learned to be American through such books, it was now the turn of Americans to demonstrate that they could be the perfect images of democracy.

When immigrants first arrived to the United States, they were instructed how to speak, dress, and act if they were to successfully assimilate into American culture. These expectations could be found in guidebooks and cookbooks because the pages were filled with projections of what Americans were. Sherrie A. Inness notes that cookbooks throughout the twentieth century, “attempted to inculcate its readers with upper- and middle-class ideals...women learned as much about being ladies through reading a cookbook as they learned about how to decorate tea sandwiches.”

Similarly, in the post-war era, an ideal and uniformed idea was projected about what it meant to be a welcomed citizen in society. In a time filled with political scrutiny and paranoia, along with overwhelming mass markets for consumption, the United States was changing, and in order to succeed it was vital to keep up.

With food rations lifted and the economy thriving, the dream of gaining an education, owning a home, and having new appliances became easily accessible to many Americans. People in the United States were judged by possessions, as the famous Kitchen Debate between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev memorably showcased. The cookbooks published during the 1950s highlighted the newfound consumer culture and suggested another important revelation. As Publisher’s Weekly noted in 1947, “America in the postwar years experienced ‘a cook book boom,’” further showing the dedication people had in not only spending in the “era of abundance,” but the desire to achieve the ideal life and casserole.

Craving a sense of normalcy following the Depression and tumultuous war years, Americans happily purchased the colorful cookbooks with glossy pictures and newfound ingredients. During the same time, the process of canning and freezing foods became well regimented and corresponding cookbooks highlighted new conveniences, including frozen desserts and prepackaged ingredients, such as cooked noodles. In turn, cookbooks appeared different than those of the past because they emphasized such products as canned soup and boxed cake mixes. Often times, individual brands published cookbooks to further promote their products. The recipes included in the cookbooks remain important because, for the first time, Americans had a unique cuisine that was different than any other, even if the main ingredients were marshmallows and canned foods.

Although immigrant food had been accepted at times, if a family had not successfully assimilated into American culture by the 1950s, it proved to be a challenging time to be different. American cuisine


52 Neuhaus, Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America, 164.
single family home marked with a green lawn and shiny new car in the driveway embodied the American Dream. It became a patriotic duty to produce a nuclear family and to conform to this new notion. To widely circulate these ideals, publishers reached the household in the same way as before, through cookbooks and magazines. Just as the immigrants learned to be American through such books, it was now the turn of Americans to demonstrate that they could be the perfect images of democracy.

When immigrants first arrived to the United States, they were instructed how to speak, dress, and act if they were to successfully assimilate into American culture. These expectations could be found in guidebooks and cookbooks because the pages were filled with projections of what Americans were. Sherrie A. Inness notes that cookbooks throughout the twentieth century, “attempted to inculcate its readers with upper- and middle-class ideals...women learned as much about being ladies through reading a cookbook as they learned about how to decorate tea sandwiches.”

Similarly, in the post-war era, an ideal and uniformed idea was projected about what it meant to be a welcomed citizen in society. In a time filled with political scrutiny and paranoia, along with overwhelming mass markets for consumption, the United States was changing, and in order to succeed it was vital to keep up.

With food rations lifted and the economy thriving, the dream of gaining an education, owning a home, and having new appliances became easily accessible to many Americans. People in the United States were judged by possessions, as the famous Kitchen Debate between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev memorably showcased. The cookbooks published during the 1950s highlighted the newfound consumer culture and suggested another important revelation. As Publisher’s Weekly noted in 1947, “America in the postwar years experienced ‘a cook book boom,” further showing the dedication people had in not only spending in the “era of abundance,” but the desire to achieve the ideal life and casserole.

Craving a sense of normalcy following the Depression and tumultuous war years, Americans happily purchased the colorful cookbooks with glossy pictures and newfound ingredients. During the same time, the process of canning and freezing foods became well regimented and corresponding cookbooks highlighted new conveniences, including frozen desserts and prepackaged ingredients, such as cooked noodles. In turn, cookbooks appeared different than those of the past because they emphasized such products as canned soup and boxed cake mixes. Often times, individual brands published cookbooks to further promote their products. The recipes included in the cookbooks remain important because, for the first time, Americans had a unique cuisine that was different than any other, even if the main ingredients were marshmallows and canned foods.

Although immigrant food had been accepted at times, if a family had not successfully assimilated into American culture by the 1950s, it proved to be a challenging time to be different. American cuisine

---


52 Neuhaus, Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America, 164.
became centered on the white, middle-class nuclear family. This was the family everyone wanted to be, the image they worked for and, most obviously, the one who received the most attention. Cookbooks followed suit, displaying one “American” dish after another.

Ingredients such as marshmallows, Jell-O, and items that could be fashioned into a casserole became intimately connected to the American kitchen. Any food item that had not been adopted by white Americans remained foreign, or “exotic,” making it seemingly out of reach in the standard kitchen. As a result, many “exotic” foods became lesser versions of the original, reworked in order for the nuclear mother to wow her guests with Chinese egg foo yung. By the mid-century, previously rejected foods graced the shelves of supermarkets, resting quietly next to American goods. It was noted that, “near the cans of Boston baked beans and codfish cakes stood cans of spaghetti and chop suey,” signifying the unification of ethnicity and modern convenience.

Dinner is Ready- It’s in the Cupboard...and the Bomb Shelter

A woman standing over the stove with a young boy tugging at her apron is bombarded with questions from every direction: “Where’s my sweater, Mom? Mom! The light bulb’s burned out! Mary, is my suit back from the cleaner’s?” Mother is expected to answer all the questions and have a solution for every problem, but breakfast must be made, too. Ralston Hot Cereal knew how to attract the attention of busy mothers and rave, “Delicious hot wheat cereal cooks in just 10 seconds!” With the demands of keeping the ideal nuclear family running smoothly, many families embraced and heavily supported the convenience food craze of the decade. There were advertisements for Campbell’s Canned Soup, Nabisco packaged cookies and crackers, Libby’s canned sliced pineapples, Bisquick “quickest nut bread ever,” Pillsbury Pie Crust and Comstock pre-sliced canned apples. Even Puss ‘n Boots cat food became canned. The entire dining sphere became something neatly sealed, packaged, and canned, perfect for placing in the pantry or nuclear bomb shelter, further reflecting the Cold War mentality.

In examining similar advertisements from decades before, it can be discerned that the emphasis shifted from what was right to what was easy. A Ralston Cereal advertisement from 1901 shows a young child in a mother’s lap. Gripping the box of cereal, the caption reads, “I Love Ralston Breakfast Food as Good as Mama!” Advertised by Purina as the “most healthful cereal you can eat,” Purina Flour claims the cereal is healthy and good for children. A 1905 advertisement claims that Ralston was, “food not medicine” and “a little care in the diet will keep children well and happy.”

Contrasting with other advertisements of the

53 Inness, Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture, 40.
54 Gabaccia, We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans, 122.
became centered on the white, middle-class nuclear family. This was the family everyone wanted to be, the image they worked for and, most obviously, the one who received the most attention. Cookbooks followed suit, displaying one “American” dish after another. Ingredients such as marshmallows, Jell-O, and items that could be fashioned into a casserole became intimately connected to the American kitchen. Any food item that had not been adopted by white Americans remained foreign, or “exotic,” making it seemingly out of reach in the standard kitchen. As a result, many “exotic” foods became lesser versions of the original, reworked in order for the nuclear mother to wow her guests with Chinese egg foo yung. By the mid-century, previously rejected foods graced the shelves of supermarkets, resting quietly next to American goods. It was noted that, “near the cans of Boston baked beans and codfish cakes stood cans of spaghetti and chop suey,” signifying the unification of ethnicity and modern convenience.

Dinner is Ready- It’s in the Cupboard…and the Bomb Shelter

A woman standing over the stove with a young boy tugging at her apron is bombarded with questions from every direction: “Where’s my sweater, Mom? Mom! The light bulb’s burned out! Mary, is my suit back from the cleaner’s?” Mother is expected to answer all the questions and have a solution for every problem, but breakfast must be made, too. Ralston Hot Cereal knew how to attract the attention of busy mothers and rave, “Delicious hot wheat cereal cooks in just 10 seconds!” With the demands of keeping the ideal nuclear family running smoothly, many families embraced and heavily supported the convenience food craze of the decade. There were advertisements for Campbell’s Canned Soup, Nabisco packaged cookies and crackers, Libby’s canned sliced pineapples, Bisquick “quickest nut bread ever,” Pillsbury Pie Crust and Comstock pre-sliced canned apples. Even Puss ‘n Boots cat food became canned. The entire dining sphere became something neatly sealed, packaged, and canned, perfect for placing in the pantry or nuclear bomb shelter, further reflecting the Cold War mentality.

In examining similar advertisements from decades before, it can be discerned that the emphasis shifted from what was right to what was easy. A Ralston Cereal advertisement from 1901 shows a young child in a mother’s lap. Gripping the box of cereal, the caption reads, “I Love Ralston Breakfast Food as Good as Mama!” Advertised by Purina as the “most healthful cereal you can eat,” Purina Flour claims the cereal is healthy and good for children. A 1905 advertisement claims that Ralston was, “food not medicine” and “a little care in the diet will keep children well and happy.” Contrasting with other advertisements of the

53 Inness, Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture, 40.
54 Gabaccia, We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans, 122.
1950s, Ralston continued to state its nutritional values, but with the added convenience of being fully and abundantly prepared in ten seconds, it was a clear reflection of the economy of the time. In the October 13, 1952 issue of *Life* magazine, a mother can again be seen at the stove top overwhelmed by multiple voice bubbles: “honey, have you seen the keys, Jake should be calling, mom what’s for dinner?” Realizing that this is a typical daily scenario for most, Ralston reveals that its product is, “wonderful news for busy mothers.” While health was still a concern, the main issue at hand for Americans was time. By appealing to the plight of the mother, initially with health concerns and then moving to time limitations, Ralston advertisements provide a glimpse into the changing priorities in the American kitchen, transitioning from home grown products to quick and easy staples.

**Short on Time, Mom? Not to Worry- We Even Have Variety!**

Americans, women in particular, were told that in order to be the ideal homemaker, each and every meal had to be prepared properly and on time. With the countless other responsibilities at hand, processed foods became heavily relied upon, especially because value was placed on domestic abilities in the kitchen. There was clear demand for quick and easy food products, and companies felt obliged to come to the scene of the busy mother. A burnt roast or ruined dish jeopardized a woman’s position as the perfect wife and American. Magazines and cookbooks instructed women that they had to be flawless in appearance and ability, and many achieved this through the help of premade food items. Schlitz Beer produced a series of advertisements throughout the decade that depicted a young wife, presumably a newlywed, learning not only how to cook but how to keep her husband happy. Crying in the arms of her husband with a ruined supper sitting on the counter, the wife is soothed by her spouse, “at least you didn’t burn the Schlitz.” Readers would view such portrayals and understand that Americans had perfect kitchens and good food, and if the food failed there was always something to remedy the problem. In the case of Schlitz, it was beer, but often times the solution could be pulled out of the cupboard or freezer.

When it came to preparing food the daunting task fell to the hands of the mother. Whether it was one small child’s lunch or a gourmet meal for twenty, women were expected to whip up culinary masterpieces that were not only appetizing, but looked equally delectable. Campbell’s Soup proved to be a popular product, with advertisements for the “hot meal” featured in nearly every issue of *Life* during 1952. Be it the perfect meal to celebrate “family cheer” and the “day baby joins the family in enjoying [Campbell’s] Soup,” or (suggested to the babysitter) “when mother’s away she remembers to say: give him soup for lunch,” Campbell’s monopolized the market when

---

1950s, Ralston continued to state its nutritional values, but with the added convenience of being fully and abundantly prepared in ten seconds, it was a clear reflection of the economy of the time. In the October 13, 1952 issue of Life magazine, a mother can again be seen at the stove top overwhelmed by multiple voice bubbles: “honey, have you seen the keys, Jake should be calling, mom what’s for dinner?” Realizing that this is a typical daily scenario for most, Ralston reveals that its product is, “wonderful news for busy mothers.” While health was still a concern, the main issue at hand for Americans was time. By appealing to the plight of the mother, initially with health concerns and then moving to time limitations, Ralston advertisements provide a glimpse into the changing priorities in the American kitchen, transitioning from home grown products to quick and easy staples.

**Short on Time, Mom? Not to Worry- We Even Have Variety!**

Americans, women in particular, were told that in order to be the ideal homemaker, each and every meal had to be prepared properly and on time. With the countless other responsibilities at hand, processed foods became heavily relied upon, especially because value was placed on domestic abilities in the kitchen. There was clear demand for quick and easy food products, and companies felt obliged to come to the scene of the busy mother. A burnt roast or ruined dish jeopardized a woman’s position as the perfect wife and American. Magazines and cookbooks instructed women that they had to be flawless in appearance and ability, and many achieved this through the help of premade food items. Schlitz Beer produced a series of advertisements throughout the decade that depicted a young wife, presumably a newlywed, learning not only how to cook but how to keep her husband happy. Crying in the arms of her husband with a ruined supper sitting on the counter, the wife is soothed by her spouse, “at least you didn’t burn the Schlitz.” Readers would view such portrayals and understand that Americans had perfect kitchens and good food, and if the food failed there was always something to remedy the problem. In the case of Schlitz, it was beer, but often times the solution could be pulled out of the cupboard or freezer.

