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SUURJ



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Welcome to *SUURJ*

Welcome to the third volume of Seattle University's Undergraduate Research Journal (*SUURJ*). As student editors, organizers, advertisers, and fundraisers for *SUURJ*, we are ecstatic to finally present the product of our year-long collaboration. Our team has worked with Seattle University students, faculty, and administrators to bring together a journal that amplifies our students' voices and insights beyond the classroom into wider conversations, while providing both authors and editors with valuable professional experience.

This year's volume is an exciting amalgamation of student research ranging from international studies, anthropology, literature, communications, psychology, art history, business ethics, and economics. Each year's selection is a careful process that seeks to balance disciplinarily and methodologically diverse content with relevant theses that engage broader issues in interesting ways. The benefit of having an online journal is that we can create a volume containing research that is relevant to larger discussions happening amongst our global audience. It is not a process we would call easy—we are a small journal, and therefore limited in the amount of outstanding research we can showcase—but we feel with this year's essays our goal was achieved. While *SUURJ* does not choose annual themes for its volumes, natural patterns and rhythms will often occur. We noticed that this year, there is a certain emphasis on health and the body, on the responsibility of institutions to take care of their constituents, and on the extent to which our cultural artifacts—literature and film most notably—do or do not endorse feminist practice.

We, and the two teams that have come before us, have had the pleasure of embarking on this illuminating, sometimes stressful, and genuinely fun practicum with Dr. Molly Clark Hillard. She met us on our better days with a passion for the *SUURJ* process, and on days when academic life left us dazed, she met us with her own sometimes bleary, yet steadfastly determined, eyes. While what Dr. Hillard brought to *SUURJ* will certainly be missed when she goes on sabbatical next year, she has organized the journal with a precision that ensures its structural longevity without compromising the individual adaptations of each new team of editors. In the coming year, we are excited to see the work that Professors Hannah Tracy and Tara Roth will bring to Volume 4, in light of the journal's continued expansion. Volume 3 is our biggest volume to date; we had more submissions, accepted papers, student editors, authors, and faculty content editors than previous years. It is, without a doubt, the drive of inspired community members that have fueled the need for undergraduate research journals and created, for students across disciplines, an impactful platform. The need for diverse voices is crucial, and it is our hope to elevate those voices in order to provoke and motivate others. So thank you, reader, for accompanying us as we *SUURJ* forward.

All Our Gratitude,
The *SUURJ* Volume 3 Student Editorial Team



Core and University Honors Writing

With its emphasis on seminar-style classes, focus on research-based inquiry, and practice of writing in revision, our liberal arts core curriculum—the University Core, or UCOR—sets Seattle University apart from other institutions of higher learning. We felt strongly that to capture the spirit of Seattle University, and to convey that spirit to a national audience, *SUURJ* should include writing from the Core. Any research-based writing assignment from a Core class is eligible for consideration in this section. We decided to offer Core writing as a separate section rather than to integrate the essays into the other full-length articles in the journal. We made this choice for several reasons. First, we wanted to introduce the Core to an audience outside the campus community. Second, because students in the Core are not necessarily majors in the field for which they are writing, and because they are often first- and second-year students, we did not want to assess their writing in the same way we did essays by upper-division majors. Finally, Core courses are often interdisciplinary, or they engage in assignments that are less-traditionally contoured than research projects in the majors, so again, we chose a different mode of evaluation. We offer the Core Writing section as part of our celebration of writing at all stages of students' undergraduate careers.

Berthe Morisot and Painted Mirrors

Leah Dooley, English and Women and Gender Studies

Faculty Mentor: Kenneth Allan, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Naomi Hume, PhD

Student Editor: Tzu Hung Huang

Abstract

A common Impressionist subject was a woman in front of a mirror. Berthe Morisot, one of a few prominent female painters during the Impressionist era, often painted women in private, domestic settings with those women looking into mirrors. This essay looks at Berthe Morisot's painting of women and mirrors through the lens of feminist theories of looking and gender difference. This is done through close readings of several paintings by Morisot and one of her contemporaries, Edouard Manet. Morisot, as a female painter, portrays a unique kind of self-looking of and by women, in which she paints women who subvert and deny the traditional male gaze through an awareness of their public presence.

When the female subject of a painting gazes into a mirror, that ubiquitous household item, she becomes both the subject of feminist discourse and an artistic portrayal of self-looking. From the moment people began gazing into still ponds, art has complicated the idea of reflections, making them a conflation of mirror image and self-understanding. In paintings, a mirror does not merely reflect the subject of the painting but instead asks the viewer to think about how we look at ourselves and others: our reflections both literally and figuratively. This article explores how Impressionist painter Berthe Morisot, through her paintings of women looking into mirrors, conveys to the beholder not only a sense of women's private moments but also a glimpse into their constant self-awareness. It was common for male artists, such as Morisot's contemporary Edouard Manet, to voyeuristically paint women. His subjects often passively sit at a vanity in various stages of undress. By contrast, Morisot's painted subjects, women who are active and aware, set her works apart from other Impressionists. Morisot wants the viewer to confront the male gaze and ask how it differs from the ways in which the women see themselves. She does that by painting women looking into mirrors. Morisot subtly and intentionally subverts the male gaze both in how she depicts women who are aware of the ways in which they are seen and in her choices of what to portray and what not to portray.

In Morisot's nineteenth-century France, mirrors were an essential part of a woman's life. Mirrors gave women the ability to gaze upon themselves privately, yet create an image meant for the public eye. It was customary for an upper-class woman to apply makeup, fashion elaborate hairstyles, and put together outfits before entering the public sphere. Those activities required a mirror to be done successfully. Mirrors were mass-produced beginning in 1835 after the discovery of silvering, a mirror-making technique that involves pouring silver behind glass to create a highly reflective surface. Before this, mirrors were a status item reserved for the elites of society. Even as silvering popularized, elaborate frames made of precious metals continued to be an indicator of wealth and status. But the more effective and advanced silvering made mirrors accessible to people of varying social classes. This technique also allowed for different kinds of mirrors like the cheval, a full-bodied, swinging mirror (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*). The ubiquity of mirrors makes them a common subject in literature and art, often tied to women, vanity, and looking (Goscilo).

Feminist art scholarship criticizes the often-sublimated male gaze, defined by Laura Mulvey as the voyeuristic and violative way male artists looks upon their female subjects (837). In her book *Vision and Difference*, Griselda Pollock, one of many feminist scholars concerned with the sexual politics of looking, writes on the relationship between the image and the beholder. Pollock investigates how the male beholder, and therefore the male gaze, are constantly implied in the consumption of visual art. And while the male gaze spans over centuries, Pollock focuses on the nineteenth century and Impressionist paintings in the chapter "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity" (50). In these works, even when the subject is a

woman, she is meant to be seen by men. The traditional masculine narrative states that to gaze is to desire; men reproducing the female nude over thousands of years have showed us this belief. As Valerie Steele writes in her article on Manet's *Nana* (1863), "the female nude, in particular, is a recognized artistic genre" (124). Pollock argues for the uniqueness of female artists within the Impressionist movement. This uniqueness is not the result of gender essentialism but is instead caused by the very separated and constructed social roles of men and women. Pollock speaks specifically to how female artists understood and navigated "what spaces are open to men and to women and what relation a man or a woman has to that space and its occupants" (Pollock 62). Morisot had to be more conscious of the space she inhabited and the ways others saw her. Thus, she painted, with intention, women who are aware of the gaze of their viewer. Pollock calls femininity "an inescapable condition understood perpetually from the ideological patriarchal definition of it" (84). Morisot lived and painted in that "inescapable condition," and it is palpable in her works. She was stuck within a world of the male gaze but painted her female models in ways that subvert that gaze.

Because the male gaze is so ubiquitous, many feminist scholars take up the topic. Laura Mulvey dissects the male gaze in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." Due to our "world ordered by sexual imbalance," Mulvey describes how "pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (837). Mulvey analyzes how film dehumanizes women by making them an image to be desired by heterosexual men. Though Mulvey writes specifically about cinema, her work applies to all visual art; "none of these interacting layers is intrinsic to film, but it is only in the film form that they can reach a perfect and beautiful contradiction, thanks to the possibility in the cinema of shifting the emphasis of the look" (843). The mirror paintings of Morisot and Manet explored in this article are intrinsically concerned with looking. Manet paints women in the way Mulvey describes. His women sit in front of a mirror but are meant to be seen and desired by the beholder. A female artist like Morisot can upset and overthrow this project with subjects who possess a potent subjectivity.



Figure 1 Berthe Morisot. *The Psyche Mirror*. 1876
Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

Morisot's *Psyche* (1876) shows a young woman standing in front of a wood-framed cheval mirror. This work illustrates the ways in which Morisot painted female subjects as conscious of the male gaze. We, the beholder, see the woman's profile and reflection in the tall mirror. Her pale dress, golden shoes, and dark jewelry indicate her upper-class status. The white and blue floral pattern on the couch and curtains stands in contrast with the red carpet on which she stands upright. Her chemise has fallen off her left shoulder; she stands with her left hand on the small of her back and her right hand on her hip. The eye is initially drawn to that exposed shoulder, a common reveal in boudoir scenes, but what is significant is the thoughtful and pensive look on her face. We have caught her in a private moment. She appears to be adjusting her clothes. Her eyes are cast downward, and her head tilted slightly forward. Perhaps she is looking at her reflection in the full-length mirror, or perhaps she is trying to tie the back of her dress. Morisot painted not a pose but a woman in motion. While we see the whole body of the standing female subject, the mirror cuts off her reflection below the knees. This reflection is blurred and distorted in ways that she is not. The painting inspires

some unease in the viewer; her mirror image is at an unexpected angle. The woman's reflection appears looking back at us, aware of the beholder's gaze. We see her profile, a position often used to dehumanize a subject, but her reflection faces the viewer, even as the face of that reflection is blurred beyond recognition.

The sexualizing of the female subject in a boudoir was a common Impressionist trope. However, Morisot combats that male gaze with *Psyche*, specifically the posture of the subject and that subject's reflection. Pollock comments on *Psyche* specifically:

"Morisot's painting offers the spectator a view into the bedroom of a bourgeois woman and as such is not without voyeuristic potential but at the same time, the pictured woman is not offered for sight so much as caught contemplating herself in a mirror in a way which separates the woman as subject of a contemplative and thoughtful look from woman as object." (81)

The presence of a mirror arouses the question of looking, and the modest posture of the subject suggests a discomfort with violating looks. The blurred reflection and posture indicate modesty; it is as though the subject is asking the viewer to avert their eyes. Morisot confronts the viewer's way of looking with these intentional artistic choices. The woman's downward looks, in contrast with confrontational nature of her reflection, imply a heightened sense of awareness. Morisot painted a woman who is not an object to be viewed, but a woman who is aware of how she will be seen. When set next to paintings by Manet, Morisot's choices are clearly distinct and intentional. These choices advocate for the interior lives of women.

Edouard Manet was an influential painter of the French Impressionist movement. He was not only a contemporary of Morisot, but also her brother-in-law. Reiterating that common Impressionist trope of a fallen woman, Manet's *Before the Mirror* (1876) portrays a highly sexualized female subject looking at her reflection. While Morisot's and Manet's works feature the same location and subject, Manet objectifies and sexualizes his subject while Morisot does not. The woman in the painting stands erect; her stiff back, square shoulders, and impossibly small waist leave her naked upper back as the focus. Her displaced undergarment and untied corset emphasize her hourglass shape. The draped clothes give the sense that they were removed by someone other than her. The subject is risqué. Manet himself said that "the satin corset may be the nude of our era" (Steele 124). This painting is one of many where Manet uses clothing to signify class and morality. Steele says of Manet's *Nana* that "the subject's colorful satin corset and silk lingerie mark her as a courtesan" (124). He uses the same blue satin corset in *Before the Mirror* (Stelle 124). That subject looks at a reflection in the mirror we cannot see. It is as though she is presenting herself to the beholder, posing for an audience. She appears to be admiring her own reflection in the way a man might admire, sexualize, or objectify her. The woman's positioning, outfit, and framing display her as an object to be viewed; that is the male gaze at work. Manet suppresses any sense that this woman looks at herself as her self. Indeed, though she stands in front of a mirror, she does not appear to have any sense of self.

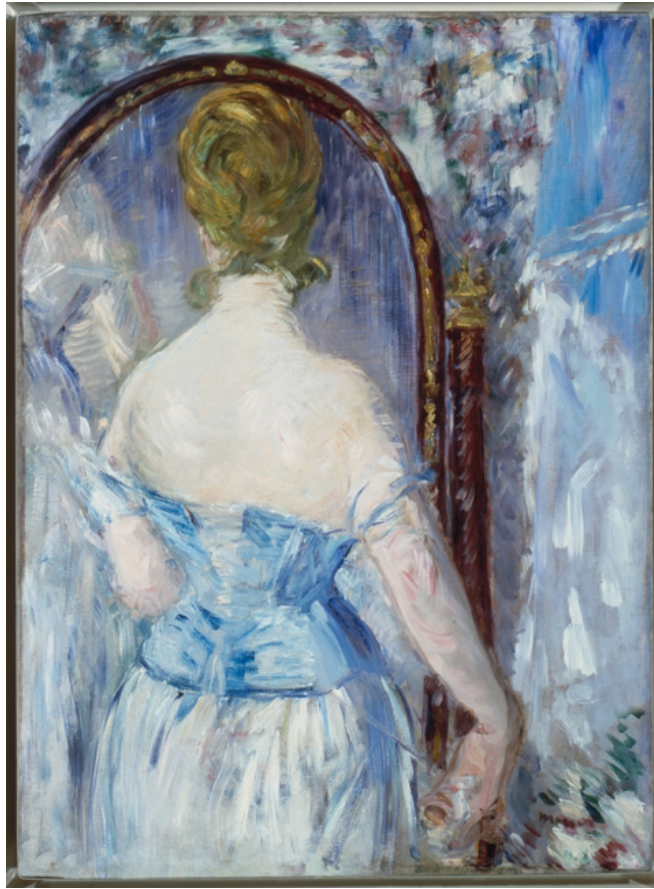


Figure 2 Édouard Manet. *Before the Mirror*. 1876
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Linda Nochlin, in her essay, “Eroticism and Female Imagery in Nineteenth Century Art,” explores the male sexualization of female subjects: “the very title of this investigation [...] is actually redundant. There really is no erotic art in the nineteenth century which does not involve the image of women, and precious little before or after” (137). Their female subjects are painted to be on display for and visually pleasing to a male audience, existing only to be looked at and consumed. Tied to the concept of the male gaze, Nochlin writes: “man is not only the subject of all erotic predicates, but the customer for all erotic products as well, and the customer is always right” (138-139). Thus, the beholder can see the sexuality being vended in Manet’s *Before the Mirror*.

Manet’s use of color here also speaks to the male gaze. Colored corsets existed to be seen, at least by one other person, and were therefore the sign of a sexually promiscuous woman. Speaking to the fashion and morality of the era, Steele cites a centerfold from *La Vie Parisienne* from the 1880s; “The proper and virtuous woman wears a white satin corset, never a colored corset” (129). While Morisot painted women in white, Manet dressed his models in blue, another indicator that they are meant to be looked at. The woman Manet painted is not

given the privacy, agency, or awareness Morisot grants her subjects. Manet's female subject is a body, not a person, dressed and posed for the male viewer. It is not only her colorful corset but her impossible shape and her performative pose that suggest Manet's dehumanization of the subject. Morisot's subtlety is thrown into clear relief when compared against this Manet piece. Even when the female subjects of the painting are positioned similarly, Morisot's women possess a subjectivity and interiority wholly lacking in Manet's work. Morisot's women are subjects not easily consumed.

In 1890, Morisot painted *Before the Mirror*, nearly 15 years after Manet's work of the same name. With a more saturated palette and heavier brushstrokes, the similarities between this and her earlier works show her portrayals of women's subjectivity to be even more striking and intentional. Much like Manet's *Before the Mirror*, we see a woman from behind, with her undergarment off her shoulders, revealing her back as she looks into a large mirror. The woman's back is curved as she sits forward on the chair in the middle of putting up her hair, gazing downward. However, Morisot depicts this woman in the middle of an action, rather than in a static pose. We see the mirror clearly, but her reflection lacks realistic details. Her back has greater shading and depth, and more precise brushwork when compared to the reflection, which shows the front of her body. Morisot clearly distinguishes the rendering of the woman's reflection from her actual body. Even though we see the front of her half-naked body in the mirror, the image is not sexualized in the way that Manet's woman is. Morisot's *Before the Mirror* includes nudity, but that nudity is not the focus of the viewer's eye. The blurring of the undressed parts of the woman, along with the much clearer back and shoulder, intentionally pulls the viewers focus to the woman herself, not her image or nakedness. The beholder sees into the mirror the way the woman sees into the mirror—not a sex object but just a reflection. This positioning creates empathy and, as with *Psyche*, implies modesty.

The curved back and arm movements show a woman going about her business, not a woman on display. While Manet's woman is clearly framed for the viewer, Morisot's woman sits among pieces of furniture and different colors, making the painting more about her holistic life than the sexual pleasure derived from her positioning. Given the context of both paintings, it does not follow logically that a woman would be posing in the way that Manet poses his subject; a woman in a private space would be moving like Morisot's woman. In distorting the reflection and painting a woman in action, Morisot creates a portrait that resists objectification and the male gaze. She does not default to that gaze and instead shows a woman in her female-gendered private space.

Morisot made specific choices in where she painted her women. Her domestic settings express class, wealth, privacy, as well as the limitations nineteenth-century female artists who faced restricted access and minimal safety in public space. In *Vision and Difference*, Pollock also discusses space in terms of location and women's relationship to locations (62). Public spaces,

being both literally and morally dangerous for women, were not often painted by female artists. Male Impressionists did not risk their reputations by painting dancers and prostitutes in sordid locations. The painting of upper-class women in domestic situations, in their bedrooms or with children, on the other hand, is a staple of female Impressionists.

Morisot portrayed women by painting them in women's spaces, to which she would have legitimate access. She painted women of the upper class, a small portion of women overall who had access to fine things like decorative mirrors and fanciful dresses. In painting women in these private spaces, along with the women's posture and clothing, Morisot endows them with an interior life. They are private in their painted setting. And yet any comfort those women would experience in real life is ripped away when they, the subjects of a painting, are put on display. Any painting will be viewed publicly, in an art gala or exhibition, by a great number of people, including men. Morisot knew that, so she used the patriarchal structures she lived in to confront that patriarchal audience. Instead of sexualizing women and violating their private space, which male artists were constantly doing either consciously or unconsciously, Morisot places the women in front of a mirror to ensure that the viewer is thinking about the politics of looking. She painted women with the knowledge that real women possessed, an understanding of the way they look as well as the way they are seen. She undercut the male gaze by imbuing their posture, facial expressions, and reflections with that understanding of constant observation. Then, as the subject gazes upon herself, the viewer of the painting cannot see her simply as a lifeless prop. She is a fully formed and thoughtful person, wary of her situation.