When it came to preparing food the daunting task fell to the hands of the mother. Whether it was one small child’s lunch or a gourmet meal for twenty, women were expected to whip up culinary masterpieces that were not only appetizing, but looked equally delectable. Campbell’s Soup proved to be a popular product, with advertisements for the “hot meal” featured in nearly every issue of Life during 1952. Be it the perfect meal to celebrate “family cheer” and the “day baby joins the family in enjoying [Campbell’s] Soup,” or (suggested to the babysitter) “when mother’s away she remembers to say: give him soup for lunch,” Campbell’s monopolized the market when

---

it came to convenient and hot meals. Hunt’s canned tomatoes came to the rescue when it was time to feed dad: “Goulash- the way a man likes it!” Opposed to a more feminine goulash recipe, it was hinted that the robust tomatoes from Hunt’s would make any simple dinner an incredible meal fit for hearty men. Processed food advertisements show that alongside soup and Jell-O molds, even ethnic foods entered the repertoire of the pantry. Hormel chili was the perfect solution for “mom’s night off” because “it’s fun…and so easy that even dad can do it.” A menu dish that had been deemed insufficient in The Americanization Study, chili was conveniently found in a can and became an established essential for busy nights. In a 1956 advertisement, Heinz showcased a “Thrifty Tetrazzini,” with the main ingredient being canned spaghetti in tomato sauce with cheese. The starchy noodles and heavy cheese that previously deemed Italian immigrants as unassimilated became the key ingredient in an American created dish, as Tetrazzini essentially combined leftovers with spaghetti. Similarly, Chun King enticed cooks with the following tagline, “When guests drop in, serve ‘em Chun King Chow Mein and Chop Suey.” Ready in ten minutes and featured in a new three pound can, Chop Suey exemplifies another Americanized ethnic dish. With no concrete origins to Chinese cooking, but rather the borrowing of staple elements, in this case, chow mein noodles, cooks successfully incorporated elements of foreign food into a unique creation. It was now poured from a can and figured into the pages of American cookbooks.

Christopher Holmes Smith states, “the object of frozen foods proponents...revolved around teaching women how to use the new products to convince them that they were gaining ground in American society, even as they appeared to be losing it.” The immigrant women of the 1900s believed that by following the instructions in cookbooks they would be better accepted and assimilated more easily. The early years of the Cold War reignited these familiar sentiments, with families all across American striving to fit in and become thoroughly Americanized. Noting that “the convenience foods make it possible for inexperienced cooks, career women, and busy mothers to serve their families treats such as the perfect fluffy cakes, luscious desserts, hot breads, [and] vegetables,” anyone was capable of creating the perfect meal and becoming the perfect wife and mother, despite any preconceived notions.

Food became something that was no longer tied to specific cultures, but was rather judged in an entirely new way because in order to align with American values, it needed to be jellied, rolled, and fluffed. The influx of recipes that catered to packaged food items and the demand for perfection aligned with the

---

64 Heinz, “Thrifty Tetrazzini,” Advertisement, Chatelaine Magazine, April 1956, 22.
65 Chun King, Chow Mein and Chop Suey, Advertisement, Life, Feb. 16, 1953, 133.
66 Sherrie A. Inness, Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2003), 21.
67 Ibid, 22.
it came to convenient and hot meals.\textsuperscript{61} Hunt’s canned tomatoes came to the rescue when it was time to feed dad: “Goulash- the way a man likes it!”\textsuperscript{62} Opposed to a more feminine goulash recipe, it was hinted that the robust tomatoes from Hunt’s would make any simple dinner an incredible meal fit for hearty men. Processed food advertisements show that alongside soup and Jell-O molds, even ethnic foods entered the repertoire of the pantry. Hormel chili was the perfect solution for “mom’s night off” because “it’s fun…and so easy that even dad can do it.”\textsuperscript{63} A menu dish that had been deemed insufficient in The Americanization Study, chili was conveniently found in a can and became an established essential for busy nights. In a 1956 advertisement, Heinz showcased a “Thrifty Tetrazzini,” with the main ingredient being canned spaghetti in tomato sauce with cheese.\textsuperscript{64} The starchy noodles and heavy cheese that previously deemed Italian immigrants as unassimilated became the key ingredient in an American created dish, as Tetrazzini essentially combined leftovers with spaghetti. Similarly, Chun King enticed cooks with the following tagline, “When guests drop in, serve ‘em Chun King Chow Mein and Chop Suey.”\textsuperscript{65} Ready in ten minutes and featured in a new three pound can, Chop Suey exemplifies another Americanized ethnic dish. With no concrete origins to Chinese cooking, but rather the borrowing of staple elements, in this case, chow mein noodles, cooks successfully incorporated elements of foreign food into a unique creation. It was now poured from a can and figured into the pages of American cookbooks.

Christopher Holmes Smith states, “the object of frozen foods proponents...revolved around teaching women how to use the new products to convince them that they were gaining ground in American society, even as they appeared to be losing it.”\textsuperscript{66} The immigrant women of the 1900s believed that by following the instructions in cookbooks they would be better accepted and assimilated more easily. The early years of the Cold War reignited these familiar sentiments, with families all across American striving to fit in and become thoroughly Americanized. Noting that “the convenience foods make it possible for inexperienced cooks, career women, and busy mothers to serve their families treats such as the perfect fluffy cakes, luscious desserts, hot breads, [and] vegetables,” anyone was capable of creating the perfect meal and becoming the perfect wife and mother, despite any preconceived notions.\textsuperscript{67} Food became something that was no longer tied to specific cultures, but was rather judged in an entirely new way because in order to align with American values, it needed to be jellied, rolled, and fluffed. The influx of recipes that catered to packaged food items and the demand for perfection aligned with the

\textsuperscript{64} Heinz, “Thrifty Tetrazzini,” Advertisement, \textit{Chatelaine Magazine}, April 1956, 22.
\textsuperscript{65} Chun King, Chow Mein and Chop Suey, Advertisement, \textit{Life}, Feb. 16, 1953, 133.

\textsuperscript{66} Sherrie A. Inness, \textit{Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table} (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2003), 21.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid, 22.
vision of Americanization in the 1950s, a world centered on consumerism, uniformity and the appearance of affluence.

500 Tasty Ways to Succeed and Deceive Your Guests
Cookbooks in earlier decades instructed individuals how to create complete meals for families. Recipes for hearty entrée dishes and traditional soup and salad recipes could be found on page after the page. With the rise of convenience foods, however, cookbooks shifted focus to more creative endeavors with entire books devoted to sauces, eggs, and candies. Glazed to perfection and glistening with ornamentation, menu items easily tricked the eye of the eater, often times being vastly different than what was believed. Dishes were no longer straightforward, but instead were crafted into elaborate displays of layers and dimensions, appearing much more appealing than they actually were, a reflection of the Cold War façade.

Because of the ease of the ready-made entrée, energy could be dispensed on side dishes, desserts, and most importantly, snacks. Published in 1950 as part of Culinary Arts Institute series (One of America’s foremost organizations devoted to the science of Better Cookery), the 500 Snacks- Ideas for Entertaining book opens with the concept of the Smorgasbord, noting that, “an old Scandinavian custom, has grown strong deep roots in our national affections until now we feel that it belongs to us.”


The recipes are listed side-by-side, with no distinction in regard to cultural origins. In past cookbooks, recipes with ingredients borrowed from another culture included origins (i.e.-“German”), but now certain elements were incorporated into America’s smorgasbord of food. In 500 Delicious Dishes from Leftovers, Macaroni Salad and Spaghetti Creole were labeled as such, without the ethnic label, “Italian.” Sauerkraut Viennese, Sauerbraten, and Hassenpeffer appeared next to Bran Muffins and Strawberry Jam Cupcakes, again omitting any ethnic identity. A distinction did occur, however, when certain ethnic foods maintained original ties in order to appear fancy and gourmet. Foreign food labels were assigned to certain menu items to appeal to the connoisseur, to the cook who sought the distinction of mastering “Crepes Suzette,” or “Swedish, Dutch, and Polish Pancakes.”

70 The recipes listed in 300 Ways to Serve Eggs were given cultural titles, but with ingredients consisting of flour, salt, milk, sugar, and butter, no trace of authenticity could be found, because the pancakes were created for Americans to suit the proper ideals of utilizing ingredients that were conveniently found. In turn, foreign labels did not mean what they had in the past, and referred instead to a posh recipe that, similar to other foods, was only intriguing on the surface. Rarely did these recipes have any connection to the original. Americanization was no
vision of Americanization in the 1950s, a world centered on consumerism, uniformity and the appearance of affluence.

500 Tasty Ways to Succeed and Deceive Your Guests

Cookbooks in earlier decades instructed individuals how to create complete meals for families. Recipes for hearty entrée dishes and traditional soup and salad recipes could be found on page after the page. With the rise of convenience foods, however, cookbooks shifted focus to more creative endeavors with entire books devoted to sauces, eggs, and candies. Glazed to perfection and glistening with ornamentation, menu items easily tricked the eye of the eater, often times being vastly different than what was believed. Dishes were no longer straightforward, but instead were crafted into elaborate displays of layers and dimensions, appearing much more appealing than they actually were, a reflection of the Cold War façade.

Because of the ease of the ready-made entrée, energy could be dispensed on side dishes, desserts, and most importantly, snacks. Published in 1950 as part of Culinary Arts Institute series (One of America’s foremost organizations devoted to the science of Better Cookery), the 500 Tasty Snacks: Ideas For Entertaining book opens with the concept of the Smorgasbord, noting that, “an old Scandinavian custom, has grown strong deep roots in our national affections until now we feel that it belongs to us.”


The recipes are listed side-by-side, with no distinction in regard to cultural origins. In past cookbooks, recipes with ingredients borrowed from another culture included origins (i.e.-“German”), but now certain elements were incorporated into America’s smorgasbord of food. In 500 Delicious Dishes from Leftovers, Macaroni Salad and Spaghetti Creole were labeled as such, without the ethnic label, “Italian.” Sauerkraut Viennese, Sauerbraten, and Hassenpeffer appeared next to Bran Muffins and Strawberry Jam Cupcakes, again omitting any ethnic identity. A distinction did occur, however, when certain ethnic foods maintained original ties in order to appear fancy and gourmet. Foreign food labels were assigned to certain menu items to appeal to the connoisseur, to the cook who sought the distinction of mastering “Crepes Suzette,” or “Swedish, Dutch, and Polish Pancakes.”

69 Ibid, Introduction.

70 Ibid, 14.

The recipes listed in 300 Ways to Serve Eggs were given cultural titles, but with ingredients consisting of flour, salt, milk, sugar, and butter, no trace of authenticity could be found, because the pancakes were created for Americans to suit the proper ideals of utilizing ingredients that were conveniently found. In turn, foreign labels did not mean what they had in the past, and referred instead to a posh recipe that, similar to other foods, was only intriguing on the surface. Rarely did these recipes have any connection to the original. Americanization was no
longer something reserved just for the immigrant population. What emerged, however, was a uniquely American diet that valued ease and accessibility, one that the previously mentioned Carnegie Institute’s “Americanization Study” would hardly recognize.

Reminiscent of Nessel’s suggestion that immigrants subconsciously coated most foods in a white sauce, the French philosopher Roland Barthes states that there was an “obvious endeavor to glaze surfaces, round them off, to bury the food under the even sediment of sauces, creams, icing, and jellies” when asked about the common 1950s trend of decorating food and making it appear something it was not. A common trend in Cold War American cookbooks involved the almost mocking appearance of food, reflecting the mentality that appearance was more important than reality. Fish dishes became adorned and decorated, while recipes for ground beef recommended fashioning the beef to appear as a luscious T-bone steak. There appeared to be little effort in hiding the concept of sculpting food, as many recipes were blunt, such as Mock Chicken Legs. By mixing pork and veal and “shap[ing] it around skewers, along with canned pineapple,” a hostess was able to serve her guests chicken legs that were far from it. Chicken in Nest - made from fat, flour, salt, pepper, chicken stock and diced cooked chicken - becomes complete by “serv[ing] in a macaroni ring.” To “set off” the chicken nest, the cook could add “full length green beans bound with pimento,” creating a uniquely American presentation of dinner. Recipes for Delectable Dishes of Every Vegetables from Artichokes to Zucchini: 250 Ways to Serve Fresh Vegetables begins with the section “Vegetables as Garnish,” including vegetable flowers, baskets, and cups. Cooks were able to create an Easter Lily and Shasta Daisies from white turnips, a basket from eggplant, and cups from beets and carrots. Stating that the, “blossoms are ingeniously carved,” Americans became accustomed to presenting foods as something they were not, but rather, items that were transformed and made better, a direct reflection of their societal desires. Food became something that was manipulated, molded, deceptive and, arguably, comical in the same sense that suburban neighborhoods and Cold War uniformity dominated the United States. If a given food could be rolled up and garnished it became an instant success. The preoccupation with appearance touched every facet of American life, whether it was the choice of appliances or the believability of a duck dish.

From Immigrants to Nuclear Families

As an American, it was important to follow the expected norms, especially during the Cold War era. During the waves of immigration throughout the early twentieth century, many ideas and opinions surrounded diet and nutrition. Immigrants were told that an Americanized diet was superior to other customs and it was important that food was properly eaten and

71 Neuhaus, Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking, 172.
73 Ibid, 17.
74 Ibid.
75 Ruth Berolzheimer, ed. 250 Ways to Serve Fresh Vegetables (Chicago: Consolidated Books Publishers, 1951) 8.
longer something reserved just for the immigrant population. What emerged, however, was a uniquely American diet that valued ease and accessibility, one that the previously mentioned Carnegie Institute’s “Americanization Study” would hardly recognize.