Morisot's *Woman at her Toilette* (1875) shows another subject conscious of her audience. In this work, Morisot paints a young woman with light hair looking down at a tilted mirror. Her back is to the viewer, hiding her face. We see her hair gathered at the top of her head, a black ribbon around her neck, exposed and slanted shoulders, and white and blue chamise. She looks downward at a reflection we cannot see with one hand in her hair. Much like the subject of *Psyche*, her shoulder lies bare and turned towards the viewer. This is a private moment; the woman appears alone and in action. The mirror sits to the left of the woman, and in it, we see the table behind the subject set with the accoutrements of beauty. We do not see the reflection of the woman. Though the painting shows a large part of the mirror, our angle as a viewer makes the woman's back the focal point. We are not permitted to see her whole face; we do not see her reflection at all. Morisot purposely hides these details. The subject is the beholder of her image. Like in *Psyche*, the subject is modest in how she looks away. Mirrors are connected to the act of dressing; Morisot places her subject in front of a mirror to ask questions about looking and image-creation. Her women create their image, makeup, clothing, and hair in private spaces, knowing that they will venture out into the public. By painting this private space, making it on display, the artist violates that privacy. And yet,

through intentional artistic choices, Morisot's women are aware of both space and viewer. This double awareness, being in a private space and still on display, is what Morisot conveys as the discomfort of women under the male gaze. Nonetheless, she allows her female subject the agency to reject the gaze of the viewer, through image-crafting. In *Young Woman Powdering her Face* (1877), Morisot painted another woman in front of her vanity; she is simultaneously aware of how others see her and actively engaged in crafting her own image. The subject, again a young woman, sits in front of her mirror, applying makeup. As she puts on powder with her right hand, her left hand tilts the mirror towards her face. She wears a loose-fitting white undergarment. This painting offers a profile of the subject; she sits faced away from us, toward the mirror. Her reflection is hidden to us, like in *Woman at her Toilette*, but she clearly sees her own reflection. The mirror is darker than most of the painting, reflecting an unseen corner of the room. Morisot does not allow the beholder to see the reflection of the woman, and this is an intentional omission.

Young Woman Powdering her Face again shows a woman who is both aware of and crafting her own image. Morisot denies the viewer the woman's reflection and has painted her subject putting on makeup, a distinctly feminine activity. The woman doing her makeup self-consciously crafts her image. By having her female subject doing a task so tied to image crafting and changing, Morisot confronts the passive viewer, asking that viewer to see how the woman truly sees herself. Morisot's painted women refuse to be gazed upon by a voyeuristic observer but instead take a proactive approach in how they will be seen. The woman is not just her reflection, not just the makeup she puts on but the conscious creation of that self. Morisot shows the viewer that women are conscious of their appearance even when alone. She reveals the woman's genuine self and her autonomy to craft her image, thus bestowing a subjectivity on the depicted woman. The painting is successful at refusing to give the viewer a purely passive object. Morisot gives the viewer a subject actively intent upon crafting her own appearance.

Morisot painted women actively gazing at their reflections, women who are self-aware and conscious of their image. Morisot, participating in the culture of her time, knew that the intended and assumed audience of her works would be men. Yet she still painted women in feminine, private spaces, specifically looking into mirrors at themselves. Morisot uses mirrors in her works to ask what it can mean to look at the subject of a portrait and to confront viewers about how they look at women. Morisot's works push back against the constant eroticism of women in private places by her contemporary male artists. Looking at art by female painters requires a necessary "deconstruction of the masculinist myths of modernism" (Pollock 50). Morisot deconstructs the male gaze by showing that women see themselves not only from their own perspective but from that outside male perspective at the same time. The ubiquitous leering male gaze bleeds into her works, so Morisot painted women who blatantly reject

that gaze; they hide, obscure, or change their face, and confront the viewer. She intentionally painted figures who know what they looked like, inviting a more complex and sympathetic viewpoint that sees women as multi-dimensional beings. Morisot and the painted women negotiate and challenge a patriarchal social structure, the male gaze, and the systematic undermining of their autonomy. Morisot subtly manipulates the traditional painting styles of her time to emphasize women's humanity in the ways they self-consciously craft their own images, gazing into their mirrors.

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The Consequences of Universities Overlooking the Challenges Faced by International Students

Chhavi Mehra, Communication & Media

Faculty Mentor: Nathan Colaner, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Nathan Colaner, PhD

Student Editor: Tzu Hung Huang

Abstract

Each year, more than a million international students arrive in universities in the United States, bringing valuable cultural, academic, and intellectual backgrounds, as well as revenue to these universities. However, the values these students bring are often overlooked when universities do not factor in the life circumstances of these students, creating unintended barriers for these students to succeed. These barriers reduce the contributions that international students make to the campus community. This essay uses a philosophical and civil lens to explore this problem and argue for a civil framework to help universities be better hosts to international students, enabling these students to make culturally and economically valuable contributions to the universities.

In Plato's allegory of the cave, a group of prisoners is shackled in a dark cave. They can't turn around, and the fire behind them projects shadows on the wall in front of them, which they call beings. To the prisoners, these shadows become reality. One of the prisoners manages to break free from his shackles and sees the flame for the first time, which he takes a little while to get used to. As the freed prisoner makes his way out of the cave, he sees the sun for the first time; it is blinding at first but then he learns that the shadows were in fact a reflection of actual beings (p. 240-248). Like the shackled prisoners, when international students come to the United States, they may gain a wider perspective, which to them is a world that they didn't grow up in.

International students come from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds, habits, values, and belief systems to pursue their dream of studying in the United States. As of academic year 2017–2018, the number of international students in US colleges and universities reached 1.09 million.¹ (Institute of International Education, 2018). These students generate considerable revenue and bring diverse cultural perspectives and global awareness to the whole campus community. However, campus communities often overlook the value these students bring because of universities' systemic oversight of international students' experiences. When universities don't factor in the life circumstances of these students, such as cultural and language barriers as well as academic and financial challenges, universities create unintended obstacles to these students' success. When international students are confronted with these barriers, the contribution they can make to the university campus and classroom is diminished because when students feel alienated and marginalized, they no longer participate on campuses or in classrooms.

In this essay, I am advocating for the principle of civility and philosophy that reminds us to value, embrace, and be mindful of our differences, and to see people with common dignity and respect. In our universities, we need to use a civil framework that asks us to be better hosts to our international students, so that everyone can more fully participate in our campus community. Among the many challenges that these students face, I will focus on two: language and academics.

Language barriers can pose a huge challenge for international students when they come to the United States. Communication barriers which have occurred with professors can be linked to power dynamics, vocabulary, and lack of historical context. International students may feel hesitant in approaching their professors because of power dynamics in their cultures. Power dynamics here means varying cultural practices between students and teachers. In many countries like China, Chile, and parts of Africa, power dynamics are such that a "teacher-led approach" is preferred, where a teacher is seen as an expert on the topic (Pérez & Clem, 2017; *Teaching Policies*, 2016; "What You Need," 2015). Asking questions may imply questioning teachers' authority. Conversely, in the United States, classroom discussions

from elementary school to high school are generally more student-led and interactive, offering students a chance to express their ideas. As a result, an international student who has been conditioned in a more authoritative educational culture may feel shy and is less likely to approach American university professors.

In addition to the varying power dynamics between a professor and a student across cultures, vocabulary used by professors can be daunting, especially because most international students don't speak English as their first language. Even after international students demonstrate English language proficiency through standardized tests such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (International English Language Testing System), a wide range of vocabulary may still be inaccessible to them, even before they enter a classroom. International students may view American education through their own cultural lenses, which causes them to not fully understand these complex, culturally-dependent concepts. When they come across complex vocabularies, international students may feel confused at first but then slowly begin to understand subtle meanings.

In addition to power dynamics and complex vocabularies, lack of historical context can pose a challenge for international students. Often, the information that professors provide requires historical context. An example can be learning about racial subjugation: African Americans were subjugated by white supremacist groups. The complexities of history, terminology, and names such as Martin Luther King Jr., KKK (Ku Klux Klan), "lynching," or "Jim Crow segregation," are foreign to many international students.

Like communication with professors, socialization can be a language barrier for international students because of their emerging language proficiency. Socialization includes understanding slang and sarcasm as well as humor and popular culture references. International students may feel shy, embarrassed, or judged by their domestic counterparts because of their developing language skills. "References to popular culture icons readily recognized by U.S. students don't register; sarcasm and slang are often taken literally" (Kisch, 2014, pp. 44-47). Such references in everyday interactions can make international students feel alienated. For example, international students may come across the phrase, "how are you?" While the phrase is often said in the form of a statement without necessarily expecting a thorough answer (Meyer, 2010), an international student might consider a lack of response impolite.

A possible pitfall of learning a language is recognizing that there are different dialects. One study of US English argues that there are as many as 24 identifiable English dialects (Nisen, 2013). For example, an international student might hear the phrase "kick it," for the first time and take it literally, feeling threatened or confused. Whether it is communicating with professors or making new friends, growing mastery of the English language can make the

transition for international students into American universities difficult, often causing social isolation and alienation (Hsiao-ping, Garza, & Guzman, 2015, pp. 1-9).

Academic challenges can be another issue for some international students. Academic challenges include class participation, religious holidays, and confusion about concepts such as plagiarism, citing sources, critical thinking, and assignment interpretation.

Many international students often struggle with participating in their classes. For example, students in many Asian cultures “[shy] away from putting themselves forward too actively or contradicting each other too vocally” (Rear, 2017, pp. 18-33). In some cultures, classrooms promote teacher-centric learning, where active participation and questions are discouraged. But in many universities in the United States, students are encouraged to vocally express their opinions during class interactions.

In addition to engaging in class discussions, working in groups can be a concern for students with differing cultural norms. In the article “Helping Faculty Teach International Students,” Marian Kisch portrays how group work can be a concern for some international students. Suppose a group of Saudi Arabian students are paired with a group of American students; Saudi Arabian students may not openly express themselves because their culture norms don’t encourage open expression of ideas, unlike their American counterparts (2014, p. 44). Such a scenario can create a sense of discomfort from being forced to speak for these students that are more reserved.

Another complication that comes in class participation arises from religious beliefs. A majority of Americans believe in Christianity (Newport, 2015). But in Islam, there are certain days during the week where students may have to fast or attend religious meetings. As a result, there can be times when a student may feel drained or unwell. But this does not indicate that the student is not trying. Therefore, university faculty must “concentrate [their] efforts on the prevalence of religious diversity and what that means for the student community” (Tarantino, 2016, p. 88). Before faculty can even welcome a religion, they must first be mindful of such diversity in religions in the classrooms. Civility asks us to be conscious of our neighbors’ beliefs and perspectives. If a student’s grade depends on class participation, these international students may fail to fulfill the academic expectations of the class, which may ultimately impact their college success.

In addition to class participation, understanding of concepts like “plagiarism” can be another academic challenge for international students. Some countries, like China, focus on rote learning. The article “What You Need to Know About Chinese Teaching Methods” illustrates that students in Chinese classrooms value learning styles that involve notetaking, repetition, and absorbing information given by authority like teachers. “They view memorization as a route to understanding and believe the most effective way of achieving this is through direct instruction. Therefore, students passively receive information from the

teacher” (Teach in China, 2015). Such learning habits can also be observed in Chile and some African countries (Pérez & Clem, 2017; *Teaching Policies*, 2016). This learning strategy is derived from repetition and memorization of teachers’ ideas in addition to the supplementary books. Plagiarism is defined as theft and involves not giving credit to the source. But for students from these countries, memorization involves reciting information while not being expected to give credit to the sources.

In addition, citing sources can be another problematic concept for international students. If, for instance, a student is asked to write a paper on “Financial Challenges and International Students,” the student may need statistics or outside sources to back up their ideas. But students in some cultures are “not used to paraphrasing or citing their sources when preparing research papers” (Kisch, 2014, pp. 44-47). This scenario would then become a case of academic dishonesty. While the information may appear plagiarized to an instructor, it can just be a misunderstanding. This may indicate that a student is simply uninformed about the nuances of US academic honesty. Such a misunderstanding can lead to serious consequences like academic probation or expulsion.

Classroom discussions in America are heavily focused on critical thinking, another concept of which international students may be unaware. As discussed earlier, there are some cultures that focus on rote memorization. Furthermore, “many studies have shown that, in contrast to their Western counterparts, Asian students perceive silence to be an important component of deep thinking” (Rear, 2017, pp. 18-33). This might also be the case with American students who don’t speak up. Inherently, rote memorization can push these students to not think critically.

Finally, international students often struggle with interpreting assignments accurately. This can be applied to American students as well, but struggling to accurately interpret assignments may impact international students more seriously, especially if they do not speak English as their first language. The assignments may consist of unclear guidelines, thereby causing a lot of confusion for these students to successfully finish an assignment. For example, an international student has received a homework assignment to solve some math problems, but there is no guideline on whether the teacher wants a student to simply arrive at an answer or to assess what strategies they have used to arrive at an answer. This ambiguity in the assignment may indicate that the student is incorrect or has a wrong perspective. In truth, it could just be a misinterpretation of the assignment. Given that class participation, lack of understanding of key concepts, and misinterpretation of assignments pose an academic challenge for these students, universities must reassess how we engage our international students.

Thus, it is clear that language barriers and academic challenges can hinder the academic success of international students. The effects of these challenges include alienation, social

isolation, fear, and marginalization. We need to remind ourselves that we have entered this era of interconnectedness and a global economy. We need international students in our universities because these students expand our global perspectives, since they enrich and engage in our classrooms by bringing forth their cultural experiences. If we do not tend to the needs of these students, they will no longer participate in our colleges and universities. As a result, we will lose not only the financial profit, but also the cultural and moral values they bring to our universities.

Universities need to question their assumptions of international students and find the courage to challenge their own understanding of these students. Because international students' satisfaction surveys reveal relatively low levels of satisfaction in terms of social interactions and academic adjustment,² universities can certainly improve in these areas in a variety of ways. They can add to their international students' orientations by focusing on the diversities of American culture, values, and academic styles. Universities can offer writing workshops that spark creativity and critical thinking, focusing on research writing and educating students on academic terminology. Faculty and staff can have more one-on-one check-ins with their international students to see if they are doing well. And lastly, universities need to create a better, safer, and more welcoming environment for international students to thrive. In doing so, we are forming leaders of civility with a global mindset for the real world.

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Notes

¹ The top three countries students come from are China (363,341), India (196,271), and South Korea (54,555).

² According to the International Student Barometer data, 60,000 international students at 48 universities in the US, UK, and Australia were surveyed to determine their satisfaction levels and willingness to recommend a university. Of these, 535 respondents were from the United States and rated 3.17 out of 4.0 on satisfaction level. The study suggests that satisfaction levels are particularly low in certain areas, such as career-related networking, connecting with domestic friends, social activities, and legal status advice (Redden, 2014).

The Travail of the Freedmen's Daughters

Serena Oduro, History

Faculty Mentor: Kenneth Allan, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Kenneth Allan, PhD

Student Editor: Amy Gulley

Abstract

This essay analyzes Robert Colescott's ability to visualize the emotional and psychological burden of racism using his rendition of Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.K. Rastrelli Version)*, *Les Femmes d'Alger: Vestidas*, a 96 x 92 in. acrylic on canvas painting. Created in 1985, but based in 1960s America, Colescott's satirical rendition of one of Picasso's most famed works, and a work in high regard in the art canon, illuminates racist attitudes perpetuated by Picasso's *d'Avignon*. This essay was also inspired by the Museum of Modern Art's wall text about *d'Avignon*, which failed to mention the racism embedded in primitivism. I focus on how Colescott's critical look at who is painting and being painted calls artists and institutions to wake up to the ideologies they perpetuate. I come to these conclusions through analyzing Colescott's use of satire, stereotyping, cartoonish coloring, symbolism, and spatial grotesque, and through comparison to Picasso's *d'Avignon*. During my research, I often paired Black artists' works with literary ones, particularly WEB Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*. Inspired by the myriad of ways Black people produce works that push against the tides of racism, I conclude my essay and name inspired by a quote from Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*: "The spiritual striving of the Freedmen's sons is the travail of souls whose burden is almost beyond the measure of their strength, but who bear it in the name of an historic race, in the name of this the land of their fathers' fathers, and in the name of human opportunity."



Figure 1 Robert Colescott's *Les Demoiselles d'Alabama: Vestidas*

Standing in the *Figuring History* exhibit at the Seattle Art Museum on April 6th, 2018, I could not help but be transfixed by Robert Colescott's *Les Demoiselles d'Alabama: Vestidas* (*d'Alabama*). A 96 x 92 in. acrylic on canvas painting created in 1985, the size and brightness of the colors in *d'Alabama* make it an imposing force. The Seattle Art Museum website describes Robert Colescott's painting as using "Picasso's appropriation of African art as an example of Europe's infatuation with exoticism and ideas of 'primitivism'" ("*Les Demoiselles d'Alabama: Vestidas*"). African American painter Robert Colescott (1925–2009) takes a critical look at who is painting and who is painted. Creating paintings that blatantly show and satirically critique

racist representations, Colescott made reproductions of highly canonical paintings, such as Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O)*. Picasso's *d'Avignon* (1907) exemplifies the anti-classical movement occurring in the early 1900s and the use of African culture as a tool in that movement. A 96 x 92 in. oil on canvas painting, *d'Avignon*, too, is imposing. Disillusioned with the classical model of paintings, Picasso disrupts all former Western artistic notions. The presence of African masks, conjoining of the foreground and background, and portrayal of five prostitutes in a brothel shocked European viewers (Museum of Modern Art). Thus, using Picasso's "high art" to embrace, critique, and even make fun of the past, *d'Alabama* exemplifies that "*Figuring History*" involves not only *reFiguring History*, but critiquing past notions that have structured our present (Kramer). As I strolled through the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) on June 29th, 2018, I noticed that the curation notes for Picasso's *d'Avignon* demonstrated history's tendency to ignore racism and therefore perpetuate it. Picasso's past and the hard work that went into creating the painting were described, but other than the mention that "African tribal masks" added to the painting's "startling composition," the masks are ignored (Museum of Modern Art). This failure to mention racism as the root of Picasso's use of the African masks proves that many are still not critically analyzing who is painting and who is being painted. Robert Colescott's *d'Alabama* satirically exposes racist attitudes that were perpetuated by Picasso's *d'Avignon*.

Colescott is able to capture historical omissions through his figurative, narrative style. Miriam Roberts notes that what lures Colescott's viewers is that his encoded messages lead us to try to deduce meaning, but viewers instead "often end by finding themselves, along with the artist and the rest of humanity, personally implicated" (18). Colescott's work in the mid-1970s to mid-1980s received little attention because his critique of society through historical painting inherently critiqued the art world; it is the bravery of his critiques, though, that ensures that every viewer of his paintings, including Colescott, is scathingly implicated (Roberts 18). Huey Copeland further explains Colescott's boldness:

Colescott's insistence on painting meant he could sully and celebrate Western cultural hierarchy in its most gilded aesthetic tongue. Neither content with the confines by which artists of color are so often hemmed in, nor mindful of calls for "positive imagery," Colescott instead said yes: yes to history and its omissions, yes to figuration and its darkest blights, yes to painterly coherence and dadaist confusion, yes to multiculturalism and political incorrectness—all to affirm the fact of our collective tragedy and the small pleasures we might take in its farcical repetition. (60)

As Copeland explains, Colescott's brazen portrayals of society did not lead to the "positive imagery" African American artists felt they needed to portray. As African American artist David Hammons states: "Robert Colescott's the force. Through his paintings [...] I found a way of bringing humor to the seriousness of my work" (qtd. In Roberts 18). Colescott's critical look at who is painting and who is painted frees Black artists from painting what is expected of them; instead, Black artists control their portrayals, and with the use of satire, such as in *d'Alabama*, Colescott portrays the West with an unabashed gaze.