Reminiscent of Nessel’s suggestion that immigrants subconsciously coated most foods in a white sauce, the French philosopher Roland Barthes states that there was an “obvious endeavor to glaze surfaces, round them off, to bury the food under the even sediment of sauces, creams, icing, and jellies” when asked about the common 1950s trend of decorating food and making it appear something it was not. A common trend in Cold War American cookbooks involved the almost mocking appearance of food, reflecting the mentality that appearance was more important than reality. Fish dishes became adorned and decorated, while recipes for ground beef recommended fashioning the beef to appear as a luscious T-bone steak. There appeared to be little effort in hiding the concept of sculpting food, as many recipes were blunt, such as Mock Chicken Legs. By mixing pork and veal and “shap[ing] it around skewers, along with canned pineapple,” a hostess was able to serve her guests chicken legs that were far from it. Chicken in Nest - made from fat, flour, salt, pepper, chicken stock and diced cooked chicken - becomes complete by “serv[ing] in a macaroni ring.” To “set off” the chicken nest, the cook could add “full length green beans bound with pimento,” creating a uniquely American presentation of dinner. Recipes for Delectable Dishes of Every Vegetables from Artichokes to Zucchini: 250 Ways to Serve Fresh Vegetables begins with the section “Vegetables as Garnish,” including vegetable flowers, baskets, and cups. Cooks were able to create an Easter Lily and Shasta Daisies from white turnips, a basket from eggplant, and cups from beets and carrots. Stating that the, “blossoms are ingeniously carved,” Americans became accustomed to presenting foods as something they were not, but rather, items that were transformed and made better, a direct reflection of their societal desires. Food became something that was manipulated, molded, deceptive and, arguably, comical in the same sense that suburban neighborhoods and Cold War uniformity dominated the United States. If a given food could be rolled up and garnished it became an instant success. The preoccupation with appearance touched every facet of American life, whether it was the choice of appliances or the believability of a duck dish.

From Immigrants to Nuclear Families

As an American, it was important to follow the expected norms, especially during the Cold War era. During the waves of immigration throughout the early twentieth century, many ideas and opinions surrounded diet and nutrition. Immigrants were told that an Americanized diet was superior to other customs and it was important that food was properly eaten and

---

71 Neuhaus, Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking, 172.
73 Ibid, 17.
distributed. Food science and nutrition continued to flourish, especially with the rise of home economics classes during the war years. The 1951 copy of 2000 Useful Facts About Food reminds that:

‘It’s all in knowing how’ [was] the way our grandmother phrased it as she passed her kitchen and marketing lore on to her daughter. But grand-daughter has an opportunity to acquire this information from more accurate if less colorful sources. Food laboratories, chemical laboratories...as well as great testing kitchens both commercial and governmental—all these and more put their findings at her disposal.76

Insinuating that past ideas both about food and the kitchen were outdated and “colorful,” the cookbook attempted to convey a message of modern superiority to the reader. No longer was the immigrant the only holder of incorrect dietary knowledge: Every person who continued to follow the advice of the past was deemed inferior.

**Conclusion**

Today a wide variety of food is easily found in the United States. Julia Child cemented the idea that French cuisine was *très chic*, while food personalities such as the Frugal Gourmet insisted that even the most novice cook could prepare meals of their ancestors. Cooking shows with ethnic origins have proliferated in the media, including those with PBS stars Lidia Bastianich and Ming Tsai. It is apparent that the reintroduction of ethnic cooking has contributed to their acceptance as part of American cuisine. What was once viewed as unacceptable and dangerous has been embraced and craved, even if today’s version appears much different than that of the past. From its inception, the United States has borrowed and incorporated values, traditions and ideas from other cultures. The arrival of foreign immigrants challenged the way Americans thought about identity because it was never truly addressed previously. Food habits that were initially shunned became essential aspects of the American diet by the Cold War. Nuclear fears again confronted ideas of American identity, this time forcing the country to recognize that it was no longer a homogenous race of people, but rather, a diverse one that united under one common image. Every characteristic that formed America emerged on a give-and-take platform from several cultures and customs. Despite the early efforts of reformers who intended to Americanize the immigrants, it became evident that diversity is what made Americans, and their cuisine, unique.

Colleen Zellitti is a History major and Art History minor. Her interests in cooking and antiques inspired the research and analysis for her senior thesis. Colleen focused her studies at Santa Clara on gender roles and societal structures in both the United States and London. She is also a member of Phi Alpha Theta. After graduation, Colleen hopes to work in the field of education and pursue a career in secondary schools.

---

distributed. Food science and nutrition continued to flourish, especially with the rise of home economics classes during the war years. The 1951 copy of *2000 Useful Facts About Food* reminds that:

‘It’s all in knowing how’ [was] the way our grandmother phrased it as she passed her kitchen and marketing lore on to her daughter. But grand-daughter has an opportunity to acquire this information from more accurate if less colorful sources. Food laboratories, chemical laboratories...as well as great testing kitchens both commercial and governmental—all these and more put their findings at her disposal.76

Insinuating that past ideas both about food and the kitchen were outdated and “colorful,” the cookbook attempted to convey a message of modern superiority to the reader. No longer was the immigrant the only holder of incorrect dietary knowledge: Every person who continued to follow the advice of the past was deemed inferior.

**Conclusion**

Today a wide variety of food is easily found in the United States. Julia Child cemented the idea that French cuisine was *très chic*, while food personalities such as the Frugal Gourmet insisted that even the most novice cook could prepare meals of their ancestors. Cooking shows with ethnic origins have proliferated in the media, including those with PBS stars Lidia Bastianich and Ming Tsai. It is apparent that the reintroduction of ethnic cooking has contributed to their acceptance as part of American cuisine. What was once viewed as unacceptable and dangerous has been embraced and craved, even if today’s version appears much different than that of the past. From its inception, the United States has borrowed and incorporated values, traditions and ideas from other cultures. The arrival of foreign immigrants challenged the way Americans thought about identity because it was never truly addressed previously. Food habits that were initially shunned became essential aspects of the American diet by the Cold War. Nuclear fears again confronted ideas of American identity, this time forcing the country to recognize that it was no longer a homogenous race of people, but rather, a diverse one that united under one common image. Every characteristic that formed America emerged on a give-and-take platform from several cultures and customs. Despite the early efforts of reformers who intended to Americanize the immigrants, it became evident that diversity is what made Americans, and their cuisine, unique.

Colleen Zellitti is a History major and Art History minor. Her interests in cooking and antiques inspired the research and analysis for her senior thesis. Colleen focused her studies at Santa Clara on gender roles and societal structures in both the United States and London. She is also a member of Phi Alpha Theta. After graduation, Colleen hopes to work in the field of education and pursue a career in secondary schools.

---

Mobilizing African-Americans against the “Peddlers of Bigotry”: The “NO ON PROPOSITION 14” Campaign in Los Angeles

Tracy Sullivan

Introduction

During the first half of the twentieth century, California represented a safe haven for African-Americans living in the southern region of the United States. Fleeing the “Jim Crow” South, thousands of southern blacks relocated to California in pursuit of social and economic equality. However, once they arrived in their new home, African-Americans soon discovered that life in California was not as they had hoped. While rioting in the streets of Los Angeles in August 1965, an individual voiced the general disappointment of those living in the city’s black districts:

Everywhere they say, ‘Go to California! California’s the great pot o’ gold at the end of the rainbow.’ Well, now we’re here in California, and there ain’t no place else to go, and the only pot is the kind they peddle at Sixteenth and Avalon.\(^1\)

Nine months prior to this statement, voters in California passed Proposition (Prop) 14, a constitutional initiative written to prohibit the existence of fair housing legislation in California. In the months leading up to the proposition’s passage, opponents launched a mighty campaign against what they considered to be “the forces of bigotry.”\(^2\) This paper documents the debates and controversy surrounding Prop 14 in Los Angeles prior to the proposition’s passage. The California Eagle and Los Angeles Sentinel, two popular L.A.-based black newspapers, reveal an active “No on 14” presence in L.A. that placed value on the African-American vote.

Historiography

Time magazine called Prop 14 “the most bitterly fought issue in the nation’s most populous state,” and claimed that it attracted intense interest both inside and outside of California, overshadowing “that of such piddling contests as the one between Johnson and Goldwater.”\(^3\) However, after the Supreme Court overturned the electorate’s decision in 1967, Prop 14 faded from public memory as though it had never happened. Since then, few historians have unearthed Prop 14 from the depths of history. In L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present, Josh Sides provides a minimal, one-paragraph synopsis of Prop 14 as a segue into the Watts Riots.\(^4\)


\(^2\) Dr. Christopher L. Taylor, President of the L.A. NAACP Branch, quoted in “No on 14 Crusade Starts Its ‘Operation Westside’”, Los Angeles Sentinel, October 1, 1964.

\(^3\) “Proposition 14.” Time 84, no. 13 (September 25, 1964), 41.

Mobilizing African-Americans against the “Peddlers of Bigotry”: The “NO ON PROPOSITION 14” Campaign in Los Angeles

Tracy Sullivan

Introduction

During the first half of the twentieth century, California represented a safe haven for African-Americans living in the southern region of the United States. Fleeing the “Jim Crow” South, thousands of southern blacks relocated to California in pursuit of social and economic equality. However, once they arrived in their new home, African-Americans soon discovered that life in California was not as they had hoped. While rioting in the streets of Los Angeles in August 1965, an individual voiced the general disappointment of those living in the city’s black districts:

“Everywhere they say, ‘Go to California! California’s the great pot o’ gold at the end of the rainbow.’ Well, now we’re here in California, and there ain’t no place else to go, and the only pot is the kind they peddle at Sixteenth and Avalon.”

Nine months prior to this statement, voters in California passed Proposition (Prop) 14, a constitutional initiative written to prohibit the existence of fair housing legislation in California. In the months leading up to the proposition’s passage, opponents launched a mighty campaign against what they considered to be “the forces of bigotry.” This paper documents the debates and controversy surrounding Prop 14 in Los Angeles prior to the proposition’s passage. The California Eagle and Los Angeles Sentinel, two popular L.A.-based black newspapers, reveal an active “No on 14” presence in L.A. that placed value on the African-American vote.

Historiography

Time magazine called Prop 14 “the most bitterly fought issue in the nation’s most populous state,” and claimed that it attracted intense interest both inside and outside of California, overshadowing “that of such piddling contests as the one between Johnson and Goldwater.” However, after the Supreme Court overturned the electorate’s decision in 1967, Prop 14 faded from public memory as though it had never happened. Since then, few historians have unearthed Prop 14 from the depths of history. In L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present, Josh Sides provides a minimal, one-paragraph synopsis of Prop 14 as a segue into the Watts Riots.

---


2 Dr. Christopher L. Taylor, President of the L.A. NAACP Branch, quoted in “No on 14 Crusade Starts Its ‘Operation Westside’,” Los Angeles Sentinel, October 1, 1964.

3 “Proposition 14.” Time 84, no. 13 (September 25, 1964), 41.

Recently, Prop 14 has figured more prominently in scholarly research. In The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1948, Prop 14 receives more scholarly attention. The author, Mark Brilliant, explains the “ideological schizophrenia” manifested in the 1964 election when California voters "cast ballots in the same overwhelmingly numbers against Goldwater as they did for Prop 14." Brilliant goes on to explore the consequences of the election, arguing that the ongoing housing debate won Ronald Reagan the governor’s chair in 1967. The same year Brilliant released his book, the University of California Press published Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California, a selective study of California’s most controversial ballot measures. Devoting an entire chapter to the issue of fair housing, Daniel Martinez HoSang details both the campaigns for and against Prop 14. California’s “No on Prop 14” campaign adds to the growing body of literature that challenges the notion that the civil rights movement was an enterprise exclusive to the American South.

The controversy around Prop 14 reveals that the “race problem” existed outside of the South, thereby broadening the scope of the civil rights struggle. This paper places Prop 14 in the broader context of the civil rights movement in order to examine the influences driving California’s fair housing advocates. While Prop 14 affected all ethnic minorities in California, this paper focuses on African-Americans, the main victims of the initiative’s attack. Louis Lomax, a renowned journalist and major African-American figure, described Prop 14 as a direct attack on black people living in California. In September 1964, he told the Sentinel, “We are moved by information which proves that the peddlers of bigotry will unleash an all-out campaign against black people in this state during the last two weeks in October.” Prop 14 especially impacted African-Americans because they experienced more housing discrimination than any other ethnic minority at the time. Mark Brilliant cites a 1961 United States Civil Rights Commission report in which the California advisory committee concludes, “There is a far greater degree of housing mobility for Orientals and Mexican-Americans in California than exists for Negros.”

This paper adds to the existing research by focusing specifically on the “NO” campaign in Los Angeles County rather than the state at large in order to reveal

---

9 Brilliant, The Color of America Has Changed, 171-172.
Recently, Prop 14 has figured more prominently in scholarly research. In *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1948*, Prop 14 receives more scholarly attention. The author, Mark Brilliant, explains the “ideological schizophrenia” manifested in the 1964 election when California voters “cast ballots in the same overwhelmingly numbers against Goldwater as they did for Prop 14.” Brilliant goes on to explore the consequences of the election, arguing that the ongoing housing debate won Ronald Reagan the governor’s chair in 1967. The same year Brilliant released his book, the University of California Press published *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California*, a selective study of California’s most controversial ballot measures. Devoting an entire chapter to the issue of fair housing, Daniel Martinez HoSang details both the campaigns for and against Prop 14. California’s “No on Prop 14” campaign adds to the growing body of literature that challenges the notion that the civil rights movement was an enterprise exclusive to the American South.

The controversy around Prop 14 reveals that the “race problem” existed outside of the South, thereby broadening the scope of the civil rights struggle. This paper places Prop 14 in the broader context of the civil rights movement in order to examine the influences driving California’s fair housing advocates. While Prop 14 affected all ethnic minorities in California, this paper focuses on African-Americans, the main victims of the initiative’s attack. Louis Lomax, a renowned journalist and major African-American figure, described Prop 14 as a direct attack on black people living in California. In September 1964, he told the *Sentinel*, “We are moved by information which proves that the peddlers of bigotry will unleash an all-out campaign against black people in this state during the last two weeks in October.” Prop 14 especially impacted African-Americans because they experienced more housing discrimination than any other ethnic minority at the time. Mark Brilliant cites a 1961 United States Civil Rights Commission report in which the California advisory committee concludes, “There is a far greater degree of housing mobility for Orientals and Mexican-Americans in California than exists for Negroes.”