The placement of the women in *d'Alabama* draws on the racial history of America and gestures to racism's effects on social standing and experience. The inclusion of Black women in a historical painting, in a "high art" form, appears to indicate their inclusion in society (Kramer). The Black women are elevated according to Western artistic conventions, but the blonde woman's presence in the bottom right corner highlights the standards of beauty to which Black women are being compared. The Seattle Art Museum notes that "the voluptuous blonde is a recurring figure in Colescott's paintings. She represents an object of desire that is a stereotype in its own right [...] The blonde-haired, blue-eyed Eurocentric ideal of beauty" (Seattle Art Museum). In examining the role of the blonde woman in *d'Alabama*, it is also interesting to compare her to the woman in her position in *d'Avignon*. The woman donning a mask and squatting in Picasso's *d'Avignon* is replaced by the blonde sitting on a bench in *d'Alabama*. Though the blonde woman is in the same degrading position as the woman in the African mask in *d'Avignon*, her squatting position does not greatly affect her status as the epitome of beauty. In *d'Avignon*, though, the squatting position of the woman wearing the African mask reflects her lower social position in comparison to the unmasked women. To the women in the African masks, the viewer applies preexisting assumptions of African culture. For the blonde woman, that process does not occur because she is not an Other; she is the norm by which all other figures are judged. The Black women in Colescott's painting are within the frame, but since Blackness is societally Othered, they are still compared to stereotypes, ideals, and ideologies outside of their control.

Colescott's satirical methods make the viewer recognize their consumption and propagation of beauty standards. Art historian and curator Mitchell Kahan expands on the use of satire through the example of Colescott's painting, *Jus' Folks by Vermeer*, stating:

Having been raised by a bosomy Black woman, I was guiltily reminded that, for me, Aunt Jemima will remain a potent myth despite efforts by artists and sociologists to deconstruct the image [...] By illustrating the legacy of racist stereotyping, Colescott painfully points out to [Black people] their status as outsiders. (Manchanda et al. 40)

The viewer of *d'Alabama* is reminded of the woman in the upper-right corner through the placement of her fabric in the lower foreground, upon which a slice of watermelon rests. Black people's "status as outsiders," as Kahan describes, is perfectly exemplified by this placement because, while her presence in the painting signals social inclusion, her fabric is pinned by a symbol historically used to belittle Black Americans' intelligence and worth. The placement of the fabric also makes the viewer remember the woman's setting; *d'Alabama*, like *d'Avignon*, is presumably set in a brothel (Museum of Modern Art), and the women are therefore prostitutes. The viewer, then, is most likely someone procuring their services, and someone primarily pursuing Black women. Though Black women do not conform to Western beauty ideals like the blonde woman, there is no doubt that they are often objects of sexual desire. The leopard print of the woman's fabric suggests the same kitschy and stereotypical views of "exoticism" that Picasso and others were obsessed with when they first encountered African masks. Upon closer examination of the leopard print fabric, we see peppers sprinkled next to the watermelon slice, hinting further at the exotic nature of Black women. As Kahan notes, the viewer is implicated; we notice the women's tight and scant clothing, we see them as sexual beings, but that does not mean we see them as human. In the viewer's lustful gaze, our racism and biases stare back.

Reimagining Picasso's *d'Avignon*, Colescott's use of cartoonish depictions and bright colors shocked contemporary viewers just as Picasso's use of African masks and flattening planes shocked early twentieth-century viewers. Picasso's use of African masks is an example of primitivism. Primitivism is built on racism; as Paul Wood explains, primitivism "allow[s] some radical thinkers to entertain the idea that the progress of civilization [has] not been uniformly for the best, that much of the artificiality and even decadence which attended the growth of 'polite' society might represent the loss of a kind of freedom, a kind of naturalness, which obtained in the original 'state of nature'" (82). Frances S. Connelly further explores how Picasso's primitivism in *d'Avignon* marked a break from the classical model: "Picasso's primitivism fully established the anti-classical role that 'primitive' art came to play in modern art [...] the grotesque was the most radical form of irrational expression because it represented the near opposite of the classical ideal, both in its bizarre inventions and its willful ugliness" (109). Connelly describes the lack of spatial dimension as "Picasso [creating] a spatial grotesque [...] intersecting the figures with their surrounding space and conjoining foreground to background" (107). In the twentieth century, the "grotesque" that Connelly discusses is often associated with African and Oceanic, or primitive, art. Hilton Kramer also discusses the meaning of the grotesque with reference to the imagination:

What especially appealed to the modern eye in primitive art was its genius for bold, simplified forms, and its frank and even ferocious statements of feeling. In its grotesque but highly imaginative distortions and its emotive symbolism, primitive art offered the modern artist a vivid alternative to what was perceived to be the worn-out conventions of the Western classical tradition. (Kramer)

Connelly discusses Picasso's obsession with the grotesque, and states that the African masks in *d'Avignon* were meant to emulate their "affective, magical force" (106). The grotesque was horrific yet "magical," due to its simplicity and difference from traditional academic paintings. This "affective, magical force" also emulates Picasso's own "irrational emotions" that he claimed to feel when he first interacted with African masks (Connelly 108). The emotive nature of Picasso's work is present in Colescott's, and Colescott's modern rendition of *d'Avignon* brings about contemporary "irrational emotions" (Connelly 108).

Colescott creates a modern grotesque through his cartoonish depictions and use of bright colors. In the Seattle Art Museum's exhibition catalogue for *Figuring History*, Colescott's use of color is described: "By the mid-1980s, his brushwork became lush and gestural, and his palette increasingly paired acidic colors—with azure blues and hot pinks sidling up to intense yellows and greens—in a way that heightens the painful subject matter" (Manchanda et al. 15). Pairing bright colors, such as the extremely rosy cheeks of the blonde woman, with the cartoonish depiction of the characters, the viewer is left feeling uncomfortable; this discomfort is due to the tools Colescott uses to implicate the viewer (irony, humor, icons of stereotypes, historical paintings' "high form," and the indictment of Picasso) which are different from the normal color scheme and depiction in figurative art. Cartoons are associated with books, television, and movies that help the viewer escape from reality, while Colescott uses them to painfully bring reality to light. As Roberts writes, Colescott's narratives "[unfold] within a cartoon bubble, providing a framework that brings all the disparate elements into improbable harmony" (12). Just as Picasso strayed from tradition through the use of the spatial grotesque, African masks, and a taboo topic, Robert Colescott also chooses a set of tools to upset the viewer; however, instead of being shocked only by the garishness of the painting, Colescott's viewers are shocked because they finally see themselves.

Colescott's *d'Alabama* implicates the viewer in an honest rendering of our biases. The satiric and blatant way Colescott lays out the racist ideologies that impact us all, especially Black people, is painful. Living the experience, I have to admit that I do not always want to visually witness racist discourse, even in critique, but that weight must be shown. As I read the description of *d'Avignon* at MOMA, I felt the familiar pain that arises when your story is ignored; I felt the weight that Black people carry due to racism. I was reminded of a quote from WEB Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* that I read around the time I visited the Seattle Art

Museum and encountered *d'Alabama*: "The spiritual striving of the Freedmen's sons is the travail of souls whose burden is almost beyond the measure of their strength, but who bear it in the name of an historic race, in the name of this the land of their fathers' fathers, and in the name of human opportunity" (321). Despite carrying a burden "almost beyond the measure of their strength," African American artists such as Robert Colescott do not let that weight crush them, but instead let it embolden them to create with an unabashed gaze (Du Bois 321). Though it was emotionally difficult, I felt exalted while seeing Colescott's works at the Seattle Art Museum as my people's history was being figured by our own hands. The weight of oppression can only be released when its causes are destroyed and liberation prospers.

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Short Communications

This section of the journal was designed primarily, though not exclusively, for the science disciplines. It consists of preliminary data, initial findings, and other brief investigations into a field of inquiry. As an interdisciplinary journal, we wanted to be mindful of the ways in which science and empirically-based social science writing can differ from humanities and qualitative social science writing. Because publications in the sciences are often multi-authored, in which case student researchers might not be the first authors, we wanted to create a space where our science students' research could still be showcased. Science journals in many disciplines have a section like ours (called variously "short communications," "conversations," or "letters") where authors can publish independent work, or roll out individual findings within larger research projects as they emerge. We have developed Short Communications on this model to serve our students in the various science and social science disciplines.

What About the Patient? The Effects of Mergers and Acquisitions in the Hospital Industry on Patient Care

Raechel N. Warren, Economics

Faculty Mentor: Erin Vernon, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Erin Vernon, PhD

Student Editor: Amy Gulley

Abstract

The hospital industry and market for healthcare have grown increasingly complex over the last decade. When the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was enacted in 2010, hospital mergers and consolidations were already on the rise but have since increased substantially. While new, improved efficiencies and integration are often crucial for hospitals and clinics to run successfully, making too many unnecessary changes can negatively affect patient care. This study addresses the negative implications of increased market concentration in the hospital industry, discusses how the ACA has driven these incentives, and provides examples of what is occurring in Washington State. Large mergers and continuing consolidation have driven up costs and negatively impacted patient care. There are additional concerns stemming from increased market concentration, including some that could be better understood if more quantitative data was available. In light of these mergers, it is clear that improved costs, quality, and access for patients need to continue to be closely monitored priorities.

The US hospital industry has grown increasingly complex over the last century. From health systems to Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), the industry is redefined constantly. In the mid-1700s, hospitals were sanctuaries for the poor and resting places for a person's final days, eventually becoming places to recover from illness (Wall, n.d.). Primarily funded by philanthropies, religious organizations, and generous donations, hospitals ensured that those in need of care were not turned away; hospitals tended to be charitable work done in the name of God (Henderson, 2018, p. 307). Caring for an individual was two-fold, and often meant providing "spiritual sustenance" (Wall, n.d.). Most recently referred to as "charity care," this element is still a compulsory part of a hospital's function even if it is not as present in modern times. Despite charity care still being compulsory, the majority of health services operate primarily from a business perspective, fundamentally because of the unsustainable costs facing the US healthcare system (Henderson, 2018, p. 307). In a recent study of the nation's ten most profitable hospitals, seven of them were nonprofit (Bai & Anderson, 2016, p. 889-897). A common misconception is that nonprofit hospitals do not need to prioritize their revenue stream. Being deemed nonprofit is simply for tax purposes. Revenues matter regardless of tax status and must break even with costs for any type of hospital to remain operational, just like any business. Regardless of whether an institution is for-profit or nonprofit, scarcity of resources is an issue.

National health expenditures have continued to climb, increasing by 3.9% from 2016 to 2017 and accounting for 17.9% of total gross domestic product (GDP). That amounts to \$10,739 per person (NHE Fact Sheet, 2017). With an overnight hospital stay costing patients, on average, \$1,013 per day after insurance, many question why costs are continually on the rise (Adrion, 2016, p. 1325). There are innumerable culprits suspected to be contributing factors of surging medical costs, such as the complexity of private insurance and its propensity to dictate hospital care, the rising costs of prescription drugs, and expensive new technology. However, one cause that has been gaining more critical attention in recent years is the intensification of hospital mergers and acquisitions. While mergers can improve efficiencies due to two entities coming together to be one, these efficiencies can occasionally be detrimental. My study investigates how the purported efficiencies of hospital mergers might affect the patient: are they resulting in improved quality of care for patients? Are personal, out-of-pocket costs increasing or decreasing? I discuss the incentives and benefits horizontal integration can bring to hospitals and why the Affordable Care Act (ACA) contributed further incentives, highlighting recent mergers within the Greater Seattle area. I then examine the major concerns and potential problems this phenomenon causes.

The ACA was designed to promote interaction, integration, and coordination between physicians throughout hospitals and clinics alike (Kocher, DeParle, & Emanuel, 2010, p.

537). From an economic perspective, this vertical integration (integrating up through a clinic and hospital) makes sense: streamlining office practices and coordinating patient data can lead to more readily accessible information (Kocher et al., 2010, p. 537). Additionally, the implementation of electronic medical records (EMRs) allows information to transfer quickly and easily between clinics and hospitals. However, aside from small practices combining forces vertically, horizontal integration is also beginning to occur: already-large hospitals are merging with equally large or larger hospitals to become giant conglomerates. A report by Kaufman Hall, an Illinois consulting firm, showed that there were 115 hospital mergers in 2017 alone—the highest number in recent history and up 13% since 2016 (Kaufman Hall, 2017, p. 1).

According to Elizabeth Barker and other scholars, these horizontal mergers have generated some positive results that can be categorized into three distinct industry improvements: improved efficiency, improved access to care, and improved quality of care (Barker, 2017). Nevertheless, it is still too soon to determine the real impact mergers are having on consumers. The knowledge that increased market concentration can lead to price increases is concerning, prompting many to question whether these deals and the increased efficiency they claim to provide are really beneficial to patients.

It is important to note that consolidations and mergers are not identical in nature and can have different implications. A merger occurs when two or more corporations combine to form a single corporation where one company acquires all liabilities and assets. Although a consolidation can stem from a merger, the act of consolidating creates an entirely new enterprise composed of all liabilities and assets involved. The hospital sector has experienced both ventures, but mergers are more common because they do not require the development of a completely new entity. The process typically involves two hospitals coming together and taking on the name and characteristics of the larger entity while still incorporating some of the smaller entity's characteristics.

In 2006, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest health-centered philanthropy, conducted a study called the Synthesis Project. This study provided some substantial information about the impact these ventures are having on our health care system as a whole. They obtained and analyzed data concerning the increased concentration of hospitals in single markets, the cost of care after mergers and consolidations, and the quality of administered care. Their findings were updated in 2012 to further confirm the original report: an increase in hospital consolidation has, in fact, led to an increase in the cost of hospital care (Gaynor & Townsend, 2012, p. 1). They also found that in an already concentrated market, hospital mergers can drive prices up by more than 20% (p. 1). Even with these clear indicators that mergers are a contributing factor to price increases, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Justice (DOJ) have not yet seen reason to block any of these mergers.

While it is common for establishments to exit the market for healthcare, entry into the hospital industry in particular is not easy. Most states have specific guidelines and requirements, such as filing for a certificate of need and demonstrating that these community needs are not being addressed thus far. Along with these regulations, there are five main barriers to entry: large fixed-capital requirements, product differentiation (gaining trust of new consumers), switching costs (changing suppliers), economies of scale (based on hospital bed capacity), and access to physicians (Babate, J., n.d., p. 32-51). High fixed costs and economies of scale are two leading reasons many hospitals gravitate towards mergers. From an administrative perspective, merging allows for the hospitals' costs to be shared and resources to be allocated in various ways, resulting in increased efficiency. This is why the persistent pressure from the ACA for hospitals to expand technologically and provide the latest and greatest care has further accelerated consolidation (Bigger and better, 2011).

The Greater Seattle area has also experienced this national phenomenon, beginning with Providence Health & Services and Swedish Health & Services officially joining forces in 2012. Following close behind was UW Medicine and PeaceHealth, when they finalized a strategic alliance in 2013, and Providence Health & Services merged with Providence St. Joseph Health in July 2016. Most recently, in December 2017, Providence and Ascension Health announced discussion of a possible consolidation, only to see talks halted in March (Providence and Swedish, 2012). Providence is the largest healthcare provider in Washington with a total of 1,875 available beds (Washington State Department of Health). UW Medicine is the ACO, encompassing all of UW Medicine's various entities, including many clinics and hospitals alike. UW Medicine captures a large part of the market in the Seattle Metro area, and 63% of UW Medicine's revenue comes specifically from their hospitals, operating with 1,370 available beds in King County alone (UW Medicine Annual Financial Reports; Washington State Department of Health). According to a joint statement from the executives of Swedish and Providence, the merger would allow both organizations "to collaborate to better deliver health care to the region" (Ostrom, 2012). However, as market concentration increases, competition decreases, resulting in fewer options for patients and even less leverage to negotiate prices. Thus, the question remains: are these giant mergers negatively impacting the quality of care?

Dr. Susan Haas, Dr. William Berry, and CEO of Risk Management Foundation Mark Reynolds recently concluded a study attempting to determine exactly how patients are affected by massive mergers and acquisitions. They summarized their findings as three key areas of risk: new patient populations (adjusting to serve a population of patients that varied from the previous norm), unfamiliar infrastructure (needing to navigate a new facility in a short amount of time or being unfamiliar with equipment), and lastly, new settings for physicians (receiving little or no systematic orientation) (Haas, Berry, & Reynolds, 2018). These risks are introduced more frequently when hospitals expand and begin functioning more like

traditional businesses, focus increasingly on efficiencies and profits, and potentially forget elements that are key to their success as places of care. One can only increase efficient practices to the extent that the practice or service is actually improving. It is a classic case of diminishing marginal returns: at some point, each additional unit of efficiency is going to increase the overall service's efficiency less and less. Eventually, the patient could be hurt by the continued push to increase efficiency.

Furthermore, as hospital markets become increasingly concentrated, patients have less choice in where they can receive care. Researchers at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College explained that when there are four or fewer hospitals in a local market, admission prices can be up to 16% higher than in less-concentrated markets (Kacik, 2017). In some cases, markets for both health providers and insurers can be highly concentrated, leading to insurers having superior negotiating power (Fulton, Arnold, & Scheffler, 2018). While those insured might get a small break on a bill, the uninsured are severely impacted by increased price and decreased access. A combination of studies and stories compiled into an article by Health Finance, a publication of Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, discusses the implications of hospitals in rural communities with a large uninsured population. When the majority of prospective patients can't afford treatment, the few available hospitals are forced to cut back on services, further limiting already sparse choice (Rovner, 2017). Rural areas are also less attractive to providers, adding another caveat to patient choice. When hospitals increase prices, insurance companies demand more reimbursement, which results in premium hikes for patients and further accelerates this perpetual cycle. With hospitals like Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, Washington (which operates on a 1% margin and primarily serves uninsured and low-income populations), this cycle presents a significant problem for both patient and care facility (Beason, 2014).

A final question, one I wish to explore further in the future, is how increased market concentration and mergers are adversely affecting particular services. One growing area of concern is that both male and female reproductive services could be negatively impacted as an increased number of nonprofit, typically Catholic-affiliated, hospitals merge with for-profit, public, or state hospitals. While there is no significant quantitative data to support these claims, there have been recent studies that warrant further investigation. The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Healthcare Services, issued by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (2009), specifically limit the reproductive health services that can be offered in a hospital of Catholic affiliation Elaine Hill and David Slusky reported that there has been a 22% growth rate of mergers between non-Catholic and Catholic hospitals; there were 120 mergers between 2001 and 2016 (Hill, Slusky, & Ginther, 2017, p. 1). With the majority of these hospitals being the only ones for miles in rural areas, the increased market concentration further limits patient choice, largely without patient knowledge. If a Catholic hospital happens to merge

with the only existing hospital, which happens to be public, this is the only option available to patients. This also connects to the aforementioned certificates of need: in order for a new hospital to enter into a community, they must provide proof that a new healthcare facility is necessary. Overbuilding of healthcare entities can lead to unnecessary, increased costs for the individual and community. Therefore, restricted access further restricts choice.