This paper adds to the existing research by focusing specifically on the “NO” campaign in Los Angeles County rather than the state at large in order to reveal...
Mobilizing African-Americans

campaign nuances specific to the area. It shows that anti-14 forces in L.A. directed energy toward reaching the city’s African-American population. In order to reach this conclusion, I relied on articles published in the Los Angeles Sentinel and California Eagle, two leading black newspapers of the time.

Destination California

World War II created job opportunities on the United States home front for all members of society, including women and ethnic minorities. Demand for munitions, planes, ships, weaponry, and tanks skyrocketed when France and Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939. As a result, employment figures in the U.S. defense industry rose dramatically. At the helm, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt set lofty production goals for the country, emphasizing the necessity to out-produce the enemies “overwhelmingly.”

Under immense pressure by the NAACP and A. Philip Randolph, Roosevelt reluctantly issued Executive Order 8802 on June 25, 1941 to avoid a massive civil rights march. The order banned discrimination in the war industry and established the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) to temporarily oversee hiring practices.

Seizing the newfound job opportunities, five million African-Americans migrated from the South between 1940 and 1970. During the war, 85 percent of the one million African-Americans who left the South settled in California. Los Angeles, one of the country’s largest wartime production centers, was a major destination for African-Americans seeking employment. During the war years, 340,000 job seeking African-Americans moved to L.A., home to a defense industry of over half a million workers in 1943. The largest wave of African-American migration into L.A. occurred in 1943 when over 6,000 newcomers inundated the city every month.

Fooling into thinking California offered a new life ripe with opportunity for all, African-American arrivals quickly discovered the Golden State was not the Promised Land they had envisioned. The use of restrictive housing covenants and block agreements confined African-Americans to the south central section of L.A.

Used in California since the 1920s, restrictive covenants were binding legal contracts whereby the signers vowed to sell their property only to white buyers.

Trapped within the boundaries of Slauson Ave., Broadway, and Alameda St., African-Americans did not

14 May, Golden State, Golden Youth, 11; Sides, L.A. City Limits, 37.
15 May, Golden State, Golden Youth, 11.
16 Sides, L.A. City Limits, 98.
17 HoSang, Racial Propositions, 55.
Mobilizing African-Americans 265

campaign nuances specific to the area. It shows that anti-14 forces in L.A. directed energy toward reaching the city’s African-American population. In order to reach this conclusion, I relied on articles published in the Los Angeles Sentinel and California Eagle, two leading black newspapers of the time.

**Destination California**

World War II created job opportunities on the United States home front for all members of society, including women and ethnic minorities. Demand for ammunitions, planes, ships, weaponry, and tanks skyrocketed when France and Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939. As a result, employment figures in the U.S. defense industry rose dramatically. At the helm, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt set lofty production goals for the country, emphasizing the necessity to out-produce the enemies “overwhelmingly.”

Under immense pressure by the NAACP and A. Philip Randolph, Roosevelt reluctantly issued Executive Order 8802 on June 25, 1941 to avoid a massive civil rights march. The order banned discrimination in the war industry and established the Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) to temporarily oversee hiring practices. Seizing the newfound job opportunities, five million African-Americans migrated from the South between 1940 and 1970. During the war, 85 percent of the one million African-Americans who left the South settled in California. Los Angeles, one of the country’s largest wartime production centers, was a major destination for African-Americans seeking employment. During the war years, 340,000 job seeking African-Americans moved to L.A., home to a defense industry of over half a million workers in 1943. The largest wave of African-American migration into L.A. occurred in 1943 when over 6,000 newcomers inundated the city every month.

Fooled into thinking California offered a new life ripe with opportunity for all, African-American arrivals quickly discovered the Golden State was not the Promised Land they had envisioned. The use of restrictive housing covenants and block agreements confined African-Americans to the south central section of L.A.

Used in California since the 1920s, restrictive covenants were binding legal contracts whereby the signers vowed to sell their property only to white buyers. Trapped within the boundaries of Slauson Ave., Broadway, and Alameda St., African-Americans did not

---


14 May, Golden State, Golden Youth, 11; Sides, L.A. City Limits, 37.

15 May, Golden State, Golden Youth, 11.

16 Sides, L.A. City Limits, 98.

17 HoSang, Racial Propositions, 55.
have access to the “beautiful beaches,” “attractive residential districts” and “spacious lawns” advertised in the NAACP’s May 1942 issue of *The Crisis.*\(^{18}\) Although South Central L.A. provided inhabitants with a better quality of life than the slums of other major cities, living conditions were far from ideal for African-Americans who relocated to L.A. The McCone Commission, a group of “distinguished Californians” appointed by Governor “Pat” Brown to study the L.A. riots in 1965, addressed the “serious deterioration” of the city’s black districts. Barred from suburbia, African-Americans had no other housing options but the overcrowded and decrepit apartments described in the commission’s report.\(^{19}\)

In 1948, the Supreme Court of the United States delivered a blow to segregationists nationwide. In *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), the Court majority declared that the enforcement of racially restrictive housing covenants was in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment.\(^{20}\) In *The Petitioners: The Story of the Supreme Court of the United States and the Negro* (1965), Supe-


> **23** Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 101.

> **24** Ibid., 101-2.

> **25** Ibid., 103.
have access to the “beautiful beaches,” “attractive residential districts” and “spacious lawns” advertised in the NAACP’s May 1942 issue of *The Crisis.* Although South Central L.A. provided inhabitants with a better quality of life than the slums of other major cities, living conditions were far from ideal for African-Americans who relocated to L.A. The McCone Commission, a group of “distinguished Californians” appointed by Governor “Pat” Brown to study the L.A. riots in 1965, addressed the “serious deterioration” of the city’s black districts. Barred from suburbia, African-Americans had no other housing options but the overcrowded and decrepit apartments described in the commission’s report.

In 1948, the Supreme Court of the United States delivered a blow to segregationists nationwide. In *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), the Court majority declared that the enforcement of racially restrictive housing covenants was in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. In *The Petitioners: The Story of the Supreme Court of the United States and the Negro* (1965), Supreme Court Justice Loren Miller, a leader in the crusade against racially restrictive covenants, translates the Court’s opinion in laypeople’s terms: “Covenants were not void; they were unenforcible [sic].” Finally, in *Barrows v. Jackson* (1953), the Supreme Court officially abolished racially restrictive housing covenants.

Despite the new opportunities the Supreme Court rulings opened for the black community, the color line in L.A. County remained largely intact. Historian Josh Sides argues that the postwar period “brought a crushing wave of virulent anti-black racism the likes of which the city had never known.” The Court’s abolition of racially restrictive covenants triggered more overt acts of racism against African-Americans seeking entrance to historically all-white neighborhoods than ever. On many occasions, segregationists vandalized, planted bombs, and formed mobs outside the new homes of African-Americans. Sides notes a Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations record which “reported six bombings and four incidents of arson against black homes in Los Angeles County [between 1950 and 1959].” William Brady, a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, and his family were the victims of one such incident. Shortly after

---


24 Ibid., 101-2.

25 Ibid., 103.
Brady moved his family into a suburb outside the City of L.A., vigilantes bombed his home in the early morning of March 16, 1952. The real estate agent who sold Brady the home woke up to find a heap of trash piled on top of her car and her gas tank filled with sand.\textsuperscript{26} Despite such effort and aggression, the color line became increasingly difficult to maintain as black migrants continued to settle in L.A. throughout the 1950s and 60s.

**Civil Rights Reform: 1959-1963**

The election of Edmund Gerald “Pat” Brown as California Governor in 1958 restored hope in the African-American community. Sympathetic to the plight of the African-American community, Governor Brown immediately began to push his liberal agenda through the California state legislature in the hopes of opening access to employment and housing for black citizens. On April 16, 1959, a mere four months after taking the oath of office, Governor Brown signed the California Fair Employment Act into law. For enforcement, Brown selected five appointees to head the new Fair Employment Practice Commission (FEPC).\textsuperscript{27} After tackling job discrimination, Brown directed his energy toward ending discrimination in housing—an unpopular project among the majority of voters. Risking his chances for reelection, Brown endorsed a string of fair housing bills that passed through the state legislature between 1959 and 1963. The first in the series, the Hawkins Fair Housing Act, banned discrimination in publicly assisted housing.\textsuperscript{28} On July 15, 1959, the legislature passed the Unruh Civil Rights Act which historian Mark Brilliant argues “placed California at the forefront of the nationwide fight against housing discrimination.”\textsuperscript{29} A huge victory for civil rights, the Unruh Act declared:

> All persons within the jurisdiction of this State are free and equal, and no matter what their race, color, religion, ancestry, or national origin are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.\textsuperscript{30}

While civil rights victories occurred within a legislative framework on the West Coast, the movement in the East and South involved more grassroots participation. Following on the heels of the Unruh Civil Rights Act, the “sit-in” movement caught fire east of the Mississippi River after a highly publicized demonstration in Greensboro, North Carolina. Masterminded by four students at North Carolina A & T State University, the demonstration involved black students occupying an all-white lunch counter in downtown Greensboro and

\textsuperscript{26} Wendell Green, “Bombed Street a Beehive,” *California Eagle*, March 20, 1952.

\textsuperscript{27} Brilliant, *The Color of America*, 161.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 163.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 162.

Brady moved his family into a suburb outside the City of L.A., vigilantes bombed his home in the early morning of March 16, 1952. The real estate agent who sold Brady the home woke up to find a heap of trash piled on top of her car and her gas tank filled with sand. Despite such effort and aggression, the color line became increasingly difficult to maintain as black migrants continued to settle in L.A. throughout the 1950s and 60s.

Civil Rights Reform: 1959-1963

The election of Edmund Gerald “Pat” Brown as California Governor in 1958 restored hope in the African-American community. Sympathetic to the plight of the African-American community, Governor Brown immediately began to push his liberal agenda through the California state legislature in the hopes of opening access to employment and housing for black citizens. On April 16, 1959, a mere four months after taking the oath of office, Governor Brown signed the California Fair Employment Act into law. For enforcement, Brown selected five appointees to head the new Fair Employment Practice Commission (FEPC). After tackling job discrimination, Brown directed his energy toward ending discrimination in housing—an unpopular project among the majority of voters. Risking his chances for reelection, Brown endorsed a string of fair housing bills that passed through the state legislature between 1959 and 1963. The first in the series, the Hawkins Fair Housing Act, banned discrimination in publicly assisted housing. On July 15, 1959, the legislature passed the Unruh Civil Rights Act which historian Mark Brilliant argues “placed California at the forefront of the nationwide fight against housing discrimination.” A huge victory for civil rights, the Unruh Act declared:

All persons within the jurisdiction of this State are free and equal, and no matter what their race, color, religion, ancestry, or national origin are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.

While civil rights victories occurred within a legislative framework on the West Coast, the movement in the East and South involved more grassroots participation. Following on the heels of the Unruh Civil Rights Act, the “sit-in” movement caught fire east of the Mississippi River after a highly publicized demonstration in Greensboro, North Carolina. Masterminded by four students at North Carolina A & T State University, the demonstration involved black students occupying an all-white lunch counter in downtown Greensboro and

28 Ibid., 163.
29 Ibid., 162.
refusing to move until they received service.\textsuperscript{31} Two
weeks after the events in Greensboro hit the news, students in the
neighboring towns of Durham and Winston-Salem began to stage sit-ins of their own.\textsuperscript{32} Within a year, two hundred cities in twenty-eight states integrated lunch counters and theatres as a result of the sit-ins.\textsuperscript{33}

After the highly successful sit-in movement, the desegregation of interstate public buses became the new rallying cry of civil rights activists. On May 4, 1961, under the leadership of the Director of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) James Farmer, a biracial group of thirteen freedom riders boarded two interstate buses scheduled to arrive in New Orleans within two weeks. Starting in Washington, DC, the route passed directly through the Deep South, an area occupied by the nation’s most hostile white supremacists. On May 14, ten days into the journey, the world watched as a mob in Anniston, Alabama firebombed the first bus of freedom riders. Recognizing the importance that the freedom rides continue to New Orleans, Diane Nash assumed leadership, recruiting twenty-one new riders. David Halberstam, a staff writer for the \textit{New York Times}, remembers Nash as “a Fisk student, bright, focused, utterly fearless, with an unerring instinct for the correct tactical move at each increment of crisis”—qualities that contributed greatly to her success as a leader.\textsuperscript{34} In all, 430 freedom riders, both black and white, risked their lives to end racial segregation. Finally, on September 22, after suffering months of brutality, the freedom riders celebrated victory. Under pressure from Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, the Interstate Commerce Commission desegregated interstate bus travel beginning on November 1, 1961.\textsuperscript{35}

The freedom rides received widespread media coverage, revealing a nation entrenched in racial segregation. Marches initiated by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in early 1963 called attention to the most staunchly segregated city in the U.S.—Birmingham, Alabama. Their police Chief Eugene “Bull” Connor ordered the use of brutal force to wipe civil rights protesters off his streets. News cameras caught footage of uniformed officers aiming high-pressure fire hoses and unleashing attack dogs on citizens, some of them school aged children.\textsuperscript{36}

After the Birmingham confrontation, President John F. Kennedy could no longer avoid the realities of U.S. race relations. On June 11, 1963, two and a half


\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 38.

\textsuperscript{33} Anthony Hazard, Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, February 12, 2013).
refusing to move until they received service.\footnote{Martin Oppenheimer, *The Sit-In Movement of 1960* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1989), 14.} Two weeks after the events in Greensboro hit the news, students in the neighboring towns of Durham and Winston-Salem began to stage sit-ins of their own.\footnote{Ibid., 38.} Within a year, two hundred cities in twenty-eight states integrated lunch counters and theatres as a result of the sit-ins.\footnote{Anthony Hazard, *Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements* (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, February 12, 2013).}

After the highly successful sit-in movement, the desegregation of interstate public buses became the new rallying cry of civil rights activists. On May 4, 1961, under the leadership of the Director of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) James Farmer, a biracial group of thirteen freedom riders boarded two interstate buses scheduled to arrive in New Orleans within two weeks. Starting in Washington, DC, the route passed directly through the Deep South, an area occupied by the nation’s most hostile white supremacists. On May 14, ten days into the journey, the world watched as a mob in Anniston, Alabama firebombed the first bus of freedom riders. Recognizing the importance that the freedom rides continue to New Orleans, Diane Nash assumed leadership, recruiting twenty-one new riders. David Halberstam, a staff writer for the *New York Times*, remembers Nash as “a Fisk student, bright, focused, utterly fearless, with an unerring instinct for the correct tactical move at each increment of crisis”—qualities that contributed greatly to her success as a leader.\footnote{David Halberstam, “Nashville Revisited: Lunch-Counter Days,” *New York Times*, May 1, 1995. See Lynne Olson, *Freedom’s Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 to 1970* (New York: Touchstone, 2001).} In all, 430 freedom riders, both black and white, risked their lives to end racial segregation. Finally, on September 22, after suffering months of brutality, the freedom riders celebrated victory. Under pressure from Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, the Interstate Commerce Commission desegregated interstate bus travel beginning on November 1, 1961.\footnote{Stanley Nelson, Tess Gadwa, and Max George, *American Experience: Freedom Riders*, directed by Stanley Nelson, PBS documentary, 2011, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americaneperience/freedomriders/watch (accessed November 27, 2013).}

The freedom rides received widespread media coverage, revealing a nation entrenched in racial segregation. Marches initiated by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in early 1963 called attention to the most staunchly segregated city in the U.S.—Birmingham, Alabama. Their police Chief Eugene “Bull” Connor ordered the use of brutal force to wipe civil rights protesters off his streets. News cameras caught footage of uniformed officers aiming high-pressure fire hoses and unleashing attack dogs on citizens, some of them school aged children.\footnote{Anthony Hazard, *Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements* (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, Feb 20, 2013).}

After the Birmingham confrontation, President John F. Kennedy could no longer avoid the realities of U.S. race relations. On June 11, 1963, two and a half
years after taking office, Kennedy finally appeared in front of television audiences to address the nation’s crippling “race problem.” Becoming the first president to pressure Congress to pass a comprehensive civil rights bill, President Kennedy delivered a message that reverberated around the world: “This nation, for all its hope and all its boasts, will not fully be free until all of its citizens are fully free.” With the Oval Office as the backdrop, the president announced his plan to propose federal legislation that would end segregation nationwide. A call to action on national, state, and personal levels, the speech is significant to the civil rights movement because, for the first time, civil rights activists could claim the support of the president of the United States.

Answering the call of the president, Governor Brown tirelessly lobbied to expand the existing laws on fair housing to encompass private property. Brown teamed up with Assemblyman Byron Rumford to push a more expansive fair housing bill through the legislature. Together, they produced Assembly Bill (AB) 1240, better known as the Rumford Fair Housing Act, which Mark Brilliant argues became “the year’s most contentious and significant piece of legislation.” As can be expected with any highly controversial piece of legislation, a fierce opposition assembled to try and block its passage. However, AB 1240 carried the support of political powerhouses such as the Speaker of the Assembly and Senator Edward Regan who were able to push consideration of the bill to the floor. In the final hour of the 1963 legislative session, AB 1240 passed through both the Senate and Assembly. Governor Brown eagerly signed the bill into law on September 20, 1963.

The bill reads as follows:

> The practice of discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry in housing accommodations is declared to be against public policy.

The bill defines the term “housing accommodations” to include non-publicly-assisted residences of five or more units. Even though the provisions applied to only one-third of dwellings in California, segregationists feared the state’s eventual incursion into all areas of real estate. Nonetheless, California joined ten other states where similar laws regulated the rentals and sales of private property. They included New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Oregon, Alaska, Colorado, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania.

---

38 Anthony Hazard, Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, Feb 26, 2013).
39 Brilliant, The Color of America, 179.
40 Ibid., 182-3.
42 Brilliant, The Color of America, 92.
43 Milton G. Gordon, “What are the Obligations of Government to Resolve such Conflicts as Exist in this Area? (Property and Civil Rights),” November 22, 1963, folder 10, “No
years after taking office, Kennedy finally appeared in front of television audiences to address the nation’s crippling “race problem.” Becoming the first president to pressure Congress to pass a comprehensive civil rights bill, President Kennedy delivered a message that reverberated around the world: “This nation, for all its hope and all its boasts, will not fully be free until all of its citizens are fully free.” With the Oval Office as the backdrop, the president announced his plan to propose federal legislation that would end segregation nationwide. A call to action on national, state, and personal levels, the speech is significant to the civil rights movement because, for the first time, civil rights activists could claim the support of the president of the United States.

Answering the call of the president, Governor Brown tirelessly lobbied to expand the existing laws on fair housing to encompass private property. Brown teamed up with Assemblyman Byron Rumford to push a more expansive fair housing bill through the legislature. Together, they produced Assembly Bill (AB) 1240, better known as the Rumford Fair Housing Act, which Mark Brilliant argues became “the year’s most contentious and significant piece of legislation.” As can be expected with any highly controversial piece of legislation, a fierce opposition assembled to try and block its passage. However, AB 1240 carried the support of political powerhouses such as the Speaker of the Assembly and Senator Edward Regan who were able to push consideration of the bill to the floor. In the final hour of the 1963 legislative session, AB 1240 passed through both the Senate and Assembly. Governor Brown eagerly signed the bill into law on September 20, 1963. The bill reads as follows:

The practice of discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry in housing accommodations is declared to be against public policy.

The bill defines the term “housing accommodations” to include non-publicly-assisted residences of five or more units. Even though the provisions applied to only one-third of dwellings in California, segregationists feared the state’s eventual incursion into all areas of real estate. Nonetheless, California joined ten other states where similar laws regulated the rentals and sales of private property. They included New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Oregon, Alaska, Colorado, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania.

38 Anthony Hazard, Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, Feb 26, 2013).
39 Brilliant, The Color of America, 179.
40 Ibid.,182-3.
42 Brilliant, The Color of America, 92.
43 Milton G. Gordon, “What are the Obligations of Government to Resolve such Conflicts as Exist in this Area? (Property and Civil Rights),” November 22, 1963, folder 10, “No
The Resistance Movement: 1959-1963

Celebration over the passage of the Rumford Act quickly turned to fear over the California Real Estate Association’s (CREA) mighty wrath. In November 1964, the CREA convinced two-thirds of the electorate to vote in favor of a property owner’s right to discriminate.\(^4\) In order to understand the election’s outcome, it is important to trace the proposition’s history back to its creation. Efforts to repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act began before news of its passage even became public. A small Berkeley-based drive to repeal the Rumford Act by referendum fell short of the necessary signatures needed to qualify for the ballot. The CREA and the California Apartment Owners’ Association (AOA) reached for more property rights than a referendum would create. Uniting under the banner of a property owner’s right to discriminate, the CREA and AOA formed the Committee for Home Protection (CHP).\(^5\) As opposed to the small movement in Berkeley that challenged the Rumford Act by referendum, the CHP crafted a constitutional initiative, later known as Proposition 14, that would amend the state constitution to include the following:

Neither the State nor any subdivision or agency thereof shall deny, limit, or abridge, directly or indirectly, the right of any person, who is willing or desires to sell, lease or rent any part or all of his real property, to decline to sell, lease, or rent such property to such person or persons as he, in his absolute discretion, chooses.\(^6\)

The amendment defines “person” to include all individuals and corporations as long as they are not a part of the State. The term “real property” includes all dwellings “irrespective of how obtained or financed.” In comparison to the Rumford Act which exclusively covers residences of five or more units, the only restrictions in this initiative consisted of “property owned by the State or its subdivisions; property acquired by eminent domain; or transient lodging accommodations by hotels, motels and similar public places.”\(^7\) In addition to nullifying the existing state laws which protected property seekers from discrimination, the amendment prevented the legislature from enacting any future fair housing legislation.

For the most part, segregationists in California were much more disguised than like-minded individuals in the Deep South. The language of the CHP’s initiative reveals the tact and manipulation of racist California realtors. Making no reference to “race,” “discrimination,” or “color,” the CHP strategically buried its intent in flowery language borrowed from the Fourteenth Amendment. The initiative’s opening clause bears an uncanny resemblance to the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee that “[n]o State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.”

\(^{44}\) Casstevens, Politics, Housing and Race Relations: California’s Rumford Act and Proposition 14, (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, 1967), 68.
\(^{45}\) HoSang, Racial Propositions, 63-64.
\(^{46}\) “Initiative Measure to be Submitted Directly to Electors,” folder 2, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
\(^{47}\) Ibid.
The Resistance Movement: 1959-1963

Celebration over the passage of the Rumford Act quickly turned to fear over the California Real Estate Association’s (CREA) mighty wrath. In November 1964, the CREA convinced two-thirds of the electorate to vote in favor of a property owner’s right to discriminate.\(^4^4\) In order to understand the election’s outcome, it is important to trace the proposition’s history back to its creation. Efforts to repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act began before news of its passage even became public. A small Berkeley-based drive to repeal the Rumford Act by referendum fell short of the necessary signatures needed to qualify for the ballot. The CREA and the California Apartment Owners’ Association (AOA) reached for more property rights than a referendum would create. Uniting under the banner of a property owner’s right to discriminate, the CREA and AOA formed the Committee for Home Protection (CHP).\(^4^5\) As opposed to the small movement in Berkeley that challenged the Rumford Act by referendum, the CHP crafted a constitutional initiative, later known as Proposition 14, that would amend the state constitution to include the following:

Neither the State nor any subdivision or agency thereof shall deny, limit, or abridge, directly or indirectly, the right of any person, who is willing or desires to sell, lease or rent any part or all of his real property, to decline to sell, lease, or rent such property to such person or persons as he, in his absolute discretion, chooses.\(^4^6\)

The amendment defines “person” to include all individuals and corporations as long as they are not a part of the State. The term “real property” includes all dwellings “irrespective of how obtained or financed.” In comparison to the Rumford Act which exclusively covers residences of five or more units, the only restrictions in this initiative consisted of “property owned by the State or its subdivisions; property acquired by eminent domain; or transient lodging accommodations by hotels, motels and similar public places.”\(^4^7\) In addition to nullifying the existing state laws which protected property seekers from discrimination, the amendment prevented the legislature from enacting any future fair housing legislation.

For the most part, segregationists in California were much more disguised than like-minded individuals in the Deep South. The language of the CHP’s initiative reveals the tact and manipulation of racist California realtors. Making no reference to “race,” “discrimination,” or “color,” the CHP strategically buried its intent in flowery language borrowed from the Fourteenth Amendment. The initiative’s opening clause bears an uncanny resemblance to the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee that “[n]o State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.”

\(^4^4\) Casstevens, *Politics, Housing and Race Relations: California’s Rumford Act and Proposition 14*, (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, 1967), 68.

\(^4^5\) HoSang, *Racial Propositions*, 63-64.

\(^4^6\) “Initiative Measure to be Submitted Directly to Electors,” folder 2, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.

\(^4^7\) Ibid.
States.”

The CHP championed the protection of property rights—a concern dating back to the American revolutionary period. The patriotic appeal of Prop 14 lured many voters. Unfortunately, the initiative’s implicit aims greatly restricted African-Americans.

Reflecting on the CHP nearly twenty years later, Marnesba Tackett, a minister’s wife who assumed leadership positions in local civil rights projects after moving to L.A. in 1952, remembered, “They did not put it [the initiative] in such words that the layman could clearly understand what they were about.” In order to “clearly understand” Prop 14, it is necessary to read in between the lines—an exercise which requires time as well as a grasp of legal jargon. The September 25, 1964 issue of Time magazine presents findings from California’s Opinion Research Inc. that serve to illustrate the confusion surrounding Prop 14. During the early stages of the campaign, California’s Opinion Research Inc. polled African-Americans about Prop 14. Initially, when asked if they approved of the initiative, 59.3% of participants answered that it “was just what they had been wanting all along.” However, Time magazine reported, “[W]hen the same pollsters told the same Negroes what the practical effects of the amendment would be, 89% were against it.”

By late March, six months after Governor Brown signed the Rumford Act into law, the CHP had already collected well over the 500,000 signatures needed to qualify for the ballot. Secretary of State Frank Jordan swiftly approved the petition and assigned it a proposition number.

While Californians took to the polls to express their dissent, resistance efforts in other parts of the country were not as civil. The Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in 1954 to outlaw school segregation instigated a level of ethnic violence unprecedented in the country’s history. Between January 1, 1956 and June 1, 1963, Southern regions of the U.S. reported a staggering 138 bombings. Local police looked away as vigilantes used terror to keep civil rights from disrupting the Southern, segregated way of life. Hours after President Kennedy’s famous civil rights address on June 11, 1963, a member of the Ku Klux Klan assassinated Medgar Evans, Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP. Two months later, a group of Klansmen bombed 16th Street Baptist Church, the main meeting place for civil rights activists in Birmingham, Alabama. Four young girls were killed in the explosion. Still reeling from all of the bloodshed in the South, the nation experienced the tragic loss of its leader on November 22, 1963. A mere four months after earning his reputation as a moral leader, President Kennedy was assassinated, leaving behind a legacy of hope for
States.”

The CHP championed the protection of property rights—a concern dating back to the American revolutionary period. The patriotic appeal of Prop 14 lured many voters. Unfortunately, the initiative’s implicit aims greatly restricted African-Americans.