An international reproductive health journal, *Contraception*, recently published a study which found that “women with annual incomes under \$25,000 are less likely to realize their hospital is Catholic than women who make more than \$100,000 a year” (Littlefield, 2018). Oftentimes, people in rural communities in need of medical procedures, typically patients with lower incomes, do not have the resources or ability to browse for other options regarding provider and price point, significantly restricting their choice. Taking these statistics a step further, a study by Columbia Law School’s Public Rights/Private Conscience Project found that 19 out of the 33 states surveyed provided data showing that women of color were more likely to give birth in Catholic hospitals (Shepherd, Platt, Franke, & Boylan, 2017, p. 9). The study proceeds to discuss the racial disparities existing in healthcare, and how women of color are already disproportionately affected (p. 34). Unfortunately, rural or very densely populated areas often overlap with low-income communities and people of color who fall under the federal poverty line, and this statistic further limits access and choice of care. While more concrete evidence indicating the magnitude of this issue is quite limited as of now, it is essential to monitor how increased market concentration, specifically regarding Catholic hospitals, impacts these particular services and communities of people.

In addition to significantly high out-of-pocket patient costs, other factors such as potential restrictions based on religious affiliation, the limited choice of hospitals dependent upon location, and rising rates for the uninsured population all contribute to critical apprehensions surrounding proliferating hospital mergers and consolidations. While there are still more studies to be developed and research to be conducted, this study gives a glimpse into this complicated but crucial industry. The potential consequences of increased market power and concentration of hospitals could be incredibly detrimental if not contained soon. It’s difficult to compare prices across hospitals and achieve price transparency because each hospital has its own chargemaster. A chargemaster is an extensive list of all billable items and is a document few people even know how to read. However, as of January 1, 2019, hospitals will now be required to electronically publicize a chargemaster of basic services. In theory, this is a step in the right direction toward improving transparency in hospital pricing and, as a result, improving the quality of patient care (“CMS Finalizes Changes,” 2018). In the past, hospitals have been hesitant to provide certain information, but this can make it more difficult for a patient to determine the realities of the care they might be receiving, specifically in respect to its quality. The studies I reference suggest a significant impact of hospital mergers

on the healthcare system as a whole; the impact on patients, however, is still largely unknown, and these next few years will be revealing. While there are always two sides to every issue, and many positives that can come from improved efficiencies, specifically those encouraged by the ACA, the negatives also need to be addressed. As a society, we need to question how these market occurrences affect patient healthcare, and ask what can be done to maintain the very essence of medical care: serving those in need.

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Full-Length Research Articles

This section of the journal is dedicated to full-length research projects in any discipline. These might be final essays for a class, a capstone project, a study abroad essay, an independent study, or any multi-authored papers for which the student contributor is first author. We have chosen not to separate these essays into disciplinary divisions, but we do indicate the major field of study for each author. These essays have been chosen for their academic promise, for their participation in Seattle University's vibrant research community, and for their representation of majors across the university

Romanticizing Abuse: Comparing the Depiction of Violence in Brontë's Wuthering Heights and Meyer's Twilight Series

Emily Boynton, English

Faculty Mentor: Molly Clark Hillard, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Tara Roth

Student Editor: Mikayla Medbery

Abstract

When *Wuthering Heights* was first released in 1846, readers were horrified by the relentless violence which the characters use to communicate hatred, passion, and obsessive love (Baldellou, 148). Although Brontë's book was first perceived as monstrous, the text is now widely regarded as an epic love story. This shift has largely occurred because of the adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* which depict the violence within the novel as a feature of idyllic love. This paper examines the differences between the authors' treatment of domestic violence in *Wuthering Heights* and Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series. I argue that in *Wuthering Heights* Catherine and Heathcliff are denied access to the language of power because of gender and race, causing them to communicate through violence. Their violent communication is a means of survival for the characters, and an exploration of the way marginalized individuals can communicate and align themselves against dominant British culture. By contrast, I contend that *Twilight's* adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* champions violence as attractive—upholding heteronormative gender roles and glamorizing domestic violence. Through investigating the response of adolescents and scholars alike, my paper reveals how *Twilight* and other adaptations have caused *Wuthering Heights* to be taught as a romance. To prevent the romanticization of domestic abuse in literature and teen relationships, *Wuthering Heights* must be read and taught as a revenge novel, not a romance.

Introduction

“It is impossible that you can covet the admiration of Heathcliff—that you can consider him an agreeable person! I hope I have misunderstood you, Isabella?”

“No, you have not,” said the infatuated girl. “I love him more than ever you loved Edgar; and he might love me if you would let him!” (Brontë 102)

In Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, Isabella Linton’s feelings for and views of Heathcliff are depicted as delusional. In this passage, Catherine finds Isabella’s romanticized perception of Heathcliff to be “impossible” (102) and tells Isabella explicitly that Heathcliff is “a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man” (103). Isabella’s blinkered view of Heathcliff is emphasized throughout the novel; Heathcliff himself notes that “[Isabella] picture[d] in me a hero of romance and expect[ed] unlimited indulgences from my chivalrous devotion [...] obstinately has she persisted in forming a fabulous notion of my character, acting on the false impressions she cherished” (149). Isabella holds these false notions of Heathcliff so strongly that she willfully ignores what is now considered one of the most telling harbingers of domestic abuse: violence towards animals. When Heathcliff hangs Isabella’s dog from a tree, Isabella responds with heightened attraction: “she had an innate admiration of it” (150). Many characters, critics, and readers point out the delusions and folly of Isabella’s actions, yet readers themselves still romanticize Heathcliff.

When *Wuthering Heights* was first published, readers were horrified by the relentless violence in the text; however, today’s audiences frequently view these acts as romantic displays of love and passion, glamorizing abuse in a way that is not unlike Isabella’s desire to see Heathcliff’s violent demeanor as index to an “honourable soul” (Miquel Baldellou 148; Brontë 103). Though it is important to recognize Heathcliff’s abusive treatment of Isabella, this paper focuses more broadly on the way readers themselves excuse and adore abusive actions. With that in mind, Isabella’s fetishization and misinterpretation of violence has ironically become the lens that readers adopt, as they hold the violent obsession between Catherine and Heathcliff as a paragon of epic love. This shift has occurred in no small part because of book and film adaptations that portrayed Catherine and Heathcliff as star-crossed lovers. Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight* series, four young adult novels indebted to *Wuthering Heights*, has been particularly influential in reframing Catherine and Heathcliff as iconic lovers. It is thus noteworthy that in Meyer’s novels the character that romanticizes an abusive relationship is also named Isabella: Bella Swan.

Clear connections can be made between the *Twilight* series and *Wuthering Heights*. Along with parallels in gothic form, Meyer explicitly references Brontë’s text in *Eclipse*, and calls

that novel her “*Wuthering Heights* homage” (“Stephenie Meyer”). This is mentioned by the characters themselves when Bella and Edward read *Wuthering Heights*. Bella notes that “I was like Cathy” (Meyer, *Eclipse* 159), and Edward begrudgingly admits that “I can sympathize with Heathcliff in ways I didn’t think possible before” (64). Due to these references to Brontë’s text, HarperCollins printed an edition of *Wuthering Heights* with a jacket design similar to the *Twilight* series, advertising it as “Bella and Edward’s favorite book,” which quadrupled the sales of *Wuthering Heights* after the reissue (Wallop). In her article “Context Stinks!” Rita Felski argues that texts must be “sociable” to survive (185). Drawing on Felski, I would go so far as to argue that *Twilight* solidified *Wuthering Heights*’ prominent status in Western cultural consciousness through casting Catherine and Heathcliff as idyllic lovers and romanticizing their abusive relationship. This essay holds as its central premise that Meyer radically misinterprets *Wuthering Heights*: where Brontë employs domestic abuse to critique patriarchal, imperialistic British culture, Meyer glamorizes domestic abuse and upholds gender roles through toxic masculinity and feminine self-sacrifice. Meyer’s twenty-first-century couple is white and middle-class, unlike their nineteenth-century counterparts. Thus, Bella and abusive beau Edward’s story erases the trauma caused by class-, gender-, and race-based oppression that is central to Catherine and Heathcliff’s conflict. Catherine is denied full personhood because she is a woman and therefore cannot be financially or legally independent; Heathcliff is similarly denied his humanity by British society, likened to an animal innumerable times throughout the novel, and denied legitimacy as a human being because of his race. Therefore, Catherine and Heathcliff’s abuse of each other is neither the calculated domestic abuse that Heathcliff enacts on Isabella (but never vice-versa), nor is it the sexualized, violent male-to-female domination displayed in Bella and Edward’s relationship. Instead, the abuse between Catherine and Heathcliff is a result of societal oppression and an attempt to communicate that manifests as violence rather than language.

Although there are many readers who look at Isabella Linton’s initial devotion to Heathcliff and scoff at her blindness, Meyer’s adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* has caused many of these very readers to recreate Isabella’s false notions of romance through viewing Bella and Edward, then later Catherine and Heathcliff, as idyllic lovers. Through the adoption of (Isa)Bella’s consciousness, young readers fall in love with Edward, and actively desire the violence between Catherine and Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*. In turn, both adolescents and critics have begun to view *Wuthering Heights* as a romance novel. Through investigating the response of adolescents and scholars to the domestic abuse in the novels, this paper argues that *Twilight* and other adaptations have reframed *Wuthering Heights* as a romance, ultimately perpetuating the dangerous notion that abuse is desirable.

Catherine and Heathcliff: Abuse as Communication

The term “domestic abuse” did not exist until the twentieth century; in the nineteenth century, violence between partners and families was called “wife-beating” or “wife-torture” (Hancock 66). For the purposes of comparing the domestic violence in modern literature to the violence in *Wuthering Heights*, I will be using the term “domestic abuse,” while noting that this is twentieth-century terminology (defined by the US Department of Justice). Although the domestic abuse in Brontë’s novel can initially appear to promote violent relationships, a closer look reveals that the abuse in the novel is, in fact, critiquing the patriarchal system and the treatment of those labeled as racially “Other.” In the nineteenth century, British law and society actively marginalized individuals based on gender and race. British property laws oppressed women and colonized races by favoring white males as heirs. As a result, it was the sons of wealthy European men who were able to inherit property and wealth, simultaneously providing white men with power while excluding women and people of color from financial independence (SurrIDGE 113-118). Women would lose their inheritance to their brothers, husbands, or sons; consequently, Catherine is left without a claim to property or a way to support herself financially.

At the time Brontë wrote *Wuthering Heights*, Victorian marriage law upheld the common law doctrine of coverture. Coverture refers to the legal status of married women in the nineteenth century where, as Blackstone wrote in his 1828 Commentaries, “in marriage the husband and wife are one person in law: that is the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage” (130). Therefore, once a woman married, not only were her property and inheritance subsumed by her husband, but her very existence became her husband’s possession. In effect, British law revoked individuality and personhood from women, viewing them as “one person” (Blackstone 130) with their fathers or husbands. Brontë’s critique of these laws crystallizes when Catherine states, “if Heathcliff and I married, we should be beggars” (Brontë 82). In this phrase, Catherine—and, by extension, Brontë—emphasizes the cultural norms and property laws that prevent both Heathcliff and Catherine from having inheritance and autonomy.

As a woman, Catherine is also oppressed linguistically; Brontë shows that language prioritizes male narratives and upholds patriarchal principles through legal doctrines. Although in childhood Catherine has “ready words” (43), language does not serve her or give her power. This is seen when Lockwood stays the night in Catherine’s old bedroom, finding her “writing scratched on the paint” of the windowsill (19). Without access to the power of language, carving words into the paint becomes the only way that Catherine can form her own identity, for she carves her “name repeated in all kind of characters, large and small” (19). Although Catherine

continues to try to gain control of her own life through writing her narrative, she is left with only the margins of dominant male texts to tell her story, “covering every morsel of blank that the printer had left” (20). Through portraying young Catherine scribbling her thoughts and story into old books, Brontë is depicting Catherine’s words, and therefore herself, as marginalized. Once she hits puberty (marked by her symbolic bleeding from being violently bitten by the neighbor’s dog, Skulker, and her entrance into Thrushcross Grange) Catherine is viewed by society as a lady, and through the social construction of womanhood, she loses any autonomy she previously created through language. Catherine’s writing is not seen in the remainder of the novel; instead her words are conveyed through Nelly’s perspective and retelling. Moreover, as critic Susan Meyer notes, the education and indoctrination into language Catherine receives is an assimilation into patriarchal ideologies and oppressive society (112). During her formative weeks at Thrushcross Grange, Catherine is kept “in due restraint” through “art, not force” (52), her education becoming a way to condition her to abide by British social norms. Ultimately, language and education reinforce Catherine’s reliance on a husband for economic wellbeing, and the necessity of her marrying a financially stable man to survive.

Where Catherine is excluded from what Susan Meyer calls the “language of power” (108) because she is a woman, Heathcliff is excluded because he is a person of color. Although Heathcliff is male, he is denied access to language and an inheritance of the Earnshaw fortune because of his race and outsider status. From his first moments at *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff is marginalized by colonial language, his native tongue being depicted as “gibberish” (37) by the Earnshaws and Nelly. He is promptly given the name of the Earnshaws’ dead son—Heathcliff—a hand-me-down that exemplifies Heathcliff’s disempowering relationship to language, for he lacks a surname and the power of inheritance that comes with it. Thus, he is denied access to property and wealth because of his race, which renders him illegitimate in the eyes of white, European colonizers. This concept is reiterated in the crucial scene where Catherine is assimilated into Thrushcross Grange, while Heathcliff is pulled under the light and examined by the Lintons. Susan Meyer notes how this examination portrays Heathcliff’s relationship with the English language, finding that the passage “reveals the force of the imperialist gaze wielded against Heathcliff,” where he is “silenced by the relentless gaze and commentary of the Lintons” (100). While Catherine’s wound is being attended to, Heathcliff is told to “hold [his] tongue,” called “foulmouthed,” and dragged out of the house (Brontë 50). After his physical removal, Heathcliff’s position—outside the Linton manor looking in—symbolizes his location in British culture and marks a breaking point; Heathcliff loses “the benefit of his early education” (68) and gives up any attempts of finding communication or liberation through language. Additionally, just as British law delegitimizes Catherine’s existence because she is a woman, cultural power structures question Heathcliff’s very humanity because of his race. Victorian colonizers viewed themselves (white Anglo-Saxons) as racially superior to people of

color—an ugly, damaging mindset that lingered from the times of legalized slavery in Britain. It is this societal mindset that caused people to view Heathcliff as inferior because of his race and to ostracize and oppress him.

The fact that British society and law strips Catherine and Heathcliff of their personhood pervades all aspects of their lives and the novel. This oppression impacts them both on a concrete level; Hindley desires to “degrade” (64) Heathcliff and “restrain” (52) Catherine, and it pushes both characters to madness. Because of their social locations, the pair is not meant to interact; both are expected to marry someone of identical race and class to themselves. Thus, Catherine and Heathcliff’s socialization intentionally renders language an ineffective form of communication. Catherine’s absorption into Thrushcross Grange and Heathcliff’s corresponding rejection from the house marks a crystallizing moment in the novel where language is inadequate, not only for the characters individually, but for communication between the pair. Heathcliff “ceased to express his fondness for [Catherine] in words” and Catherine critiques Heathcliff’s speech, feeling that he “kn[ew] nothing and s[aid] nothing” (68-70). Hindley, Linton, and even Nelly emphasize the failure of language by reinforcing the societal roles that Catherine and Heathcliff hold, punishing the duo when they stray from these roles by preventing them from speaking to one another. This punishment is seen after Catherine and Heathcliff have strayed from the domestic sphere to play in the moors. Heathcliff is threatened that “the first word he spoke to Miss Catherine would ensure a dismissal” (51); later, when Heathcliff has endangered racial norms by kissing and pursuing Isabella, he is forbidden from coming to Thrushcross Grange and speaking to Catherine (146). It is no wonder that the majority of Heathcliff and Catherine’s connection occurs “off-stage” in the moors rather than in the text—genuine emotion and connection between the duo cannot be conveyed through words.

Much scholarly work reveals how Catherine and Heathcliff are denied access to language. Susan Meyer’s reading of Catherine and Heathcliff’s “mutual exclusion [...] from the language of power” initially illuminates how language is an ineffective form of communication for the pair, but ultimately focuses on Heathcliff’s exclusion from language, arguing that Brontë is more concerned with Heathcliff’s (racial) oppression and resistance to British imperialism than the treatment of women in the novel (108). To Meyer, Catherine assimilates into culture and language, leaving Brontë to follow Heathcliff’s storyline and “resistant energies” (102) against British society after Catherine’s death. Meyer is speaking to an argument originally posed by Gilbert and Gubar, who claim that “the power of the patriarch [...] begins with words” (281). Where Meyer’s interpretation argues that Brontë is largely concerned with Heathcliff’s racial oppression and violence, Gilbert and Gubar pose that Brontë is instead primarily focused on the oppression of white women, viewing Heathcliff as an embodiment of Catherine’s inner desires. Although both critical standpoints are persuasive, neither Meyer nor Gilbert and Gubar acknowledge the intersection of both gendered and racial oppression in British society, where

subjugation results in death for both Catherine and Heathcliff. Ultimately, Brontë is interested in the relation between white women and people of color, and how these individuals can communicate, have affinity, and resist dominant British culture.

Objectified and restricted by British society, Catherine and Heathcliff are constantly seeking a mode to share and relate with one another. Throughout the text their mutual soul is emphasized, Catherine famously claiming, “I *am* Heathcliff,” and that “whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same” (Brontë 81). Heathcliff echoes these sentiments at the prospect and aftermath of Catherine’s death, crying out “would *you* like to live with your soul in the grave?” (163) and “I *cannot* live without my soul!” (169). The italics here emphasize Catherine and Heathcliff’s yearning to connect through their mutual soul, and their straining to convey this need through words. Their connection and communication culminates in Heathcliff’s deconstruction of Catherine’s casket. Heathcliff’s violent disruption of Catherine’s grave and breaking of the physical barrier between where their bodies will be buried allows the pair to finally be absorbed into one another in death, decomposing together so that it is impossible to “know which is which” (288). This image exemplifies the intersectional reading of *Wuthering Heights*, where the fight for racial and gender equality (embodied in Heathcliff and Catherine) unites. Therefore, it is violence, not language, that creates the only successful modes of communication in the novel. Their abuse most often takes the form of “seiz[ing]” (97) and “grasp[ing]” (159) at one another as they forcibly drive inward to escape external societal pressure and control mechanisms. Strange as it may seem, Catherine and Heathcliff resist hierarchal power between them—ironically and counter-intuitively—through mutually, equally abusing one another.