Reflecting on the CHP nearly twenty years later, Marnesba Tackett, a minister’s wife who assumed leadership positions in local civil rights projects after moving to L.A. in 1952, remembered, “They did not put it [the initiative] in such words that the layman could clearly understand what they were about.” In order to “clearly understand” Prop 14, it is necessary to read in between the lines—an exercise which requires time as well as a grasp of legal jargon. The September 25, 1964 issue of *Time* magazine presents findings from California’s Opinion Research Inc. that serve to illustrate the confusion surrounding Prop 14. During the early stages of the campaign, California’s Opinion Research Inc. polled African-Americans about Prop 14. Initially, when asked if they approved of the initiative, 59.3% of participants answered that it “was just what they had been wanting all along.” However, *Time* magazine reported, “[W]hen the same pollsters told the same Negroes what the practical effects of the amendment would be, 89% were against it.”

By late March, six months after Governor Brown signed the Rumford Act into law, the CHP had already collected well over the 500,000 signatures needed to qualify for the ballot. Secretary of State Frank Jordan swiftly approved the petition and assigned it a proposition number.

While Californians took to the polls to express their dissent, resistance efforts in other parts of the country were not as civil. The Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in 1954 to outlaw school segregation instigated a level of ethnic violence unprecedented in the country’s history. Between January 1, 1956 and June 1, 1963, Southern regions of the U.S. reported a staggering 138 bombings. Local police looked away as vigilantes used terror to keep civil rights from disrupting the Southern, segregated way of life. Hours after President Kennedy’s famous civil rights address on June 11, 1963, a member of the Ku Klux Klan assassinated Medgar Evans, Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP. Two months later, a group of Klansmen bombed 16th Street Baptist Church, the main meeting place for civil rights activists in Birmingham, Alabama. Four young girls were killed in the explosion. Still reeling from all of the bloodshed in the South, the nation experienced the tragic loss of its leader on November 22, 1963. A mere four months after earning his reputation as a moral leader, President Kennedy was assassinated, leaving behind a legacy of hope for

---

48 U.S. Constitution, amend. 14, sec. 2.
50 “Proposition 14.” *Time* 84, no. 13 (September 25, 1964), 41.
53 Ibid., 37.
Mobilizing African-Americans

racial equality.⁵⁴

**Civil Rights Activism Continues: 1964**

In his first public address as president, Lyndon Baines Johnson hurried Congress to act on civil rights, claiming that “no memorial, oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President’s Kennedy’s memory.”⁵⁵ Despite the determined southern Democrats who organized a lengthy filibuster to delay passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Senate secured cloture and approved the legislation with a vote of 73-27.⁵⁶ By bypassing the conference on the bill, the House approved the Senate version on July 2, 1964. That same day, after the bill passed through the House, President Johnson, in a nationally televised news broadcast, proudly signed it into law.⁵⁷ A victory in many regards, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 marked the first meaningful federal civil rights legislation since the constitutional amendments ratified during the Reconstruction Era.⁵⁸ The act officially overturned “Jim Crow” laws by banning discrimination in “public accommodations” and employment.⁵⁹ Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 signified a tremendous victory for civil rights, it did not completely solve the “race problem” in the U.S. The Mississippi Freedom Summer drew media attention to the shortcomings of the Civil Rights Act, namely the lack of voting protections. The Council of Federated Organization (COFO) enlisted an army of volunteers from SNCC, CORE and the NAACP to equip African-Americans with the tools necessary to better their lives in the Deep South.⁶⁰ The COFO’s vehicles for change included voter registration drives, freedom schools, and community centers. Robert Moses, a major leader

---

⁵⁴ Anthony Hazard, Civil Rights and Anti-Colonial Movements (class lecture, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, February 26, 2013).


⁵⁶ “The Civil Rights Act of 1964,” in The United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary website, under “Recess Reading: An Occasional Feature From the Judiciary Committee,” http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/about/history/CivilRightsAct.cfm (accessed November 28, 2013). Cloture is a motion to end lengthy debate, also known as a filibuster. At the time, support from two-thirds of all senators “present and voting” was necessary in order to end a filibuster. In 1975, the Senate voted to change the necessary supermajority to three-fifths.


Civil Rights Activism Continues: 1964

In his first public address as president, Lyndon Baines Johnson hurried Congress to act on civil rights, claiming that “no memorial, oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President’s Kennedy’s memory.” Despite the determined southern Democrats who organized a lengthy filibuster to delay passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Senate secured cloture and approved the legislation with a vote of 73-27. By passing the conference on the bill, the House approved the Senate version on July 2, 1964. That same day, after the bill passed through the House, President Johnson, in a nationally televised news broadcast, proudly signed it into law. A victory in many regards, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 marked the first meaningful federal civil rights legislation since the constitutional amendments ratified during the Reconstruction Era. The act officially overturned “Jim Crow” laws by banning discrimination in “public accommodations” and employment.

Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 signified a tremendous victory for civil rights, it did not completely solve the “race problem” in the U.S. The Mississippi Freedom Summer drew media attention to the shortcomings of the Civil Rights Act, namely the lack of voting protections. The Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) enlisted an army of volunteers from SNCC, CORE and the NAACP to equip African-Americans with the tools necessary to better their lives in the Deep South. The COFO’s vehicles for change included voter registration drives, freedom schools, and community centers. Robert Moses, a major leader in many regards, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 marked the first meaningful federal civil rights legislation since the constitutional amendments ratified during the Reconstruction Era. The act officially overturned “Jim Crow” laws by banning discrimination in “public accommodations” and employment.

Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 signified a tremendous victory for civil rights, it did not completely solve the “race problem” in the U.S. The Mississippi Freedom Summer drew media attention to the shortcomings of the Civil Rights Act, namely the lack of voting protections. The Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) enlisted an army of volunteers from SNCC, CORE and the NAACP to equip African-Americans with the tools necessary to better their lives in the Deep South. The COFO’s vehicles for change included voter registration drives, freedom schools, and community centers. Robert Moses, a major leader in many regards, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 marked the first meaningful federal civil rights legislation since the constitutional amendments ratified during the Reconstruction Era. The act officially overturned “Jim Crow” laws by banning discrimination in “public accommodations” and employment.

Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 signified a tremendous victory for civil rights, it did not completely solve the “race problem” in the U.S. The Mississippi Freedom Summer drew media attention to the shortcomings of the Civil Rights Act, namely the lack of voting protections. The Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) enlisted an army of volunteers from SNCC, CORE and the NAACP to equip African-Americans with the tools necessary to better their lives in the Deep South. The COFO’s vehicles for change included voter registration drives, freedom schools, and community centers. Robert Moses, a major leader...
of SNCC, headed the voter registration campaign in Mississippi, the most publicized subsection of the Freedom Summer.\textsuperscript{61} Tirelessly canvassing black neighborhoods, volunteers hammered the importance of the vote to anyone who would listen. While it may seem like a minor request, registering to vote was a dangerous endeavor for blacks living in the South. By walking up the steps of the courthouse to register, African-Americans risked their jobs, safety, and futures. Of the 17,000 African-Americans who braved the Mississippi courthouses, only 1,600 successfully registered.\textsuperscript{62}

Approximately 1,000 college-aged students, many against their parent’s will, volunteered for the Freedom Summer. Before they began their assignments, volunteers attended a week-long orientation in Oxford, Ohio aimed to prepare them for life in the South—a first time experience for most. Sally Belfrage, a Freedom School teacher from California, described the volunteers as “eighty-five percent white, one hundred percent middle class.”\textsuperscript{63} The strategy to recruit upper to middle-class, white college students triggered a media frenzy. News agencies hailed the volunteers as heroes who risked their lives to bring justice to the Deep South. Everywhere the volunteers went, reporters followed closely behind. One volunteer recalls, “[F]our of us took the long ride from Oxford to Memphis in a small Corvette which was rigged with a mike so a CBS sound car behind us could record our profound thoughts as we went into battle.”\textsuperscript{64} In his book, \textit{Freedom Summer}, sociologist Doug McAdam writes, “In a very real sense, the entire country had visited Mississippi courtesy of the national news media.”\textsuperscript{65}

Meanwhile, on the West Coast, Californians were debating a constitutional amendment that critics warned would place the state in the same category as Mississippi.\textsuperscript{66} When the state legislature passed the Rumford Act, supporters immediately began to prepare for the CREA-driven backlash. The California Committee for Fair Practices (CCFP) convened in December 1963 to devise a strategy to protect California’s fair housing laws.\textsuperscript{67} The CCFP published its strategy on February 5, 1964 in the form of a fifteen page manual. In the cover letter, CCFP Chairman C. I. Dellums and Secretary Max Mont, report that “a groundswell of public opinion has arisen against the constitutional amendment proposal.”\textsuperscript{68} In one of the earliest published critiques of the initiative, the \textit{Sacramento Bee}, on February 23, 1964, labeled the CREA “the peddlers of hate, fear, distortion, and intimidation.” Accompanying the article is a cartoon depicting two men marching: one in civilian clothing carrying a picket sign that reads “Fair Housing! CORE” while the other is dressed in a Nazi uniform holding a sign that reads “Repeal the

\textsuperscript{61} McClymer, ed., \textit{Mississippi Freedom Summer}, 24.
\textsuperscript{64} McAdam, \textit{Freedom Summer}, 73.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 118.
\textsuperscript{66} See Californians Against Proposition 14, “NO MISSISSIPPI HERE!,” folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
\textsuperscript{67} HoSang, \textit{Racial Propositions}, 74.
of SNCC, headed the voter registration campaign in Mississippi, the most publicized subsection of the Freedom Summer. Tirelessly canvassing black neighborhoods, volunteers hammered the importance of the vote to anyone who would listen. While it may seem like a minor request, registering to vote was a dangerous endeavor for blacks living in the South. By walking up the steps of the courthouse to register, African-Americans risked their jobs, safety, and futures. Of the 17,000 African-Americans who braved the Mississippi courthouses, only 1,600 successfully registered.

Approximately 1,000 college-aged students, many against their parent’s will, volunteered for the Freedom Summer. Before they began their assignments, volunteers attended a week-long orientation in Oxford, Ohio aimed to prepare them for life in the South—a first time experience for most. Sally Belfrage, a Freedom School teacher from California, described the volunteers as “eighty-five percent white, one hundred percent middle class.” The strategy to recruit upper to middle-class, white college students triggered a media frenzy. News agencies hailed the volunteers as heroes who risked their lives to bring justice to the Deep South. Everywhere the volunteers went, reporters followed closely behind. One volunteer recalls, “[F]our of us took the long ride from Oxford to Memphis in a small Corvette which was rigged with a mike so a CBS sound car behind us could record our profound thoughts as we went into battle.” In his book, Freedom Summer, sociologist Doug McAdam writes, “In a very real sense, the entire country had visited Mississippi courtesy of the national news media.”

Meanwhile, on the West Coast, Californians were debating a constitutional amendment that critics warned would place the state in the same category as Mississippi. When the state legislature passed the Rumford Act, supporters immediately began to prepare for the CREA-driven backlash. The California Committee for Fair Practices (CCFP) convened in December 1963 to devise a strategy to protect California’s fair housing laws. The CCFP published its strategy on February 5, 1964 in the form of a fifteen page manual. In the cover letter, CCFP Chairman C. I. Dellums and Secretary Max Mont, report that “a groundswell of public opinion has arisen against the constitutional amendment proposal.” In one of the earliest published critiques of the initiative, the Sacramento Bee, on February 23, 1964, labeled the CREA “the peddlers of hate, fear, distortion, and intimidation.” Accompanying the article is a cartoon depicting two men marching: one in civilian clothing carrying a picket sign that reads “Fair Housing! CORE” while the other is dressed in a Nazi uniform holding a sign that reads “Repeal the

64 McAdam, Freedom Summer, 73.
65 Ibid., 118.
67 HoSang, Racial Propositions, 74.
Rumford Act!” with a swastika in the corner.⁶⁹

As evidenced in the aforementioned Sacramento Bee article, fair housing advocates voiced their opposition to the initiative throughout the signature collection process. However, in June 1964, when Secretary Jordan assigned the initiative a proposition number on the November ballot, the opposition intensified, instituting a massive, statewide campaign against what it termed the “Hate Amendment.”⁷⁰ The main organ of the “No on Prop 14” campaign was Californians against Prop 14 (CAP 14), an umbrella organization that received endorsements from a wide range of civic, labor, civil rights, and religious groups. Recognizing the need to reach every eligible voter in the state, CAP 14 orchestrated a two-front campaign with dual headquarters strategically located in L.A. and San Francisco. In order to help CAP 14 launch successful campaigns in both the northern and southern parts of the state, Governor Brown lent some of his expert staff members to the organization such as Richard Kline, Max Mont, Lucien Haas, Marvin Holden and William Becker.⁷¹

Under the leadership of Governor Brown’s former staff members, CAP 14 gained visibility throughout the state. Determined to expose the deceit of the Committee for Home Protection, CAP 14 used printed materials to raise awareness of the malicious intent behind Prop 14. A CAP 14 flier denounces the proposition as “a scheme by giant real estate interests to cripple the California Constitution.” After citing five tragedies that Prop 14 would create if passed, CAP 14 cautioned the reader not to “fall into the real estate lobby’s trap!”⁷² In another publication, CAP 14 pled, “We need your help to advertise the truth about Proposition 14.”⁷³ Other organizations and individuals joined CAP 14 in the effort to inform the public of the “real” meaning behind the proposed amendment. In its September 1964 bulletin, the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church accused the CREA of “deliberately fostering a hoax.”⁷⁴ Governor Brown added hype in a public statement where he accused real estate interests of “denying that Proposition 14 is aimed against Negros, Mexican-Americans and other minorities.”⁷⁵ In a lengthy article, Gene Blake of the LA Times recognized the opposition’s mounting influence: “[A]nyone who thinks this [Prop 14] doesn’t have anything to do with the racial issue just hasn’t been paying attention.”⁷⁶

CAP 14 used its impressive list of endorsements to build legitimacy. The committee boasted on a bumper sticker that “[v]irtually every organization has taken a stand against Proposition 14.” It includes over fifty organizations on its “Partial List” of allies, including

⁷⁰ Californians Against Proposition 14, “YOU ARE THE TARGET!,” folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
⁷¹ HoSang, Racial Propositions, 74.
⁷² Californians Against Proposition 14, “YOU ARE THE TARGET!,” folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
⁷⁴ “California Test Case: The Church and Fair Housing,” Church and Race 2, no. 2 (New York: Episcopal Church Center, September 1964), 5.
⁷⁵ Ibid., 7.
Mobilizing African-Americans

Rumford Act!” with a swastika in the corner. As evidenced in the aforementioned Sacramento Bee article, fair housing advocates voiced their opposition to the initiative throughout the signature collection process. However, in June 1964, when Secretary Jordan assigned the initiative a proposition number on the November ballot, the opposition intensified, instituting a massive, statewide campaign against what it termed the “Hate Amendment.”