This violent communication is seen when Nelly helps Heathcliff sneak into Thrushcross Grange to see sick, pregnant Catherine; the pair emotionally and physically abuse each other to communicate their desire for one another. Catherine displays both psychological abuse by threatening violence, stating she “wish[ed] she could hold [Heathcliff] [...]’til [they] were both dead,” and physical abuse through “seiz[ing] [and later tearing out a chunk of] Heathcliff’s] hair, and ke[eping] him down” (160). Heathcliff returns this abuse with physical violence of his own, for he grabs Catherine’s arm hard enough that “four distinct impressions left blue in [her] colorless skin” (161). Further, their interactions are depicted as violent and desperate, for they “strained,” “grasped,” and “seized” one another, and are described as “wild,” “desperate,” and “frantic” (191-194). These violent actions and descriptions communicate these characters’ thwarted desires. Brontë emphasizes the culmination of the characters’ pain and oppression throughout the novel through word choice, repeating “suffered,” “torment,” “wild,” and “cruel,” as well as describing the characters as having “agony,” “despair,” “anguish,” “distress,” “misery,” and “agitation” (159-163). Thus, Catherine expresses “the violent, unequal throbbing of her heart” (161) via abuse; Heathcliff shares how he is “livid with emotion” (162) for Cather-

ine through violence. These displays of abuse culminate in the two characters being “locked in an embrace from which [Nelly] thought [her] mistress would never be released alive” (162). Because of the heightened emotion and violent embraces, Catherine faints and becomes a “lifeless-looking form” (164). Catherine does survive the embrace, but she does not survive the chapter; after Heathcliff leaves and the chapter ends, Catherine delivers baby Cathy and dies. Although Victorian culture attempts to isolate Catherine and Heathcliff through the denial of economic and linguistic power, this societal pressure ultimately forces the pair together in a violent fusion.

Throughout the text, violence becomes a way for Catherine and Heathcliff to communicate, to share a soul, and to resist the cultural norms that work to separate and marginalize them. Their inability to unite through language is reminiscent of poet Audre Lorde’s renowned quote “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (110). The patriarchal tool of language cannot enable Catherine and Heathcliff to connect and destabilize British society’s oppressive structures. Consequently, Heathcliff and Catherine’s violence is a subversive reflex, working against the institutionalized racism and sexism of Victorian society. Catherine and Heathcliff’s inward violence—though shocking and harmful—is mutual: both characters are abusing one another as a result of the gender, class, and race barriers that create a hierarchal power structure between them. Their violence is a reciprocated attempt to find equality: an effort to literally beat the racist, sexist socialization out of one another. Recognizing Catherine and Heathcliff’s joint exclusion from language and overarching oppression is essential to move towards an understanding of the novel (and society) that is intersectional. The novel recognizes both racial and gendered oppression without holding these forms of subjugation in competition with one another. Instead, the experiences of various forms of oppression are revealed to happen alongside and in connection with one another. Ultimately, Brontë does not promote violence as communication, but reveals the harsh methods and mechanisms marginalized peoples must adopt to survive subjugation in Britain.

Though some may read the ending of Brontë’s novel as a return to British cultural norms through Hareton and Cathy’s union, resistance lingers in Catherine and Heathcliff’s ghosts haunting the moors. These apparitions are the final manifestation of Catherine and Heathcliff’s shared soul—a shared existence that disrupts the expected marriage plot and instead imagines future resistance through their haunting of the moors, the novel, and the consciousness of English readers who are complicit in the perpetuation of patriarchal, imperialistic structures.

Bella and Edward: Abuse as Passion

As previously noted, the public's perception of *Wuthering Heights* shifted due to adaptations of Brontë's novel. William Wyler's 1939 film in particular has shaped the way society understands *Wuthering Heights*. The adaptation portrayed the novel as a love story; it responded to the pre-WWII political and historical context and attempted to make the film more marketable through an empathetic portrayal of Catherine and Heathcliff. In the film, Catherine's body is depicted as a site where, in the face of "war and economic hardships [...] societies negotiated their ideals and material realities" (Shachar, *Cultural Afterlives* 54-55). Heathcliff is depicted as a "spectacle of pain" (54-55); his body simultaneously becomes an analogy for the body of soldiers and reflects romantic, heterosexual ideals. Thus, Catherine is objectified and sexualized by the camera, while Heathcliff embodies the romantic hero. Ultimately, Wyler's depiction of Catherine and Heathcliff immortalized them as iconic, star-crossed lovers in the eyes of the public. Therefore, when Stephenie Meyer claimed she was inspired by *Wuthering Heights*, her inspiration—whether or not she was aware of it—drew from cultural notions of Catherine and Heathcliff created by Wyler, as much as by Brontë's original novel. In creating a young adult romance series indebted to and referencing *Wuthering Heights*, Meyer perpetuated the idea of Catherine and Heathcliff as idyllic lovers. This is extremely harmful to Meyer's (often adolescent) audience, for she not only rationalizes but also idealizes Bella and Edward's domestic violence. Unlike Catherine and Heathcliff's abuse, the abuse in Bella and Edward's relationship is not a form of mutual communication. Instead, Meyer frames Edward's violence as masculine displays of passion, and Bella's passive, submissive, and self-sacrificing response as a feminine ideal. Thus, Bella and Edward's actions romanticize and enforce abuse in relationships, upholding patriarchal structures and power imbalances.

In *Reading Like a Girl: Narrative Intimacy in Contemporary American Young Adult Literature*, Sara Day details the particular impact that young adult novels have on female-identifying adolescents. Day describes the relationship between young adult romance novels' narrators and readers as "narrative intimacy," where readers are encouraged to "seek and understand similarities between themselves and the narrator in question" (19). The use of a first-person narrator minimizes the distinctions between the narrator and reader, for the first-person singular pronouns (I, me, mine) cause readers to emotionally, vicariously experience the affect of the plot alongside the narrator. In the case of *Twilight*, Bella is a first-person narrator who relies on the reader as a confidante and signals them to supplement her story with their own emotional response. Through narrative intimacy, readers are co-creators of the emotional impact of the *Twilight* series and are "voyeur[s] and participant[s] in [Bella's] physical relationships with Edward and Jacob" (72). Hila Shachar addresses the harm in this association, noting that Meyer's novels teach young readers "that 'true love' is only attainable for women once they give up something,

most commonly, themselves" ("A Post-Feminist Romance" 153). This narrative messaging is distinct from the first-person narration in *Wuthering Heights*, where Nelly and Lockwood's narration creates separation between readers and Catherine. Bella, however, repeatedly models sacrificial behavior, culminating in her surrendering her life for her daughter and her humanity for an eternal existence with Edward. Bella's narrative intimacy becomes dangerous for readers, who can absorb her sacrificial mindset and become attracted to Edward's abusive actions and nature.

The series' most violent passages reveal how Meyer packages and vends Edward's violence as passion. The morning after they have consummated their marriage, the state of the room and Bella's body signal the brutality of the night before. When Bella wakes she soon realizes "there was stiffness, and a lot of soreness, too" in her muscles, and scanning her body finds "large purplish bruises were beginning to blossom across the skin of [her] arm [...] to [her] shoulder, and then down across [her] ribs" (Meyer, *Breaking Dawn* 89). The bruises Edward leaves on Bella in this scene are reminiscent of Heathcliff's bruising Catherine. The key difference is that the portrayal of Edward's physical abuse shores up patriarchal structures and conflates sex and violence. For instance, in response to this battery, Bella exclaims "I can't imagine life gets any better than that" (92). Bella further mitigates Edward's violence—and frames it as a masculine display of passion—when she reflects, "I couldn't recall a moment when his hold had been too tight, his hands too hard against me. I only remembered wanting him to hold me tighter and being pleased when he did" (89). Bella's reaction sends the message that male dominance and violence are justified if they are arousing. When Bella wakes surrounded by feathers from pillows that Edward bit and ripped apart, Edward indicates how close he came to murdering her when he notes, "we're just lucky it was the pillows and not you" (95). Moreover, the emphasis on Bella's injuries highlights their visual appeal and minimizes their harm through artistic language: in addition to the "blossoming" above, "there was a faint shadow across one of [her] cheekbones" and "the rest of [her] was decorated with patches of blue and purple" (95; emphases added). Meyer's word choice depicts Bella's bruises as beautiful embellishments to her skin, aestheticizing Edward's abuse as enhancing Bella's body instead of injuring it. Furthermore, when Bella sees her own beaten body, her response is to justify Edward's actions and to contemplate how to hide her bruises.

Although there is a BDSM community that desires a combination of sex and pain, the *Twilight* series does not portray consensual BDSM sex. In fact, in response to the *Twilight* saga—and its still more violent spawn, the *50 Shades* series—many BDSM groups and individuals came out with statements distancing BDSM from these novels' portrayals of sex, finding Edward's (and later *50 Shades*' Christian's) non-consensual control and abuse inaccurate and harmful not only for readers but for societal perceptions of the BDSM community ("5 Things"). The key difference is unlike those who partake in BDSM, Bella's life truly is at risk. Female sexuali-

ty, BDSM, and kinks are not problematic; rather, Edward's inherent threat to Bella's life and his exercising potentially lethal battery towards Bella during sex makes this scene—and particularly its romantic portrayal—harmful.

Another prominent scene that glamorizes violence occurs when Bella delivers baby Renesmee. The chapter in which Bella gives birth reads more like a scene from a slasher flick than a passage from a paranormal, young-adult romance novel. As Bella bends to retrieve a dropped cup of blood, there is a “muffled ripping sound from the center of her body” (346) and from there Meyer implements a barrage of violent imagery to describe Bella's labor. Jacob details the horror as Bella's screams burst the blood vessels in her eyes and her convulsions crack and break her bones—including her spine—while gushes of blood choke her and prevent her from speaking. Matching the violence of Bella's “natural” labor is the violent delivery through a C-section. Edward reasserts his place as the gatekeeper and conductor of Bella's body as he uses his teeth to bite through her womb, tearing open the placenta to deliver the baby. This simultaneous devouring and decimation of Bella's body is described by Jacob as “terrifying;” “Edward's face pressed against the bulge” creates a sound “like metal being shredded apart” (351). Meyer's use of simile creates distance from Edward's violence to Bella, but it is important to emphasize that Bella—not metal—is being “shredded apart” by Edward's teeth. Jacob justifies Edward's cannibalistic moment as a necessary means to deliver Renesmee, instructing readers on how to react to the scene when he reflects that vampire teeth are “a surefire way” to cut through the vampire skin of the placenta (351). This paints Edward as a baby-saving hero and diminishes the fact that he gutted Bella and left her open on the table, a “broken, bled-out, mangled corpse” (355). Edward bites Bella all over her body to inject his venom into her heart. This is another violent ravaging that is romanticized through simile; Jacob reduces it from abuse to a loving gesture when he says that the act was “like [Edward] was kissing her, brushing his lips at her throat, at her wrists, into the crease at the inside of her arm” (354). Thus, Jacob provides a voyeuristic perspective to Bella's death, gaining erotic pleasure from looking on as violence is enacted on the passive female body. Be it Bella or Jacob's narration, the characters inform readers that Edward's violence is blameless, and the description of his actions further reinforces his role as a desirable, masculine hero.

Although some may assume that contemporary texts present more progressive ideas than their historical counterparts, the *Twilight* novels include much more reactionary and harmful depictions of heterosexual relationships than those in *Wuthering Heights*. Meyer purports to draw from Brontë, but through whitewashing the romantic leads and subscribing to patriarchal gender norms, the *Twilight* series directly contrasts *Wuthering Heights'* critique of hierarchal conceptions of gender and race. Nevertheless, the connection between these texts continues to cause readers to conflate Brontë's negative view of violence with Meyer's positive portrayal of abuse. Through enforcing binary gender roles, Meyer has created a novel whose audience

accepts Edward's perpetual abuse of Bella. Where *Wuthering Heights* condemns violence and the institutionalized oppression that creates it, *Twilight* glorifies such violence as an integral part of the relationship between two contemporary romantic heroes.

Impacts on Readers: Abuse in Real Life

To comprehend the impact of Stephenie Meyer categorizing *Wuthering Heights* as a romance, it is first necessary to understand what the romance genre is and does. Michael Cart refers to romance as a form, and pulls from Romance Writers of America to note the two factors all romance novels share: "a central love story and an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending" (103). To return to Felski, books can be understood as "non-human actors" that shape and change readers' self-concepts and world views, influencing the way individuals think about and interact with their environments (189). The influence of romanticizing abuse is addressed by Melissa Miller, who found that "romance novels act as beginner's manual[s] for adolescence," ("Maybe Edward is the Most Dangerous Thing" 173) teaching young people how to meet one another, flirt, and act in romantic relationships. The way readers internalize *Twilight*'s eroticization of domestic abuse is evidenced in their positive reactions to Edward's character and the hyper-masculine role he holds. On a *Twilight* message board, fan Yulia writes "Bella was all smacked up with bruises and still begging for more, must have been better than I imagined," and t-shirts were made proclaiming, "Edward Can Bust my Headboard, Bite My Pillows, and Bruise My Body...Anyday [sic]!" (qtd. in Parke 213).

While fans' belief that Edward's abusive actions are romantic is alarming in and of itself, *Twilight*'s connection to *Wuthering Heights* and the growing cultural understanding of *Wuthering Heights* as a romance is further problematic. What makes *Wuthering Heights* romance categorization so harmful is that unlike *Twilight*, where fans are romanticizing abuse, literary scholars and teachers are upholding the perception of Catherine and Heathcliff as romantic idols. In a variety of articles, literary critics reference Catherine and Heathcliff as idyllic lovers. Notable among these is prominent young adult scholar Michael Cart, who notes that the romance genre "dates to the eighteenth century and [...] the novels of Jane Austen and the Brontë sisters" (103). It is telling that a young adult scholar classifies Brontë novels as romance, specifically in that he defines romances as having "a central love story and an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending"—two things *Wuthering Heights* arguably doesn't have and at times actively resists (103). Classifying *Wuthering Heights* as a romance is harmful because it implicitly informs students that Heathcliff and Catherine's violent actions are romantic. By distinguishing *Wuthering Heights* as a romance, teachers and scholars—trusted guides and models for students—ultimately (and unintentionally) take part in the larger cultural movement that glamorizes and reinforces domestic abuse.

With one out of every three high school students experiencing the trauma of sexual or physical abuse (the one out of every three, it is essential that teachers and scholars do not present *Wuthering Heights* as a romance. Teachers must explain the contextual nuances of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship and help students interpret *Wuthering Heights* in a way that does not trivialize or romanticize abuse. This requires a separation from the *Twilight* series and an investigation into the current cultural understanding of both Brontë and Meyer's novels. Moving forward, proponents of young adult literature must write, edit, and publish pieces that create space for feminine sexuality and desire without relying on tired, harmful gendered tropes. Young adult readers need texts that imagine romance outside of heteronormative, patriarchal, and abusive restrictions. Comparing these two texts and readers' responses to them reveals the urgent need to provide adolescents with the skills to analyze literature that addresses sexuality, desire, and romance. Given the tools to investigate characters' actions, narrative structure, and stereotypes, young readers will be able to identify romanticized portrayals of abuse and resist the conflation of novels such as *Wuthering Heights* and *Twilight*.

Conclusion

Felski's conclusion that time is not a linear march towards progress, but instead is a "crumpled handkerchief" of affinities (576), illuminates how Brontë can present more progressive ideas through Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship in *Wuthering Heights* than Meyer does in *Twilight*. If Brontë could read the *Twilight* series today, its association with her own novel would appall her. As established throughout this paper, Bella vastly differs from Catherine; further, Bella's fate differs even from her own namesake, Isabella Linton. In crafting Isabella Linton, Brontë depicts a woman who fell in love with the idea of a man (Heathcliff) instead of his actual demeanor, and then endured the full force of patriarchal power through his legalized abuse. Yet Brontë imagines a story where Isabella shatters her illusions of Heathcliff and successfully runs away, living as a fugitive from her husband and his legal right to her and their child. Bella's ending could not diverge from Isabella's radical actions more: Meyer writes Bella as happily conforming to an eternity with her abuser. Despite the two texts' "sociability" with one another, Meyer's depictions of abuse as romantic and white men as dominant heroes uphold the societal notions Brontë works to deconstruct (Felski 185). Comparing these two novels reveals that modern readers and writers hold both limiting and liberating views of gender, race, and class. If we accept Felski's definition of "non-human actors"—that every individual is an amalgamation of the narratives they ingest—then as a society we must create stories that do not equate passion with violence and love with abuse (189). Though *Twilight* was first published in 2007, its impact—and the prevalence of harmful stories marketed to young adult readers—is

just as visceral today. This past year, the #MeToo movement has exploded dominant narratives that minimized and silenced the rape and battery of women around the world. The courageous individuals speaking up in this movement demand a change in society's conversations around domestic abuse, rape, and violence. Our stories must not endorse abuse or reduce dynamic individuals to racial and gendered stereotypes, but instead must recognize varying positionalities and create space for healthy conceptions of relationships. Just as Brontë's text ends not with the marriage plot of Hareton and Cathy, but with the destabilizing haunting of the moors, narratives today must also move beyond portrayals of abusive relationships as the desired, fairytale ending. Only once young adult authors, teachers, and critics produce narratives that envision resistant, subversive figures—phantoms with “unquiet slumbers”(Brontë 337)—will society be able to disrupt the romanticizing of white men's domestic abuse as a “small but perfect piece of our forever” (Meyer, *Breaking Dawn* 754).

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Notes

¹For an examination of Isabella’s plight that renders her relationship with Heathcliff an example of mid-Victorian domestic abuse, see Hancock, Pike, and SurrIDGE.

²Domestic abuse is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone (“Domestic Violence”).

“I Warrant You We Will Play Our Parts”: The Role of Performance in *The Taming of the Shrew*

Amanda Fawcett, English

Faculty Mentor: Allison Meyer

Faculty Content Editor: Sean McDowell

Student Author: Leah Dooley

Abstract

Shakespeare's play, *The Taming of the Shrew*, has a long and contentious history due to the discontinuities regarding its portrayal of naturalized gender hierarchies. This paper seeks to complicate a prescriptive reading of the play's gender politics by unpacking the role of metatheatrics and gender performance within its narrative. This paper draws on historicist and Shakespearean scholars to highlight how its metatheatrical Induction and the role of gender performativity call attention to the instability and artifice of early-modern patriarchy. The play's Induction establishes a framework of performance that undermines the misogyny of the events in Padua, for it forces the audience to question the stability of gender as a fixed marker of identity. Thus, the narratives of the play, which depend upon the double-layered performance of gender, effectively denaturalize gendered roles and behaviors. By revealing the performative nature of gender and marriage, *The Taming of the Shrew* disrupts, but does not overthrow, the very norms that drive its plot. The paper ultimately argues that *The Taming of the Shrew* neither condemns nor supports its inherent sexism; rather, it utilizes a complex depiction of gender to challenge patriarchal constructions of gender and converse with the various tensions that threatened the social world of the early modern period.

It would be naive to assert that Shakespeare's drama *The Taming of the Shrew* is neither contentious nor problematic. Since its first performance in early-modern England, scholars, audiences, and fellow playwrights have debated the play's portrayal of female submission and male dominance. Its representation of women is overtly misogynistic; its narrative only concludes when a headstrong woman succumbs to her domineering husband through a hyperbolic speech defending naturalized female subordination. The play-text is laden, however, with implicit contradictions to this message of a naturalized gender hierarchy. Following oppressive silence, women speak out. Moments of submissive conceding are paired with ironic language and farcical humor. The overarching negotiations of power, gender, and marriage are seemingly inconclusive and the interpretations of these fluid gender dynamics are multivocal, shaping not only contemporary stagings of this play but also our understanding of the culture and social world of early-modern England.

I argue that the play neither opposes nor supports the patriarchal themes it presents. Rather, *The Taming of the Shrew* reveals the social tension between traditional gender roles and the performative nature of gender, a prevalent political issue in Elizabethan England. The story is not so much a moral play as an experimental one, operating within the structures of patriarchy while still productively destabilizing those same norms. *The Taming of the Shrew* demonstrates that enduring gender norms—namely marital roles, submissive femininity, and masculine power—are performative in nature. While the textual characters perform roles within their metatheatrical social world, the play itself propounds that the customs which propel its narrative are also performed acts and structures. In recognizing the performativity of marriage and gender, the play admits to the instability of these roles and relations, thereby challenging, but not overthrowing, the norms driving its plot. This reading of *The Taming of the Shrew* destabilizes the insistence on a binary reading of the text, making space for a more complex understanding of gender and power, as well as of the Early Modern period itself.

Shakespeare's use of an Induction within the context of this play is vital for understanding the conflicts it presents. In theater, inductions—explanatory scenes that precede the main text of the play—serve to summarize the bigger stories they frame, frequently commenting upon or moralizing the following narrative. The Induction of *The Taming of the Shrew*, due to its seemingly dislocated purpose in the plot of the play, is often omitted from performance and film interpretation. The inclusion or exclusion of this piece of text, however, drastically alters how the audience is invited into the story. In this short scene, a beggar, Christopher Sly, passes out in a bar and is carried to the house of wealthy Lord. This Lord and his servants plan to perform a grand hoax on the beggar: the lord's pageboy is instructed to dress up as a woman and play the role of Sly's submissive wife. When Sly awakens in wealthy garb and sees his wife, he believes himself to be a master and lord. A troupe of actors then arrives to entertain him, and the play they perform constitutes the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The main plot in Padua, performed by the Lord's men of the Induction, centers on Kate and Bianca, the daughters of a wealthy merchant, Baptista, who avows that no suitor may court the demure Bianca until Kate, the ill-tempered "shrew," is married. Two suitors orchestrate elaborate disguises in order to remain in Bianca's company and woo her into marriage. Meanwhile, Petruchio, a brazen man from Verona, arrives in Padua, intending to find a wealthy bride. Upon meeting Kate, the two engage in a verbal battle of wits; Petruchio secures her hand in marriage by falsely telling Baptista that she has consented to marry him. After the wedding, Petruchio announces a plan to "tame" Kate into submission and she eventually succumbs to Petruchio's abuses. Against the wishes of her father, Bianca chooses a suitor, and at her wedding banquet, the guests are shocked to see Kate's changed behavior. Kate then delivers a speech endorsing the submission of wives to their husbands; the guests acknowledge Petruchio's victory over her shrewishness. The play concludes but never returns to the original plot of the Induction.

The play as a whole is metatheatrical, for the use of the Induction draws attention to *The Taming of the Shrew's* very nature as a work of drama, creating two layers of performance. The Induction, then, provides an entry point into the play "that flags performance, deception, and trickery involving impersonation and role-playing" (Mitchell 240) as central to the plot, establishing a metatheatrical framework for the play. The Induction communicates, above all else, that gender can be believably performed. Both the Lord's Page as well as Elizabethan male and boy actors perform as women, creating a double-layered performance wherein the actors are both performing as the Lord's men who in turn perform as the characters of the play proper. Michael Shapiro notes, however, that the use of male actors in female roles "was not merely a latent metatheatrical fact, but became explicit when Sly's defiant response to the Hostess' threat to call the police includes the line, 'I'll not budge an inch, boy'" (Shapiro 150). By calling attention to the true gender of the Hostess, the Induction underscores its own theatrical artifice: this gendered word reminds the audiences that the female characters are theatrical constructs. The Induction "inevitably [leads] to an awareness that these male performers were offering versions of femininity" (Shapiro 146-147) based in cultural norms, conduct books, and marriage manuals, rather than an essential or biological construct of womanhood. In fact, the Lord himself asserts that the construction of Sly's marriage is but "a flatt'ring dream, or worthless fancy" (Shakespeare, Induction, 1.40). Because actors knowingly present inaccurate constructions of femininity and audiences knowingly engage with these "fancies," the metatheatrical frame "generate[s] deconstructive power" (Shapiro 144), meaning that gender must be inherently performative and in service to a specific, dream-like end in order for the play to continue.

The Induction literally sets the stage for a play dependent on the actors' productions of gender and the characters' abilities to create gender identity through performance. The characters in the Induction attest to their performative roles: "my lord, I warrant you we will play our parts/As he shall think by our true diligence/He is no less that what we say he is" (Shakespeare

Induction 1.65-67). They promise an effective duping of Sly through their presentation of marital roles. Representations of gender dynamics, status, and power create the meaning of the play as well as the masculine identity of Sly. The male actors are aware that they represent constructions of gender dynamics just as the characters within the Induction are aware that marriage and submission can best be believably acted through exaggeration.

Such exaggeration is demonstrated in the lord's verbose description of the ideal performance of femininity, necessitating twenty-five printed lines of prose that describe the proper "instructions" (Induction 1.126) of womanly behavior. These scenes in the Induction force the audience to think about the metatheatrical nature of theater itself, "[encouraging] an active engagement with representation as representation" (Smith 295). The Induction as a metatheatrical framework prevents gender expressions, particularly that of femininity, from settling into a stable position. Every role must be read through this fluid, unstable use of representation and performance. Thus, the Induction reveals that the role of a lord or a woman, and therefore the dynamics that form between them, is not essential or determined. So-called naturalized structures of power cannot take root on the stage.

The metatheatrical framework of the Induction, by its very nature as a framing tool, comments upon *The Taming of the Shrew* as a whole. The Induction moralizes and comments upon the larger text, so the metatheatrical performativity of the Induction claims a similar thematic drive for the characters of Padua. The lord's hoax and the plots in Padua become inexorably linked both thematically and linguistically. Burns asserts that the argument over hunting in the Induction closely mimics the argument at the end of Act 5 over which of the three male characters possesses the best wife: "the final scene uses and re-uses the materials of the Induction and transposes them to higher terms" (Burns 88). Thus, the performance of the Induction, and all of its implications for the constructed representation of gender, reflects the performance exhibited within the social world of Padua. If the king's actors of the Induction effectively perform sensationalized femininity and marital hierarchies, then it is likely that the male actor playing Kate would also knowingly perform the character's submission under similar pretenses. As Smith argues, the "intersection between performance and gender" (289) is quickly established through various features, ultimately dominating the relationships and conclusions of the entire play. For example, the play frequently comments upon the difference between private and public behavior, conveying the character's recognition that performance within the construction of their own social world dictates roles, behaviors, and norms. One's role, therefore, is always subject to change.

Notably, Petruchio capitalizes on social performativity in order to secure his engagement to Kate. After the two speak in private and Kate verbally expresses distaste for Petruchio's assertive marriage proposal, he nevertheless explains to the other men that Kate's dissention is due to her predetermined role: "'tis bargained twixt us twain being alone,/That she shall still

be curst in company” (Shakespeare 2.1.296-297). In this assertion, Petruchio implies that Kate’s identity and femininity are unfixed; she can fluidly move in and out of expectations of female behavior in order to appeal to a different social situation. Thus, socially performed roles, attitudes, and behaviors do not reveal truth but actually cloud meaning and intention. Similarly, performance enables Petruchio to knowingly embody and pursue various social roles throughout the play: first the fortune seeker, then the wooing romantic, and finally the aggressive husband. Petruchio explicitly reveals his plans to perform these roles, stating that he has “politically begun [his] reign” (4.1.167-168), a word connoting not only the intentional organization of parts, but also scheming, crafting, or cunning behavior (“Politic” OED). Petruchio even tells the audiences that role-playing itself gains him power and status:

I attend her here,
And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
Say that she rail, why then I’ll tell her plain,
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale (Shakespeare 2.1.166-169)

In Petruchio’s plots, performance is the primary means of attaining desired outcomes, similar to how the characters of the Induction knowingly and verbally act out various roles in order to dupe Sly. Gender, marriage, wooing, and submission are performed constructions that textual characters and actors alike use for their respective benefits.

One significant question emerges in light of this feature: what is the play’s attitude towards these performative constructions, particularly that of the submission and dominance dynamic which restores order at the conclusion of the play? While *The Taming of the Shrew* does not explicitly challenge patriarchy, the play’s metatheatrical performance of patriarchal systems, specifically marriage hierarchies and gender essentialism, reveals the systems as inherently unstable and unnatural. In fact, the behaviors of various characters, in an attempt to perform or enforce patriarchy, reverse the power of these structures. Petruchio’s dominance, Bianca’s wooing, and Kate’s submission are “performances of subjection and domination that actually reshape rather than reinforce gender hierarchies” (Smith 297).

Most notably, Petruchio’s severe actions against Kate reverse the power of patriarchy within his social world. His assertion of dominance eventually breeds sympathy for Kate in the other male characters. Grumio’s narration of Petruchio’s exaggerated performance at the wedding ceremony reveals that “the community does not voice its support of his enactment of patriarchy” (Smith 305). In a conversation following Kate and Petruchio’s marriage ceremony, Peter states that “he kills her in her own humor” (Shakespeare 4.1.160) and Curtis remarks that “she, poor soul,/Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak/And sits as one new risen from a dream” (4.1.165-166). These two voices, among others, reveal that Petruchio’s patriar-

chal dominance shames him rather than Kate. Curtis attests to his own soured perception of Petruchio following his aggressive performance at the wedding ceremony: “by this reckoning he is more shrew than she” (4.1.70). Similarly, Petruchio’s hasty and forced departure from the wedding banquet “is, in fact, most insulting to the [...] host, Baptista, the father of the bride and ruling patriarch” (Smith 306). Thus, his marriage to Kate does not establish a neat and proper incorporation into their patriarchal society. Petruchio’s performance of patriarchy and dominance actually offends and sets him apart from that society.

Similarly, the wooing of Bianca works not to overthrow but instead to challenge constructions of patriarchy. Throughout the play, Bianca performs the role of the ideal woman: demure, gentle, and obedient. While scholars construe or critique her various suitors as vestiges of patriarchy, her marriage at the end of the play counters and opposes that very system; she chooses her husband without the consent of her patriarchal figurehead. Bianca’s father, Baptista, expresses explicit resentment towards her actions: “but do you hear, sir, have you married my/daughter without asking my good will?” (Shakespeare Act 5.2.114-115). He even refers to their marriage as “knavery” (5.2.118). While Bianca was able to adequately perform femininity early in the play, she eventually acts against the ideals and constructions of marriage and is not properly initiated into the system that she once performed and practiced.

Bianca’s behavior and speech changes drastically following her marriage. She becomes outspoken and direct, relying on sexual innuendos and witty retorts in her interactions with various male characters. The other men note this change, going so far as to claim that the bride has been “awakened” (5.2.42). Bianca’s prior performances of femininity are compared to the state of sleep, silence, or unconsciousness. Her awakening is not just one of coming into herself, but one of shaking off the performative layers that kept her subdued. Bianca’s former behavior may have been a believable performance. But this performance was ultimately false and unstable as she chooses to awaken when it serves her best.

Similarly, Kate’s performance of submission is marked by parody, skepticism, farce, and irony rather than indicative of proper wifely subordination. As the play progresses, her acts of submission become increasingly exaggerated, suggesting that Kate only mocks female subjection. In fact, Kate openly tells both Petruchio and the servants that she is parodying submission through the repetition of her husband’s commands, “thereby exposing her wifely submission as a calculated performance” (Smith 309):

PETRUCHIO. I say it is the moon.

KATE. I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO. Nay, then you lie. It is the blessed sun.

KATE. But sun it is not, when you say it is not,

And the moon changes even as your mind.
What you will have it named, even that it is,
And so it shall be for Katherine. (Shakespeare 4.5.20-23)

This subversive, even critical, tone towards Petruchio undermines the notion that she is in a position of pure submission and reverence. Kate has not been worn down by Petruchio's berating; rather, she has strategically performed submission and informed the audience of her intentions. She then mocks Petruchio's dominance through an elaborate use of irony: "My mistaking eyes,/ That have been so bedazzled with the sun/That everything I look on seemeth green" (4.5.47-48). She appears to have conceded to Petruchio's dominance and reign, but her language and calculated decisions to perform femininity undermine his authority by proving his methods of control to be ineffective and trivial. Most importantly, the play's final lines express explicit doubt and suspicions regarding Kate's taming, ultimately framing the final moment with a recognition of her performative submission: "'tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so" (5.2.192). Even the characters who most closely witnessed Kate's transformation into wifely subjection are skeptical of its validity and the play is left with this doubt as its final word on the matter. Thus, if the conclusion of the story is dependent on Kate's submission, and she fails to assimilate to these constructs, then patriarchal marital hierarchies prove ineffective and unstable. Even those who appear to be "tamed" leave the audience wondering.

Kate's final, complex speech of submission demands a nuanced reading, particularly considering the lingering effects of the Induction. Following Petruchio's command to tell the other women what they owe their husbands, Kate states:

Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign—one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labor both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe. (5.2.150-155)

Most notably, this passage contains language similar to that used in the Induction, where the male Page, by performing according to certain male fantasies, convinces Sly that "she" is his submissive wife. Kate's declaration of female submission is linguistically linked to the Page's performed acts of wifely duty. In fact, they are nearly interchangeable in content: "thy husband is thy lord [...] we are bound to love, serve, and obey" (5.2.150,168); "my husband and my

lord, my lord and husband/I am your wife in all obedience” (Induction 2.103-104). Thus, Kate’s speech could be seen as equally performative as the Page’s successful enactment of femininity and wifely duties. Just as the Page performs his vision of female behavior, so does Kate’s final speech function as “the final incarnation of an elaborately but transparently constructed ideal of upper-class femininity: that is to say, a doubly theatrical replication of a socially generated role” (Shapiro 166).

Thus, the performative nature of gender and marriage in *The Taming of the Shrew* functions in opposition to the long-upheld patriarchal norms that provoke and constrain its narrative. Kate’s exaggerated submission, Bianca’s femininity, and Petruchio’s dominance all reveal the inherent instability of gendered roles and hierarchies due to their performative nature; Kate effectively performs submission yet maintains power through irony and farce. Bianca properly performs her role as obedient daughter but ultimately undermines her father’s patriarchal power in order to fulfill patriarchal marriage norms. Petruchio’s performance of dominance actually opposes the patriarchy he set out to enforce, thereby damaging his position in the social world of Padua. If these gendered behaviors and structures are not naturalized, then they are not fixed and result in further social instability. Gender hierarchies, then, are ineffective systems of power. We can reasonably conclude that the play does not endorse these traditional structures but instead dramatizes their ineffectiveness and faults for the sake of humor. After all, *The Taming of the Shrew* conforms to the generic structure of comedy.

While the play might condemn certain elements of gender hierarchies, it notably fails to dismantle them; the plot still functions within these confines and necessitates a conclusion in which patriarchy maintains control, even when it is shown to be performative and unstable. The characters do destabilize gender hierarchies and patriarchal domination, but the male figures maintain social and economic power at the end of the play. This complex tension between the endorsement and condemnation of patriarchy dominating the text reads as a response to the social threats of early-modern England. Louis Adrian Montrose argues that the rule of Queen Elizabeth I heightened the focus on the performative nature of gender and power within the highly patriarchal society of early-modern England. Traditionally, “all forms of public and domestic authority in Elizabethan England were vested in men” (Montrose 64), meaning that the presence of a female ruler, whose position of power was justified not only by English law but also by divine order, would inevitably “generate peculiar tensions within such a ‘patriarchal’ society” (64-65). The presence of a female ruler subjected all English men to a female sovereign. This system of power, however, both disrupts and reaffirms patriarchal structures. Queen Elizabeth’s rule weakened male domination and asserts that the patriarchal political power typically attributed to men is actually a construct that women too can embody and perform. However, the public fixation and politicizing of her sexuality as well as her “difference to other women may have helped to reinforce” (80) male hegemony.

This anxiety regarding female sovereignty and the performative instability of patriarchal structures is present in *The Taming of the Shrew* as well as Shakespeare's contemporaries who responded to his play with more overt social or political messaging about female subordination, suggesting the Elizabethan preoccupation with this social threat. If gender and power are only performative—meaning that a male Page can play a wife just as a Queen can operate in a traditionally male space of power—what implications does this performativity have on society? And further, does this necessitate reformative change?

Kate, Bianca, and the Page in the Induction all refer to their husbands as “lords,” using this title to qualify a woman’s inferiority to her spouse. This title would have had complex implications considering the presence of a female ruler, who was the ultimate authority over the lords of English society. With Queen Elizabeth as sovereign, the title of “lord” would not have possessed the same power or authority, for masculine authority was no longer the highest standard of control. This reordering of gendered roles evoked sexually charged metaphors of dominance and submission as English society grappled with the fact that there was a woman “on top.” In fact, Kate and Petruchio utilize this sexualized tone to discuss their relationship:

PETRUCHIO. Thou hast hit it; come sit on me.

KATE. Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO. Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATE. No such jade as you, if me you mean. (Shakespeare 2.1.195-201)

This “banter precipitates a series of fluid power shifts” (Smith 300), for the pair consistently flip the hierarchical structuring of power, exposing its inherent instability and unfixed nature and “contradict[ing] the idea that courtship and marriage are changes in which women necessarily, by definition, lose” (300). Thus, *The Taming of the Shrew* operates within the tensions and anxieties around the intersections of power and gender, just as Elizabethan society experienced similar disruptions and threats.

The Taming of the Shrew, aware that power and gender are self-fashioning and unstable, is yet uncomfortable dismantling these configurations and secures patriarchy as the driving force and conclusive power for the plot. It is understandable, therefore, that there is no ending to the plot of the Induction. Sly is not presented with his own conclusion following Act 5, for revealing the end of Sly’s “dream” (Shakespeare Induction 1.40) would legitimize the fallout of the patriarchal systems that sustain his vision of masculine power. The “flatt’ring dream, [and] worthless fancy” (Shakespeare, Induction, 1.40) of female subordination is left dubiously unresolved, just as Kate’s final submission is questioned but not fully denied. In this sense, the play should not be interpreted as moral; it neither condemns nor supports the subjugation of women. Rather, the play’s double-layered, open-ended dialogue reveals the artifice and instability of socially

performative roles and power structures, the very ones that early-modern England feared to lose but could not fully embrace. Shakespeare's controversial work is "a creation of Elizabethan culture: for it also creates the culture by which it is created, shapes the fantasies by which it is shaped, [and] begets that by which it is begotten" (Montrose 86). *The Taming of the Shrew's* incoherent vision of female subordination and male dominance arises in the deconstruction and disruption of its own ills.

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Notes

¹ Shapiro highlights that “conduct books regularly enjoin wives to silence, reverence, and obedience” (152). One such example he provides is “The Form and Solemnization of Matrimony” from *The Book of Common Prayer* (1559).

² To make her argument, Burns argues that “the two hunt conversations employ not only the same images but even the same numbers. Like the lord, who enters boasting about his hound—‘I would not lose the dog for twenty pound’ (Ind.1.19-21)—Lucentio proposes to wager ‘twenty crowns’ on his wife’s obedience (5.2.70)” (Burns 88).

³ One example is found in a conversation from Act 5: “Am I your bird? I mean to shift my bush,/ And then pursue me as you draw your bow” (5.2.47-48).

⁴ By setting herself apart as a uniquely privileged woman, exempt of the expectations of others, Queen Elizabeth utilized patriarchal language to maintain her own power and difference: “As she herself wrote in response to Parliament in 1563, “though I can think [marriage] best for a private woman, yet I do strive with myself to think it not meet for a prince” (Neale, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments 1559-1581*, 127). The royal exception could prove the patriarchal rule in society at large” (Montrose 80).