The main organ of the “No on Prop 14” campaign was Californians against Prop 14 (CAP 14), an umbrella organization that received endorsements from a wide range of civic, labor, civil rights, and religious groups. Recognizing the need to reach every eligible voter in the state, CAP 14 orchestrated a two-front campaign with dual headquarters strategically located in L.A. and San Francisco. In order to help CAP 14 launch successful campaigns in both the northern and southern parts of the state, Governor Brown lent some of his expert staff members to the organization such as Richard Kline, Max Mont, Lucien Haas, Marvin Holden and William Becker.

Under the leadership of Governor Brown’s former staff members, CAP 14 gained visibility throughout the state. Determined to expose the deceit of the Committee for Home Protection, CAP 14 used printed materials to raise awareness of the malicious intent behind Prop 14. A CAP 14 flier denounces the proposition as “a scheme by giant real estate interests to cripple the California Constitution.” After citing five tragedies that Prop 14 would create if passed, CAP 14 cautioned the reader not to “fall into the real estate lobby’s trap!” In another publication, CAP 14 pled, “We need your help to advertise the truth about Proposition 14.” Other organizations and individuals joined CAP 14 in the effort to inform the public of the “real” meaning behind the proposed amendment. In its September 1964 bulletin, the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church accused the CREA of “deliberately fostering a hoax.” Governor Brown added hype in a public statement where he accused real estate interests of “denying that Proposition 14 is aimed against Negros, Mexican-Americans and other minorities.” In a lengthy article, Gene Blake of the LA Times recognized the opposition’s mounting influence: “[A]nyone who thinks this [Prop 14] doesn’t have anything to do with the racial issue just hasn’t been paying attention.”

CAP 14 used its impressive list of endorsements to build legitimacy. The committee boasted on a bumper sticker that “[v]irtually every organization has taken a stand against Proposition 14.” It includes over fifty organizations on its “Partial List” of allies, including:

72 Californians Against Proposition 14, “YOU ARE THE TARGET!,” folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
74 “California Test Case: The Church and Fair Housing,” Church and Race 2, no. 2 (New York: Episcopal Church Center, September 1964), 5.
75 Ibid., 7.
religious groups from ten different denominations. In addition to the list of high-standing, respectable organizations that opposed Prop 14, the bumper sticker includes a short list of the proposition’s supporters: the CREA, John Birch Society, White Citizens Council and American Nazi Party. 

As evidenced by the bumper sticker, CAP 14 capitalized on Cold War anxieties, using patriotism as its primary campaign tool. At the time, many Americans believed patriotism protected against communist infiltration. Many Americans, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, or socioeconomic status felt pressure to embody patriotism. CAP 14 utilized this common sentiment to break the barriers of race, religion, and politics. Using a sketch of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy as its logo, CAP 14 attempted to awaken opposition and spur people to protest the CREA’s “un-American attack.” Patriotism served as the greatest mechanism to draw broad-based support. CAP 14 strategically adjusted its message to target specific audiences while still maintaining strong, patriotic pathos. For example, CAP 14 made a direct appeal to Republicans in an advertisement for the LA Times. In the ad, the committee argued that Republicans should cast their ballots in honor of Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and other party members who “proudly championed the cause of equal rights for all.”

“No on Prop 14” affiliates garnered a substantial amount of donations during the 1964 election season. In total, anti-14 forces outspent their opponents by over $120,000. However, even with a hefty treasury, the “No on 14” campaign failed to convince the majority of voters to cast “no” ballots. Polling data shows that public opinion on Prop 14 stayed fairly consistent from March 1964 up until Election Day.

“No on Prop 14” Activity in South Central L.A.

L.A. County’s unique demographics in the 1960s made the area a hotbed of controversy regarding fair housing. According to data from the 1960 U.S. Census, L.A. County housed the largest non-white population in California. Of the county’s non-white population, most were African-Americans who remained trapped in the south central part of the city. Martin Schiesl, an Emeritus Professor of History at California State University at Los Angeles, notes in an essay that 94% of the county’s black population resided in South Central L.A. in 1960. Expanding on Schiesl’s statis-

---

77 Californians Against Proposition 14, “No on 14” bumper sticker, folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
78 Californians Against Proposition 14, “These Californians Urge NO on 14,” folder 21, “No on Prop 14,” GTU Archives.
80 Casstevens, Politics, Housing and Race Relations, 66. “No on Prop 14” affiliates spent over $500,000 in total.
81 Ibid., 55.
religious groups from ten different denominations. In addition to the list of high-standing, respectable organizations that opposed Prop 14, the bumper sticker includes a short list of the proposition’s supporters: the CREA, John Birch Society, White Citizens Council and American Nazi Party.  

As evidenced by the bumper sticker, CAP 14 capitalized on Cold War anxieties, using patriotism as its primary campaign tool. At the time, many Americans believed patriotism protected against communist infiltration. Many Americans, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, or socioeconomic status felt pressure to embody patriotism. CAP 14 utilized this common sentiment to break the barriers of race, religion, and politics. Using a sketch of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy as its logo, CAP 14 attempted to awaken opposition and spur people to protest the CREA’s “un-American attack.” Patriotism served as the greatest mechanism to draw broad-based support. CAP 14 strategically adjusted its message to target specific audiences while still maintaining strong, patriotic pathos. For example, CAP 14 made a direct appeal to Republicans in an advertisement for the LA Times. In the ad, the committee argued that Republicans should cast their ballots in honor of Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and other party members who “proudly championed the cause of equal rights for all.”

“No on Prop 14” affiliates garnered a substantial amount of donations during the 1964 election season. In total, anti-14 forces outspent their opponents by over $120,000. However, even with a hefty treasury, the “No on 14” campaign failed to convince the majority of voters to cast “no” ballots. Polling data shows that public opinion on Prop 14 stayed fairly consistent from March 1964 up until Election Day.

“No on Prop 14” Activity in South Central L.A.

L.A. County’s unique demographics in the 1960s made the area a hotbed of controversy regarding fair housing. According to data from the 1960 U.S. Census, L.A. County housed the largest non-white population in California. Of the county’s non-white population, most were African-Americans who remained trapped in the south central part of the city. Martin Schiesl, an Emeritus Professor of History at California State University at Los Angeles, notes in an essay that 94% of the county’s black population resided in South Central L.A. in 1960. Expanding on Schiesl’s stats-

80 Casstevens, Politics, Housing and Race Relations, 66. “No on Prop 14” affiliates spent over $500,000 in total.
81 Ibid., 55.
tic, historian Josh Sides attributes the “highest levels of segregation in the state” to L.A. In such an environment, the idea of integrated housing ignited strong passions among the populace. As a result, Prop 14 aroused a noteworthy amount of controversy which printed media helped fuel. The city’s most widely distributed newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times*, publicly announced its support of the initiative in a February 1964 editorial. In the editorial, the *Times* condemned laws, such as the Rumford Act, which serve to legislate morality, claiming that “[d]iscrimination will disappear only when human prejudice succumbs to human decency.” The *Times* maintained its position throughout the debate on Prop 14, informing readers that “it will neither be intimidated, nor swayed from its carefully chosen course.”

Like the *LA Times*, black newspaper such as the *California Eagle* and *Los Angeles Sentinel* took a stand on Prop 14. The *Sentinel* described the initiative as “vicious,” “biased,” and backed by “greedy realtors.” In his weekly column, Loren Miller, publisher of the *California Eagle* from 1951 to 1964, wrote on behalf of the paper: “The truth is that the November vote is not a ballot on repeal of the Rumford Act at all. It is something far different and far more sweeping and dangerous.” Josh Sides acknowledges the significance of the black press in L.A., noting, “More than simply conveying newsworthy information, the *California Eagle* and *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the city’s two most influential black newspapers, prodded their readerships to challenge racial discrimination.”

Both the *Eagle* and *Sentinel* stressed the importance of challenging discrimination by means of electoral participation. In an urgent plea, the *Sentinel* begged readers, “For the sake of your future in the United States, vote ‘NO’ on Proposition 14.” In its February 20, 1964 issue, the *Eagle* asked readers, “Are You Registered?” Underneath the heading, it reads, “If not, run, don’t walk, to the nearest registrar and get your name on the rolls.” Shortly after Secretary Jordan assigned the initiative a ballot number, an advertisement urging readers to “VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 14” appeared on the front page of the *California Eagle*. The political cartoons of artist Nick Greene featured in the *Eagle* also reveal hope in the democratic process. Greene’s cartoon printed in the June 25, 1964 editorial section shows a black voter who has kicked a white man, representative of the proposed

---

84 Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 130; Casstevens, *Politics, Housing and Race Relations*, 69.
tic, historian Josh Sides attributes the “highest levels of segregation in the state” to L.A. In such an environment, the idea of integrated housing ignited strong passions among the populace. As a result, Prop 14 aroused a noteworthy amount of controversy which printed media helped fuel. The city’s most widely distributed newspaper, the Los Angeles Times, publicly announced its support of the initiative in a February 1964 editorial. In the editorial, the Times condemned laws, such as the Rumford Act, which serve to legislate morality, claiming that “[d]iscrimination will disappear only when human prejudice succumbs to human decency.” The Times maintained its position throughout the debate on Prop 14, informing readers that “it will neither be intimidated, nor swayed from its carefully chosen course.”

Like the LA Times, black newspaper such as the California Eagle and Los Angeles Sentinel took a stand on Prop 14. The Sentinel described the initiative as “vicious,” “biased,” and backed by “greedy realtors.” In his weekly column, Loren Miller, publisher of the California Eagle from 1951 to 1964, wrote on behalf of the paper: “The truth is that the November vote is not

---

84 Sides, L.A. City Limits, 130; Casstevens, Politics, Housing and Race Relations, 69.
88 “No Vote on 14 Group Opens in Compton Sat.,” Los Angeles Sentinel, October 22, 1964.
90 Sides, L.A. City Limits, 30.
amendment, to the sky. Accompanying the forceful kick is a speech bubble that reads: “NO!! THIS INITIATIVE MEASURE MEANS SEGREGATION”  

Writing to a primarily black audience, the *Eagle* and *Sentinel* focused on Prop 14 hype within the black community. While the black press did sometimes report on the anti-14 activity in play throughout the greater L.A. community, by and large, it focused on anti-14 forces active within L.A.’s black ghettos. The *Eagle* and *Sentinel* kept readers apprised of local anti-Prop 14 functions, providing location, time, contact numbers and ticket information. 

The *California Eagle* underwent significant change in July 1964 when its publisher, Loren Miller, left the paper to become a justice on the California Superior Court.  

James L. Tolbert and A.S. “Doc” Young replaced the fiery Miller and on July 2, 1964, announced, “[t]he *Eagle* is born again. It’s all new, robust and healthy.” The new leadership shifted the paper’s focus from local to national news. As a result, Prop 14 figured less prominently in the *California Eagle* after Miller left in July 1964. After the *Eagle* changed hands, the *Los Angeles Sentinel* became the chief source of information regarding the “No on Prop 14” campaign in L.A. 

Articles from the *Sentinel* show an effort made by multiple organizations in L.A. to get every eligible African-American in the area to vote against Prop 14. Civil rights organizations figure most prominently in the *Sentinel*’s coverage of “No on Prop 14” activity. The local chapter of the NAACP funneled resources in the fight against Prop 14, opening a No on Proposition 14 Headquarters located at 2903 ½ S. Western Ave. The headquarters served as an operational base for the NAACP’s voter registration and education drives. Wendell Green, coordinator of the NAACP’s “No on 14” campaign, communicated the goals of the campaign to *Sentinel* reporters: “It is necessary that we knock again on every door to clear up any late confusion and to insure a maximum vote against the segregation proposition 14.” In October 1964, the NAACP launched “Operation Westside” in an attempt to reverse the “apathy and confusion” about Prop 14 in West L.A.—an area forgotten by most other organizations. The *Sentinel* described the operation as “[a]n intensive voter education and get-out-the-vote campaign.” 

The L.A. Urban League echoed the ambitions of the NAACP. Speaking on behalf of the Urban League, Housing Committee Chairman Sheldon C. Mays told the *Sentinel* that “[h]undreds of additional volunteers are needed in the drive to get every registered Negro ...
amendment, to the sky. Accompanying the forceful kick is a speech bubble that reads: “NO!! THIS INITIATIVE MEASURE MEANS SEGREGATION” 94

Writing to a primarily black audience, the *Eagle* and *Sentinel* focused on Prop 14 hype within the black community. While the black press did sometimes report on the anti-14 activity in play throughout the greater L.A. community, by and large, it focused on anti-14 forces active within L.A.’s black ghettos. The *Eagle* and *Sentinel* kept readers apprised of local anti-Prop 14 functions, providing location, time, contact numbers and ticket information.