Obesity, Food Swamps, and the Youth of Guatemala City

Anne-Celine Jeffroy-Meynard, International Studies

Faculty Mentor: Serena Cosgrove

Faculty Content Editor: Serena Cosgrove

Student Editor: Thea Mercer

Abstract

This essay will explore obesity, body mass and nutrition transition as health concerns in Guatemala and Guatemala City's youth population. Obesity can be caused by consuming more calories than are exerted, resulting in a high Body Mass Index. The proximate cause of an extreme weight gain can be linked to the overconsumption of energy-dense, nutrient-poor food, which marketing, urbanization, food deserts and food swamps have a direct correlation to influence. Although obesity is a global health concern, this essay will outline contributing factors which have led to a population facing severe nutritional changes, and will focus on Guatemala's youth, being one of the most vulnerable populations to this form of malnutrition. Guatemala is in a period of nutritional transition through changes in the food environment, which will be analyzed by examining the excessive marketing of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods that affects young people in Guatemala City.

Author's Note

Research for this essay began with the ambitious intention to address obesity as a global health condition. As a case study, Guatemala provides a scalable and practical approach to uncovering associated central themes; however, I am sensitive to the social implications of focusing on obesity in Guatemala. In this essay, I am attempting to create a distinction between individual experiences of obesity or increased BMI with the features (such as colonization) that shape diets and health trends in a larger population.



Guatemala, Map No. 3834 Rev.3, May 2004,
UNITED NATIONS

Figure 1 Map of Guatemala

Introduction

Obesity, excessive body mass and nutrition transitions are global public health concerns. Obesity is defined as the excessive amount of fat accumulation that may lead to chronic and negative health outcomes (WHO, 2018). Typically, obesity is calculated using the Body Mass Index (BMI), a weight and height measurement that indicates a person's amount of body fat. Obesity can be caused by consuming more calories than are exerted, resulting in a high BMI. The proximate cause of an extreme weight gain can be linked to the overconsumption of energy-dense, nutrient-poor food, upon which marketing, urbanization, food deserts and food swamps have a direct influence. In the past, obesity was considered a problem solely for developed countries; now the problem is rising in developing countries, an effect often called a nutrition(al) transition (WHO, 2018). In Guatemala, this health and societal issue has increased with urbanization and population growth; therefore a focused case study will draw attention

to the effects of a global pattern of colonized diets. I am sensitive to the social implications of focusing on obesity and increased BMI in Guatemala. In this essay, I am attempting to create a distinction between individual experiences of obesity with the social justice barriers that shape diets and health trends in a larger population.

Undernutrition is a common form of malnutrition, an imbalanced intake of nutrients. In Guatemala, changes in urbanization and economic development are impacting the nutritional health of Guatemalans (Yates-Doerr, 2015, 12). While Guatemala does still have areas where undernutrition is the main nutritional problem, the urbanized region of Guatemala City is facing an increasing problem of obesity and high BMI in youth. This form of malnutrition is increasing and has yet to receive policy action by the Guatemalan Ministry of Health. The World Bank reported in 2010 that rates of chronic malnutrition in Guatemala were the third highest in the world (Yates-Doerr, 2015, 12). With almost 17 million inhabitants, Guatemala is the largest country in Central America. The capital, Guatemala City, has a population of approximately three million people (CIA, 2018). As of 2017, 52.5% of Guatemala's population lives in urban areas, and is increasing at a rate of 3.23% per year (CIA, 2018). This is a significant increase from the mid-to-late twentieth century when only 31.1% of its people lived in cities (World Bank, 2018), and this places Guatemala and Guatemala City at risk of a nutritional transition.

One of the leading proximate causes of obesity for the youth in Guatemala City is attributed to the presence of food swamps, and the marketing of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. Food swamps are described as places where populations rely on food options that are energy-dense and nutrient-poor, or are ultra-processed, such as fast-food (Hager, 2017). Youth are among the populations most vulnerable to long-term health concerns from childhood and adolescent obesity. Food deserts exist within cities or neighborhoods where there is limited access to healthy foods from grocery stores, due to location or affordability (Whitacre, 2009). Significantly, Guatemala's population is young, with 40% of inhabitants under 15 years old (WHO, 2019). Youth and children who live in proximity to food swamps experience this nutrition transition and thus will be studied at a micro level to account for the larger trends of malnutrition. Focusing on youth in Guatemala City will highlight nutrition transition as a larger theme and will emphasize the effects of positioned marketing on the increased consumption of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods.

Literature Review

Every national population is affected by at least one form of malnutrition (WHO, 2017). Increased BMI is a growing health concern in today's global community with over 1.9 billion overweight adults and 650 million obese people. The BMI is calculated by dividing weight by the square of height. A BMI over 30 is considered obese and over 25 is considered overweight (WHO, 2018). An increased BMI is linked to health problems such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, musculoskeletal diseases, and some cancers including prostate, ovarian, and kidney cancer (which are among the leading causes of death worldwide). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 13% of the world's adult population is obese and 340 million young people under the age of 19 are overweight or obese. The root cause of an increased BMI is the intake of energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods compounded by physical inactivity (WHO, 2017). Fried foods, which contain a high amount of sugar or sodium, and sugar-sweetened beverages with a high caloric content and little or no nutritional value (Delpeuch, 2010) are defined as energy-dense and nutrient-poor. Globally, there are 41 million children under the age of five who are overweight or obese (WHO, 2018).

In Latin America, more people die each year from being overweight than underweight (WHO, 2018), women are more obese than men, and approximately four million Latin American children under the age of five are obese. Since the 1990s the largest increase in obesity has occurred in Mesoamerica, which includes the countries of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Belize and Honduras (FAO, 2017, UTA, 2018). Mesoamerica's nutrition transition is linked to its economies' reliance on imported processed foods, which have replaced indigenous foods (Jeppesen, 2013). Urbanization is linked to societal changes, including increased access to processed and fast-food, more sedentary jobs, fewer outdoor or recreational spaces, and amplified marketing or advertising of non-traditional foods (Harvard, 2018). Food deserts and food swamps are theoretical concepts that describe nutrition environments which negatively impact communities with the abundance of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. Urbanized areas that have experienced shifts in food trade policies are considered food swamps (Harvard, 2018).

Food deserts are areas that have little or no access to grocery stores that sell quality, nutritious, or affordable foods (Whitacre, National, & Tsai, 2009). Food swamps describe areas that offer many unhealthy food options, such as fast-food chains and small stores with energy-dense, nutrient-poor, and processed foods (Hager et al., 2017). While exact definitions of food deserts and food swamps differ among researchers, one definition is areas which contain four or more corner or convenient stores within a quarter-mile radius. Another uses the Retail Food Environment Index (RFEI) to quantify the food system of a neighborhood. Food deserts and food swamps can co-exist in the same neighborhood and are typically associated with

economically vulnerable and primarily non-white communities (Hager et al., 2017). People's individual dietary decisions within food deserts and food swamps are influenced by access, availability, and cost.

While this concept is being researched in the public health sector in the United States, Europe, and Australia, it has yet to be applied in countries like Guatemala. Research conducted in the United States confirms that marketing and increased access affect youth's decisions on food. In a quantitative study conducted with 634 African American adolescent girls in Baltimore, Maryland, researchers found a link between neighborhoods in food swamps and youth food decisions. It showed that when youth have access to energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods, they are more likely to consume it in excessive amounts (Hager et al., 2017). Another qualitative study, conducted in Washington DC, focused on Central American immigrant mothers living in a food swamp, (where 71% of the restaurants were fast-food establishments). Researchers found that the children of these women preferred foods like pizza and soda instead of foods traditional to their region of origin (Colón-Ramos, Monge-Rojas, Cremm, Rivera, Andrade, & Edberg, 2017). These studies may be applied to Guatemala to indicate that youth's decisions about food are influenced by their caretakers, access, and location.

Youth and Food Swamps in Guatemala and Guatemala City

Nutritional Health in Guatemala and Guatemala City Youth

The WHO defines "stunting" as the lack of linear growth development due to malnourishment or repeated disease (UNICEF, 2018). Stunting is prevalent in Guatemala's youth and poses a risk for negative health outcomes, such as cognitive and developmental delays, obesity, and chronic health disorders like diabetes and heart disease (UNICEF, 2018). With 46.5% of its children under the age of five recognized as stunted, there are 972,000 stunted children in Guatemala (GNR, 2017). Guatemala is among the countries with the highest rates of stunting in the world (WHO, 2015). This is important considering the young population existing in Latin America, as 56% of the population is under the age of 24 (CIA, 2018), (WHO, 2018). The majority of Guatemala's population is young and especially susceptible to nutritional transition, including obesity and increased BMI.

Youth living in Guatemala City are becoming more obese and overweight, which, as previously discussed, can indicate a nutrition transition. The WHO collected a Student Health Survey in Guatemala in 2015; it had a response rate of 96% among the chosen schools in Guatemala and included 4,374 students ranging from 13 to 17 years of age (Brathwaite, 2015). Three quarters of the students surveyed were from suburbs or neighborhoods of Guatemala City (3,344 students), while one quarter were from other regions of Guatemala (1,030 students).

The answers were all self-reported and the survey was optional. According to the survey responses, 28.8% of students were overweight and 8% were obese. Both indicators have increased since a previous (2009) survey, when 27.1% of students were overweight and 7.5% were obese (Fischer, 2009). In the 2015 survey, 60.4% of students responded that they drank sugar-sweetened beverages one or more times a day, showing an increase from 54.8% in 2009 (Brathwaite, 2015). This survey illustrates the correlation between increased sugar intake and resulting obesity in Guatemala City youth.

In a separate study conducted on six-to-10-year-old children in Guatemala City in 2005, 363 youths were measured for BMI; compared with the WHO and Center for Disease Control (CDC) standards almost 40% of the children in the sample were overweight or obese (Alvarado, Mayorga, Molina, & Solomons, 2009). The sample determined 36.9% to be at risk for weight-related illnesses based on their waist-to-height circumference measurement and BMI. In a separate study on adolescent obesity, 212 youth in Guatemala City were chosen along with 200 youth from six other capitals of Latin American countries. The sample analyzed a variety of socio-economic levels of youth to determine whether obesity was related to their economic and financial means. Referring to the sample from Guatemala City, 13.7% of 13-14-year-olds were obese or overweight (McArthur, Peña, & Holbert, 2001). These studies were some of the first to identify a nutrition transition in Guatemala, a country that had previously been identified as undernourished by the global health community (Alvarado et al., 2009, 189). Rather than the issue of undernourishment, the most prevalent contemporary nutrition problem, especially in urban areas of Guatemala, is dietary patterns that lead to increased BMI; this should be the primary focus for the Guatemalan government to address.

Guatemala City and Food Swamps

In many areas of Guatemala City there exists an abundance of foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt with the majority being energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods and sugar-sweetened beverages. Many food options in Guatemala City are fast-food and small convenience stores called “tiendas” and food stands or stalls called “casetas.” Tiendas offer a variety of food options such as eggs, milk, and bread, in addition to energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. Casetas are food stands or kiosks that provide energy-dense, nutrient-poor options, though some sell fresh fruit. These small stores are prevalent in Latin America and are the cornerstone of neighborhoods and daily life (Pehlke, Letona, Hurley, & Gittelsohn, 2016).

While there are supermarkets in Guatemala City, the availability of fast-food restaurants exceeds the number of grocery stores. In Guatemala City, there are numerous fast-food options available to people, brands such as Pizza Hut, McDonalds, Pollo Campero, Taco Bell, and Domino’s Pizza (Google Maps, 2018). One indicator of a food swamp is cities and

neighborhoods which contain more fast-food options than supermarkets. As previously identified, this accessibility to food known to increase the BMI when combined with inactivity is a concern for the youth population (Cooksey-Stowers, Schwartz, & Brownell, 2017). The number of tiendas and casetas are difficult to estimate due to their informal nature; it is plausible they outnumber the supermarkets in Guatemala City (Mazariegos et al., 2016). Most beverage and processed food suppliers are similar among Guatemala City neighborhoods (Perry et al., 2017). The small convenience stores such as tiendas, vendors of casetas, and supermarkets provide similar processed food and sugar-sweetened beverage options. Even though there are grocery stores and farmers market options that have fresh, non-processed foods, supermarkets and markets also carry nutrient-dense, energy-poor foods and sugar-sweetened beverages like those of the tiendas and casetas. There are plenty of local restaurants and small businesses that sell non-fast-food but the attraction to fast-food establishments is gaining popularity in Guatemala (Cooksey-Stowers et al., 2017).

Patterns can be observed in Guatemala where youth living in Guatemala City are affected by marketing, schools, and key figures in their lives, which affect their food choices. In Mixco, a municipality of Guatemala City, four elementary public schools were studied in relation to the food options available within walking distance of the campus. Convenience stores or tiendas were visited by researchers to identify the type of store, their products, and any child-oriented marketing techniques that were being used. Of 55 stores surveyed, 29% of all advertisements were identified as child-oriented, while atoles (a fortified cereal drink) was 100% child-oriented, cereals were 94.1% child-oriented, ice cream 71.4% child-oriented, and savory snacks 36% child-oriented. The study concluded that child-oriented packaging and advertising increased in proximity to the public schools (Chacon et al., 2015). Based on the number of fast-food restaurants in Guatemala City and abundance of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods around schools, I would conclude that portions of the city meet the criteria of a food swamp (Hager et al., 2016).

Nutritional Transition and Food Swamps in Guatemala City

The causes of obesity in Guatemala City are related to the shift from traditional foods to fast-foods and energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods; this is a micro-level example of the nutrition transition present throughout Guatemala. Through targeted fast-food combo meals and toys, child and youth-oriented marketing, health claims, and vendors outside schools, youth are consuming foods that can lead to increased BMI. One marketing technique directed at families and youth are combo meals, a fast-food option that includes a main dish, side dish or dessert, and a beverage, and is incentivized with cheap prices or a toy. Six fast-food restaurants in Guatemala City that sell combo meals were studied during a two-week period. Researchers

went to the restaurants, assessed youth-directed marketing, and found that combo meals with toys included were significantly less expensive than other meal options at the six restaurant chains. Furthermore, of the 21 combo meals researched, all were classified as unhealthy based on the UK Nutrient Profile model (UKNP) (Mazariegos et al., 2016).

Another form of child and youth-oriented marketing is through cartoons or spokespeople, health claims, and endorsements from health organizations. Convenience stores and supermarkets in Guatemala City were surveyed by purchasing beverages that were identified as child-oriented (Letona et al., 2014). Researchers collected and coded 89 beverages, and found that the most common forms of marketing were images related to health claims (64%) and celebrities or cartoons (51%). Only nine beverages, most of which were milk-based, were classified as healthy using the UKNP for nutritional quality. Every fruit drink and juice was rated as being less healthy than advertised, even if there was a health claim on the packaging. Only one of eight products that received an endorsement from a reputable health organization, such as the Guatemalan Pediatric Association or the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama, was regarded as healthy (Letona et al., 2014). When youth-oriented foods make health claims endorsed by professional organizations it is likely that youth and parents will purchase and potentially overeat these products (Perry, 2017). When a licensed character appears on packaging, youth are more likely to choose that food even if it is a fruit or vegetable (Letona, 2014). Health claims and cartoon characters or spokespeople influence both youth and their families' tastes and preferences for energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods.

In a similar study, researchers conducted three activity-based focus groups with 37 children and young teenagers to gather qualitative data on youth's food preferences. The activities were conducted in a group of four to nine participants for 60 to 90 minutes and included making a list of their favorite snacks, selecting images of favorite products, and drawing new packaging for a snack. The most popular snacks were salty chips and sugar-sweetened beverages, both of which are considered energy-dense, nutrient-poor. Most participants reported that fruit images on packaging meant a product was healthy or that it was "full of vitamins" (Letona et al., 2014). This study supports other findings that indicate a shift in youth's preferences and knowledge towards energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods based on outside packaging and marketing.

In Guatemala City, schools are located in areas where undernutrition and obesity co-exist and which can be considered food swamps. Researchers conducted a qualitative survey which transcribed and coded data from in-depth interviews and focus groups of 58 street vendors, principals, and students. The results showed that the diets of students from two elementary and middle schools relied heavily on energy-dense, nutrient-poor snacks. The vendors at street kiosks or casetas were aware of their role in contributing to unhealthy eating

options for students, and principals acknowledged that access to energy-dense, nutrient-poor snacks were negatively impacting the health of their students (Pehlke et al., 2015). However, while many interviewees agreed that increasing obesity and processed foods were part of the problem, many were more concerned about the undernutrition problem of schoolchildren. This research conclusion recognizes the underlying problem of a nutrition transition from undernutrition and stunting to obesity and increased BMI. While Guatemala does still have areas where undernutrition is the main nutritional problem, the urbanized region of Guatemala City is facing an increasing problem of obesity and high BMI in youth coupled with stunting (Letona et al., 2014).

There is abundant evidence of direct advertising and marketing towards youth in Guatemala City. From health endorsements by seemingly reputable organizations to licensed cartoons and combo meals at fast-food restaurants, youth and their families are being targeted through marketing to buy nutrient-dense, energy-poor foods. Qualitative research reveals that youth are attracted to such foods; teachers and vendors acknowledge that this is a problem students face. Since Guatemala experiences undernutrition, stunting, and obesity it is essential that this problem be addressed by government and education policy.

Current Policies

Guatemala experienced a 36-year Civil War from 1960 to 1996 where a government-backed military movement attempted to decimate Guatemala's population (Menchú R. & Burgos-Debray, 2010). This historical context is important to recognize because social trauma and governmental instability are related to health outcomes; during this period of war, undernutrition was the form of malnutrition most prevalent in Guatemala (Prera, 2012). Currently, Guatemala experiences corruption, lack of enforcement of policy, and graft within its government that can lead to problems enforcing health codes and programs (Menchú S., Murray, & Baum, 2018). While there is currently little movement on the part of Guatemala and Guatemala City's governments to address the nutritional transition of the country towards obesity, there are government-funded projects in rural states of Guatemala for food security and undernutrition (USAID, 2018).

It is mandated by trade liberalization policies that the Guatemalan Health Ministry monitor and regulate packaged food advertisements and labeled health claims for consistency and clarity (Chancon et al., 2015). Still, there is no apparent action on the part of the Guatemalan Health Ministry to control nutritional quality, marketing or advertising (USAID, 2018). Moreover, there are no regulations or laws governing child-oriented marketing techniques or direct advertising of processed foods and drinks (Washington University, 2017). At public schools in Guatemala, there is a school food program that attempts to address the

undernutrition problem in adolescents and children. Since 1959, the Guatemalan Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have been providing a free program called “Refacción” or snack (Pehlke et al., 2015). In 2015, the program provided a snack worth 1.11 Quetzales (\$0.15) at urban schools, which typically included a sugar-sweetened beverage and a fortified cookie or bread (Pehlke et al., 2015). Since this program focused on undernutrition, the nutritional content of the food is fortified so that youth can receive more calories. But because this food is energy-dense and nutrient-poor, the Refacción program may be contributing to obesity, BMI issues, and nutritional transition. Yet other than Refacción there are few policies in Guatemala and Guatemala City that address youth nutrition problems at all.

Policy Recommendations

The Guatemalan Ministry of Health, the government of Guatemala City, and its municipalities need to address the problem of changing dietary and nutritional patterns in youth through policy action and community changes. First, the Refacción program should be updated and changed for urban areas in Guatemala, and should join forces with the Guatemalan Ministries of Health and Education (Pehlke et al., 2015). Guatemala City and other urban centers, such as Quetzaltenango, should receive new food options that address the nutritional problems of the region. The new snack could include a fresh food option such as fruit or vegetables and a non-fortified or unsweetened beverage such as fresh water or fruit juice. The price, packaging, and freshness would need to be standardized for a cost-effective alternative to the current program. However, due to changes in tastes and preferences, there should be research conducted on what healthy foods youth will most likely eat, in order to be most efficient and effective with government resources.

Second, food swamps appear when there is little regulation on restaurants and stores in regions with high urbanization (Hager et al., 2017). Guatemalan health officials should consider directing policy toward this increasing issue, especially urbanization surrounding schools. One possible policy option could include requiring casetas and tiendas within a certain distance of public schools to carry a variety of fresh foods at the same or equal price to energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. Although nutritional education alone most likely would not be sufficient in deterring school children from purchasing products at nearby stores, providing formal nutrition classes or programs at public schools might prove beneficial to students food choices (Chacon et al., 2015).

Third, the Guatemalan Ministry of Health should require fast-food restaurants to provide nutritional and caloric information to customers. One possible method to create healthier options for youth would be to require that combo meals include a minimum number

of fruits and vegetables, and add beverage options that are lower in sugar. In addition, only allowing toys or prizes to be included with healthier meal options in combo meals could be an incentive for positive eating habits in youth (Mazariegos et al., 2016). On a macro level, the Guatemalan Ministry of Health could encourage this shift through offering incentives to large corporations such as tax breaks and exemptions.

Lastly, in terms of marketing directly to young children and adolescents, it is important that policy be created to limit targeted advertising and false health claims. One suggestion would be to advertise images which demonstrate the effects of consuming excessive energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. A sticker label from the Guatemalan Health Ministry recommending that young people eat a certain number of fresh fruits or vegetables daily might be effective. Most researchers who study marketing aimed at youth agree that it is important to use licensed characters and targeted advertising towards healthy food options, rather than energy-dense, nutrient-poor processed foods (Letona, 2014). Shifting away from marketing energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods towards healthier food options might change youths' preferences.

Conclusion

Obesity is an increasing health concern in both developed and developing countries. Guatemala is experiencing a nutrition transition resulting in cases of obesity and increased BMI while less urbanized parts of the country still struggle with undernutrition. Importing agriculture, urbanization and increased access to fast-food exacerbates the issue of increased BMI. This nutritional transition in Guatemala City where food swamps are present illustrate that nutritional decisions are environmentally designated and not simply derived by individual choice.

Youth in Guatemala City continue to experience dietary and nutritional shifts evidenced by the percentage of children and adolescents becoming overweight and obese from consuming foods and beverages that can lead to malnourishment. Some of the possible causes of consuming more energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods and sugar-sweetened drinks include taste changes and preferences, marketing to youth through false health claims and packaging, and inadequate policy. The long-term consequences of this nutrition transition are especially dangerous considering youth that are stunted are more susceptible to become obese or overweight.

Although Guatemala City lacks policy to combat the problems concerning obesity, policies for undernutrition are still prevalent through the Refacción program in public

schools. I recommend that the Health Ministry of Guatemala and Guatemala City act on this problem through several approaches, such as marketing techniques, education programs, and nutritional policy to confront increased BMI and obesity. With urban centers expected to double by 2050 in Central America, nutritional transition will continue to affect youth in Guatemala City, as urbanization and development continue to expand (Hawkes, 2008).

Although obesity is a global health concern, I have highlighted the structural causes that have led to this nutritional change, using Guatemala as a case study. Based on my research, I believe action should take place in Guatemala and Guatemala City to address the nutritional transitions experienced by youth and the larger community. It is important that research continue to be conducted in Guatemala and Guatemala City in order to monitor nutritional transition, especially as policy is enacted. The health outcomes of Guatemalan youth rely on research, policy, and investment by the Guatemalan government, the Guatemala Ministry of Health, development organizations, and multinational corporations all working in unison to protect the health and future generations of Guatemalan citizens.

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Notes

¹Health indicators such as obesity rates are used to measure the overall trends in populations and have been associated with higher rates of disease (WHO, Malnutrition, 2017).

²The term "youth" is broad due to the age range in available research. Youth is defined in this essay as those between the ages of three and 19 years old though the population most analyzed is young adolescents between 12 and 15 years old. While this broad category may be problematic, the limited research available determined the large age range.

³Non-communicable diseases, also known as chronic diseases, are non-infectious and usually a result of genetic, physiological, behavioral, and environmental factors (WHO, Malnutrition, 2017).

⁴Energy-dense means foods that are high in fats or sugars. Nutrient-poor means foods that lack macro or micro nutrients. The combination of foods being energy-dense, nutrient-poor is common in processed foods (WHO, 2017).

⁵Nutritional transition is the change in energy consumption and expenditure that is attributed to modernization, urbanization, and demographic changes (WHO, 2018).

⁶Sugar-sweetened beverages such as juices, sodas, and energy drinks are those that are sweetened with refined sugar and offer few or no health benefits. Sugar-sweetened beverages are considered energy-dense, nutrient-poor (Godin, 2017).

⁷ Child- and youth-oriented packages and marketing include those that feature cartoons, bright colors, and popular characters to advertise their products to youth (Perry, 2017).

⁸ “Health claims” refers to the practice of advertising through image, text, or figures that a macro- or micro-nutrient is included in a food’s nutritional content (Mazariegos, 2016). Health claims are linked to the “halo effect” of consumers trusting brands and limiting their research into the true nutritional quality of foods (Chandon, 2007).

The French Intervention in the Malian Conflict: Neocolonialism Disguised as Counterterrorism

Genevieve Jesse, International Studies

Faculty Mentor: Nova Robinson

Faculty Content Editor: Nova Robinson

Student Editor: Rachel Van Liew

Abstract

The international community's narrative of the Malian conflict (2012-2015) is overly simplistic. The United Nations, France, and the US focused solely on the terrorist aggression facing Mali and other West African states after the fallout of the Arab Spring—to the detriment of the Malian people's needs and long-term stability. This paper presents Malian, West African, and African perspectives in contrast to the Westernized narrative, in order to critically analyze the 2013 French intervention in Mali and the under-studied effects of colonial history in contemporary action in the Sahara-Sahel region. The paper juxtaposes the proclaimed "success" of the French counterterrorism intervention against the historical injustices of colonialism and the continuing effects of neocolonialism on development and inequality within and among states. This paper cautions against allowing states, such as France, to exert unrestrained military power for counterterrorist aims without considering the legality and necessity of such action in the context of each state. In the specific case of Mali, the French intervention prevented the resolution of the Kel Tamasheq rebellion against the Malian government and precluded regional powers from taking on the role of primary intervening authority, which continues to affect the resolution of violence and the integrity of the state.

Introduction

The 2012-2015 Malian conflict encapsulates the shortsightedness with which states and international institutions respond to internal disputes with widespread humanitarian, political, and security implications. Mali and the greater Sahara-Sahel region still face extremist threats and instability resulting from this conflict and connected volatile situations. Evaluating the factors that provoked the initial outbreak of conflict with those factors perpetuating instability throughout the Sahel in 2019 can inform potential solutions to this and similar conflicts. In this particular context, one of the central factors of the conflict is the historical background of the Malian state, which was a French colony from 1892 to 1946. French colonial rule had created a system that formally excluded people living in the northern regions compared to the southern regions that ultimately precipitated the 2012 conflict. Despite the clear connection between French colonial rule and the French intervention, analyses of the conflict and resulting intervention do not accurately portray the primacy of the historical ethno-political division in leading the northern Kel Tamasheq people to rebel against the Malian government in 2012. Western, and specifically European and American, responses to violence in Mali ignored the complexity of the national situation, choosing instead to focus on the terrorist groups that capitalized on the rebellion to infiltrate Mali's northern region and establish operational bases. This essay thus presents the historical and political context of the Malian conflict and analyzes regional and legal debates of France's third-party intervention.

It is necessary here to acknowledge that my own experiences and educational trajectory has been within a primarily Western-oriented context. Where this essay attempts to differentiate between Westernized narratives of sovereignty, violence, and peacebuilding, I, as the author, have been limited to solely researching local African perspectives.

Overall, this essay discusses France's influence in Mali and in West Africa in the twenty-first century with a specific emphasis on Mali's colonial history and France's current interests in West Africa. The primary contribution that this discussion makes is to build a connection between modern norms of counterterrorist operations and neocolonialist actions of exerting political, economic, or military influence over an independent state. This connection can potentially inform future analyses and critiques of third-party military interventions, as well as influence changes to the international security framework. This essay concludes that the French government, when executing the 2013 military intervention in Mali, not only violated Mali's sovereignty on the grounds of counterterrorism, but superseded regional authority over the conflict's resolution in order to expand French military influence in the Sahara-Sahel region.

The 2012 Malian Conflict

The conflict began on January 17th, 2012, when a northern separatist group called the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) rebelled against the government, located in the southern city of Bamako (Thurston, 2013). The government, headed by President Amadou Toumani Touré, quickly lost territorial control and authority to this rebellion, which was comprised primarily of ethnic Kel Tamasheq (sometimes referred to as “Tuareg”) people (Bergamaschi & Diawara, 2014). This ethnic group and its insurgents claimed independence from southern Mali on the basis of historical disunity and institutional inequality between the Sahara (north) and Sahel (south) regions of the state (Heisbourg, 2013).

The map in Figure 1 shows the territory of Azawad that the MNLA wanted to become independent, as well as important cities that played a role in the conflict, such as Gao, Timbuktu, Mopti, and Bamako (Heisbourg, 2013).

Presidential elections were scheduled for April 2012 with the purpose of replacing Touré. Before this could occur, Captain Ahmadou Sanogo of the Malian military, frustrated with the government’s inability to prevent the northern rebellion, successfully led a coup d’état against the Bamako government on March 21, 2012 (Heisbourg, 2013). Soon after the coup, the Algerian government led conflict resolution talks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and installed a transitional government with the head of Mali’s national assembly, Dioncounda Traoré, as temporary president (Stigall, 2015).

In April 2012, the MNLA moved south and conquered the major cities of Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu in its pursuit to gain complete control of the northern half of Mali (Stigall, 2015). The MNLA claimed independence of Azawad on April 6, 2012 (*A Touareg State at our Borders*, 2012). In the following weeks, Islamic extremist groups, including Ansar al-Dine, the Movement for Uniqueness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), took primary control of the north from the MNLA while both integrating and fighting amongst each other (Marchal, 2013). The Algerian government continued to facilitate peace in Mali, together with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) led by the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré (*“Member States,”* 2012). In July 2012, ECOWAS asked the United Nations to permit a regional intervention in Mali and secure peace, but the UN’s forces were prevented from intervening until September 2013 when the situation had drastically deteriorated (*“Member States,”* 2012). Further clashes occurring closer to Bamako in January 2013 provoked an international response to release the capital’s one million inhabitants from Islamic extremists control (Chivvis, 2016). As a result, France led a rapid-response military intervention on January 11, 2013 (Bannelier & Cristakis, 2013). This intervention consisted of approximately 4,500 French troops under the name Operation Serval (Bannelier, 2013; Charbonneau & Sears, 2014). The operation’s military aims were “to secure

Bamako, stop the terrorist offensive, strike the enemy's rear bases and prepare for the arrival of African forces" (Heisbourg, 2013, p. 11). ECOWAS forces arrived eight days after the French intervention and helped liberate the northern towns that were under extremist control on January 20, 2013 (Heisbourg, 2013).

Under ECOWAS, Algerian, and Mauritanian leadership, the preparations for democratic elections began immediately after control was established in the north. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta was elected the new President of Mali in August 2013, and the country began implementing conflict resolution actions with invested regional governments and non-terrorist internal actors (Bøås, 2013). The French maintained a military presence after the new government was in place; then they transitioned into a regional counterterrorism operation on July 13, 2014 called Operation Barkhane (Bannelier & Cristakis, 2013). Amidst this transition, a reconciliation process occurred between the Bamako government and the northern groups that remained separate from the violent extremist groups. On May 15, 2015, the Coordination of Azawad Movements, the Platform of Armed Groups, and the Malian government signed a peace accord, officially ending the internal conflict and providing guidelines for democratic elections of local representatives throughout the entire state (Nyirabikali, 2015).

Overview of Existing Literature and Importance of this Paper

The bulk of the literature regarding foreign involvement in Mali takes a Western perspective of the Malian conflict and the French intervention. This "Westernized" approach takes for granted theories about state formation, sovereignty, and institutional capacity from the Westphalian tradition, wherein states have a monopoly on the use of force. Due to a lack of contextual understanding, no Western-oriented scholar comprehensively presents the Malian conflict along its various axes: national-international, international-regional, ethnic-political, local insurgents-Islamic extremists, northern Mali-southern Mali, colonialism-neocolonialism, and terrorism-counterterrorism. Therefore, an analysis of the decolonization process from a non-Western, African-centered perspective enables greater understanding of the disconnect between the international community's and West African interpretations of internal conflict dynamics and the 2013 French intervention.

The Western-oriented literature mentions the conflict's complexity, but does not distinguish between the conflict's internal aspects and the regional forces driving the terrorist groups into Mali. Some Malian scholars question the French military's intentions as a neocolonialist intervention with inevitable, long-term repercussions, as a result of

this oversight. Neocolonialism, defined for the purposes of this essay as political coercion and indefinite military occupation of a sovereign state, informs African scholars' views of French involvement in the Sahara-Sahel. Africa's intellectual tradition incorporates historical experiences of colonization and contemporary understanding of neocolonial economic, political, and social policies that protect international actors' interests. Neocolonial policies can be implemented in areas that were never formally colonized, but neocolonialism is still foundationally connected to the process of decolonization. Decolonization includes recognizing oppressive policies and seeking to establish independently-controlled political, economic and social systems. This essay presents the regional analysis of the French intervention in contradiction to the Western-dominated narrative of the positive merits of third-party interventions against terrorist threats. In the interest of validating the African governmental sovereignty and authority, this essay demonstrates the negative implications of prioritizing counterterrorism norms over resolving internal conflicts within the international security structure.

Historical and Political Context

French Colonial Rule and Decolonization

In 1892, France took control of the territory that includes present-day Mali and parts of Mauritania, Senegal, Niger, and Burkina Faso, and administered the region as French Soudan (Ghosh, 2013). The colonial government administered French Soudan from the more environmentally-hospitable Sahel area, while the northern Sahara area remained semi-undefined, collectively administered with three other European powers, and ruled by local groups (Sèbe, 2013). The nomadic Kel Tamasheq revolted against all French efforts to consolidate Kel Tamasheq, Songhai, Fulani, and Bambara people into a confined territory (Lecocq, 2014). In exchange for political support, the French allowed the northern Kel Tamasheq to enslave Black and Arab southern groups that they considered racially and ethnically inferior (Harmon, 2014). The Kel Tamasheq still rebelled against the colonial state in 1916 and 1962, securing the ire and distrust of the French government (Harmon, 2014). The independence movement between 1946 and 1968 resulted in the French Soudan's northern groups coming under the control of the post-colonial democratic Malian government (Harmon, 2014; Sèbe, 2013). Modibo Keita, the first president of Mali, thus blamed the 1963 Kel Tamasheq rebellion on the French because the French had politically supported the Kel Tamasheq's feelings of superiority and potential for autonomy during the colonial period (Harmon, 2014). French sympathies toward the northern nomadic populations, along with

“uncontrolled socio-economic and cultural disruptions, stemming from inadequate political systems,” remained a legacy of the colonial period (Harmon, 2014, p. 214). Many Malians refer to this legacy when explaining the continued tensions between northern and southern groups in the present (Sèbe, 2013).

During the Algerian independence movement towards the end of the colonial period, France’s indiscriminate violence and torture campaigns led sympathetic African leaders, including those in Mali, to unite against French attempts to maintain colonial-era hierarchies and underdevelopment, thereby creating the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Maiangwa, 2013). After gaining independence, Mali, Algeria, and other Francophone countries used both violence and regional economic collaboration to expel French influence and power from North and West Africa. Despite calls for democracy and economic liberalism in the immediate post-colonial period, Bruno Charbonneau claims that the participation of African soldiers in the French colonial military had distorted the line between “colonizer” and “colonized,” ultimately making violence acceptable in colonial spaces (2013). This violence—contextually defined as both an act that destroys and “a pedagogical tool that works to control narratives of space and identity and as a politically enabling device that affects agency”—favored continued French military presence in North and West Africa (Charbonneau, 2013, p. 111 & 85). African leaders had few resources to consolidate and secure their newly defined territories against internal and external threats to sovereign unity other than collaborating with the French military, thereby affirming the permanent influence of the French military in independently sovereign states (Charbonneau, 2013). The Republic of Mali’s admission to the United Nations on September 22, 1960 and inclusion into Western narratives of state sovereignty ultimately reinforced France’s military bases—or “collaboration”—among fellow UN member states in Africa (Joly, 2013).

A similar situation occurred in Chad in the 1980s. Upon the Libyan occupation of Chad, France launched Operation Épervier (“Sparrow Hawk”) and brought 1,200 troops to N’Djamena, the capital of Chad (Stapleton, 2013). Even after the Organization of African Unity helped establish a ceasefire, the French stayed in Chad and prevented a transfer of power from Hissène Habré to Idriss Déby (Stapleton, 2013). They ultimately allowed Déby to take power, but many internal and external actors accused the French government of dismissing the needs of Chadians so that an authoritarian leader could maintain power for France’s benefit (Maclean, 2018). By supporting this leader, French troops were able to remain in Chad and maintain a military base at N’Djamena.

Postcolonialism in the Twenty-first Century: Security Policy and Counterterrorism

Tony Chafer describes French postcolonial policy: “French governments under the Fifth

Republic adopted a multi-layered approach to maintaining the special relationship with Africa, combining an array of ‘official’ policy instruments with a complex range of unofficial, family-like, and often covert ties” (2018, para. 48). France’s system of official and unofficial postcolonial relations with former colonies facilitated the expansion of foreign military operations in the global counterterrorism movement of the early 2000s, starting with intelligence operations against Mokhtar Belmokhtar and other individuals connected to Al-Qaeda in 2002 (Hammer, 2018). In the contemporary context, France justifies its pre-positioned troops and military capacity to intervene under the United Nations’ notions of necessarily providing support to states deemed incapable of maintaining sovereignty and control. Critics and scholars conceive of French military involvement as part of the broader contemporary era, in which international institutions such as the United Nations can revoke states’ sovereignty when deemed necessary. One scholar asserts that after 9/11 and the United States’ push for a global “war on terror,” a redefinition of sovereignty emerged, whereby states have to adhere to certain counterterrorism obligations in order to remain sovereign states (Ramos, 2013). The argument for sovereignty as the definitive aspect of a state’s freedom to act within its own boundaries is an inherently Western construction of state capacity and violence.

Debates in International Law on Military Interventions

Challenging Western notions of sovereignty in a non-Western context underlies debates on France’s motivations and legal grounding for intervening in the Malian conflict. It is important to note that even when accepting the validity of international intervention to combat global terrorist threats, international law does not support the French intervention. The two international legal principles that