The *California Eagle* underwent significant change in July 1964 when its publisher, Loren Miller, left the paper to become a justice on the California Superior Court. 95 James L. Tolbert and A.S. “Doc” Young replaced the fiery Miller and on July 2, 1964, announced, “[T]he *Eagle* is born again. It’s all new, robust and healthy.” 96 The new leadership shifted the paper’s focus from local to national news. As a result, Prop 14 figured less prominently in the *California Eagle* after Miller left in July 1964. After the *Eagle* changed hands, the *Los Angeles Sentinel* became the chief source of information regarding the “No on Prop 14” campaign in L.A.

Articles from the *Sentinel* show an effort made by multiple organizations in L.A. to get every eligible

African-American in the area to vote against Prop 14. Civil rights organizations figure most prominently in the *Sentinel*’s coverage of “No on Prop 14” activity. The local chapter of the NAACP funneled resources in the fight against Prop 14, opening a No on Proposition 14 Headquarters located at 2903 ½ S. Western Ave. 97 The headquarters served as an operational base for the NAACP’s voter registration and education drives. 98 Wendell Green, coordinator of the NAACP’s “No on 14” campaign, communicated the goals of the campaign to *Sentinel* reporters: “It is necessary that we knock again on every door to clear up any late confusion and to insure a maximum vote against the segregation proposition 14.” 99 In October 1964, the NAACP launched “Operation Westside” in an attempt to reverse the “apathy and confusion” about Prop 14 in West L.A.—an area forgotten by most other organizations. The *Sentinel* described the operation as “[a]n intensive voter education and get-out-the-vote campaign.” 100

The L.A. Urban League echoed the ambitions of the NAACP. Speaking on behalf of the Urban League, Housing Committee Chairman Sheldon C. Mays told the *Sentinel* that “[h]undreds of additional volunteers are needed in the drive to get every registered Negro

---

voter to cast his ballot NO on 14.”

Out of its eight field offices, the Urban League organized a massive get-out-the-vote drive. The Sentinel described the work involved: “Volunteers, who are being trained in special classes, are being asked to go door-to-door and talk with voters. Others are being used to help people get to the polls on Nov. 3 or to help with office work.”

In an August article, the Sentinel credited the United Civil Rights Council (UCRC) with “a registration drive that is second only to Mississippi in the entire United States.” The volunteer corps, largely comprised of high school and college-aged students, exhibited, according to the Sentinel, “an enthusiasm never seen before in a political campaign.” Formed in 1963, the short-lived UCRC was an umbrella organization, including in its membership a wide array of religious views, racial backgrounds and political affiliations. Both the L.A. chapters of the NAACP and CORE belonged to the UCRC. Activist Marnesba Tackett reflected, “That [the UCRC] was the most effective coalition that I have known of since I have been in Los Angeles because we had people from all ethnic groups and religions who participated.”

During the summer of 1964, the UCRC launched the Summer Registration Project, sending hundreds of young volunteers to “more than 1,000 precincts in central Los Angeles.” In August 1964, the Sentinel announced the UCRC’s plans to “conduct two special weekend registration drives in response to urgent requests from Watts and Compton.” As part of the “special weekend registration drives,” the UCRC asked residents to stay at home and answer their doors when volunteers came knocking. News cameras from channels 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9 planned to “be on spot.” Before the September 10 registration deadline, the UCRC aimed to add 110,000 previously disenfranchised African-Americans to the voter roll. The Sentinel reported that in one weekend alone, the UCRC managed to register 2,000 African-Americans.

The “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign in L.A.’s black communities mirrored the COFO’s much larger scaled Freedom Summer. Both campaigns relied upon volunteers to canvass black neighborhoods and convince inhabitants to register. Activists hoped that an increase in voter turnout among the black community would clinch the number of votes needed to defeat discriminatory laws. The get-out-the-vote drive in L.A. faced different hurdles than registration drives in the South. African-Americans in California were not

---

103 “UCRC Registers 2,000 on Weekend,” Los Angeles Sentinel, August 6, 1964.
104 Ibid.
105 Ibid.
106 Tackett, interview by Butler, Tape IV, Side 2, March 26, 1984. To gain a better understanding of Tackett’s involvement in L.A.’s civil rights activity, see her employment history in section vii and the list of her community affiliations in section viii.

109 Ibid.
110 “UCRC Registers 2,000 on Weekend,” Los Angeles Sentinel, August 6, 1964.
voter to cast his ballot NO on 14."\textsuperscript{101} Out of its eight field offices, the Urban League organized a massive get-out-the-vote drive. The \textit{Sentinel} described the work involved: “Volunteers, who are being trained in special classes, are being asked to go door-to-door and talk with voters. Others are being used to help people get to the polls on Nov. 3 or to help with office work.”\textsuperscript{102}

In an August article, the \textit{Sentinel} credited the United Civil Rights Council (UCRC) with “a registration drive that is second only to Mississippi in the entire United States.”\textsuperscript{103} The volunteer corps, largely comprised of high school and college-aged students, exhibited, according to the \textit{Sentinel}, “an enthusiasm never seen before in a political campaign.”\textsuperscript{104} Formed in 1963, the short-lived UCRC was an umbrella organization, including in its membership a wide array of religious views, racial backgrounds and political affiliations. Both the L.A. chapters of the NAACP and CORE belonged to the UCRC.\textsuperscript{105} Activist Maresba Tackett reflected, “That [the UCRC] was the most effective coalition that I have known of since I have been in Los Angeles because we had people from all ethnic groups and religions who participated.”\textsuperscript{106}

During the summer of 1964, the UCRC launched the Summer Registration Project, sending hundreds of young volunteers to “more than 1,000 precincts in central Los Angeles.”\textsuperscript{107} In August 1964, the \textit{Sentinel} announced the UCRC’s plans to “conduct two special weekend registration drives in response to urgent requests from Watts and Compton.”\textsuperscript{108} As part of the “special weekend registration drives,” the UCRC asked residents to stay at home and answer their doors when volunteers came knocking. News cameras from channels 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9 planned to “be on spot.”\textsuperscript{109} Before the September 10 registration deadline, the UCRC aimed to add 110,000 previously disenfranchised African-Americans to the voter roll. The \textit{Sentinel} reported that in one weekend alone, the UCRC managed to register 2,000 African-Americans.\textsuperscript{110}

The “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign in L.A.’s black communities mirrored the COFO’s much larger scaled Freedom Summer. Both campaigns relied upon volunteers to canvass black neighborhoods and convince inhabitants to register. Activists hoped that an increase in voter turnout among the black community would clinch the number of votes needed to defeat discriminatory laws. The get-out-the-vote drive in L.A. faced different hurdles than registration drives in the South. African-Americans in California were not

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{101} “Urban League Speeds Drive to Defeat Proposition 14,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, October 8, 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{102} “No on 14 Crusade Starts Its ‘Operation Westside’,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, October 1, 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{103} “UCRC Registers 2,000 on Weekend,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, August 6, 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} Tackett, interview by Butler, Tape IV, Side 2, March 26, 1984. To gain a better understanding of Tackett’s involvement in L.A.’s civil rights activity, see her employment history in section vii and the list of her community affiliations in section viii.
  \item \textsuperscript{107} “UCRC Appeals for Volunteers,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, August 20, 1964; “Local Registration Drive Getting Widespread Life,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, August 6, 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{108} “UCRC Plans Two, Big Registration Drives,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, August 13, 1964.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{110} “UCRC Registers 2,000 on Weekend,” \textit{Los Angeles Sentinel}, August 6, 1964.
\end{itemize}
barred from the polls like their brethren in Mississippi who were silenced via poll taxes, literacy tests and threats. However, the two campaigns shared the same central task. Volunteers had to convince African-Americans that their votes mattered.

Max Mont, executive director of CAP 14, expressed the necessity of targeting L.A.’s large African-American population in the “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign. The Sentinel quoted Mont on September 3, 1964: “[I]t [Prop 14] cannot be defeated unless almost all Negroes vote against it.”111 Mont’s statement echoes one of Malcolm X’s most famous speeches titled “The Ballot or the Bullet.” In his speech, delivered on April 3, 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio, Malcolm X maintained that the power to stop the “segrationalist conspiracy” lies in “the ballot or the bullet.”112 Contrary to the public memory of Malcolm, in the speech, he held hope in the democratic process, asserting that “the ballot is most important.”113 He describe the African-American community as a “bloc of votes” large enough to alter the outcome of an election.114 He called upon African-Americans to “wake up” and realize that they ultimately “determine who’s going to sit in the White House and who’s going to be in the dog house.”115 Although Malcolm X was largely referring to voter participation in presidential races, the same sentiment can be applied to local and state politics.

Recognizing that the black community could possibly clinch the number of votes needed to defeat Prop 14, Governor Brown invited 500 black leaders to a “unity meeting” on August 29, 1964 at the Second Baptist Church in L.A.116 On its front page, the Sentinel lauded the “unprecedented move to unify major civil rights organizations in L.A. County.” Spokesperson for the event, Louis Lomax, told the Sentinel, “We are determined to set aside thoughts of who will be credited with success in this fight.”117 Even though 67.4% of L.A. County voters supported Prop 14 at the ballot box, the resistance movement led by L.A. organizations was not a complete failure.118 On October 15, 1964, with less than a month until “D-Day,” the Sentinel reported, “Coordinated efforts by civic, civil rights and political organizations resulted in more than 40,000 people being registered for the vote in central Los Angeles.”119 As shown in the report, Prop 14 inspired thousands of African-Americans to register to vote—an important stepping stone on the road towards equality.

113 Ibid, 36.

118 Casstevens, Politics, Housing and Race Relations
barred from the polls like their brethren in Mississippi who were silenced via poll taxes, literacy tests and threats. However, the two campaigns shared the same central task. Volunteers had to convince African-Americans that their votes mattered.

Max Mont, executive director of CAP 14, expressed the necessity of targeting L.A.’s large African-American population in the “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign. The Sentinel quoted Mont on September 3, 1964: “[I]t [Prop 14] cannot be defeated unless almost all Negroes vote against it.” Mont’s statement echoes one of Malcolm X’s most famous speeches titled “The Ballot or the Bullet.” In his speech, delivered on April 3, 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio, Malcolm X maintained that the power to stop the “segrationalist conspiracy” lies in “the ballot or the bullet.” Contrary to the public memory of Malcolm, in the speech, he held hope in the democratic process, asserting that “the ballot is most important.” He describe the African-American community as a “bloc of votes” large enough to alter the outcome of an election. He called upon African-Americans to “wake up” and realize that they ultimately “determine who’s going to sit in the White House and who’s going to be in the dog house.” Although Malcolm X was largely referring to voter participation in presidential races, the same sentiment can be applied to local and state politics.

Recognizing that the black community could possibly clinch the number of votes needed to defeat Prop 14, Governor Brown invited 500 black leaders to a “unity meeting” on August 29, 1964 at the Second Baptist Church in L.A. On its front page, the Sentinel lauded the “unprecedented move to unify major civil rights organizations in L.A. County.” Spokesperson for the event, Louis Lomax, told the Sentinel, “We are determined to set aside thoughts of who will be credited with success in this fight.” Even though 67.4% of L.A. County voters supported Prop 14 at the ballot box, the resistance movement led by L.A. organizations was not a complete failure. On October 15, 1964, with less than a month until “D-Day,” the Sentinel reported, “Coordinated efforts by civic, civil rights and political organizations resulted in more than 40,000 people being registered for the vote in central Los Angeles.” As shown in the report, Prop 14 inspired thousands of African-Americans to register to vote—an important stepping stone on the road towards equality.

113 Ibid, 36.
Mobilizing African-Americans

Conclusion

Threatened by the growing presence of African-Americans in California after World War II, realtors crafted Prop 14 in an effort to prevent African-Americans from overflowing into white suburbia. Although fair housing advocates failed to defeat Prop 14 in November 1964, the groundswell of opposition reveals the widespread influence of the civil rights movement. This was especially apparent in Los Angeles where local organizations sought to harness the voting power of the city’s large African-American population. Mirroring the strategies employed by national civil rights organizations during the Mississippi Freedom Summer, like-minded organizations in L.A. encouraged African-Americans to become electorally active. Even though Prop 14 disappeared from discussion after the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in 1967, the “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign had a lasting impact on South Central L.A. It inspired thousands of African-Americans to engage in the political process in an effort to shape their futures.

Tracy Sullivan is a History major and Political Science minor. Tracy’s dual interests in public policy and California History inspired her senior capstone. The topic of her research, Proposition 14, figures prominently in her family’s history as both sets of her grandparents voted in the 1964 general election. Additionally, her family’s hometown of Sierra Madre, CA lies within the borders of Los Angeles County which prompted her regional focus. In the fall, Tracy is moving to Sacramento where she will continue to fuel her passion for California state politics as a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow.
Conclusion

Threatened by the growing presence of African-Americans in California after World War II, realtors crafted Prop 14 in an effort to prevent African-Americans from overflowing into white suburbia. Although fair housing advocates failed to defeat Prop 14 in November 1964, the groundswell of opposition reveals the widespread influence of the civil rights movement. This was especially apparent in Los Angeles where local organizations sought to harness the voting power of the city’s large African-American population. Mirroring the strategies employed by national civil rights organizations during the Mississippi Freedom Summer, like-minded organizations in L.A. encouraged African-Americans to become electorally active. Even though Prop 14 disappeared from discussion after the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in 1967, the “Vote No on Prop 14” campaign had a lasting impact on South Central L.A. It inspired thousands of African-Americans to engage in the political process in an effort to shape their futures.

Tracy Sullivan is a History major and Political Science minor. Tracy’s dual interests in public policy and California History inspired her senior capstone. The topic of her research, Proposition 14, figures prominently in her family’s history as both sets of her grandparents voted in the 1964 general election. Additionally, her family’s hometown of Sierra Madre, CA lies within the borders of Los Angeles County which prompted her regional focus. In the fall, Tracy is moving to Sacramento where she will continue to fuel her passion for California state politics as a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow.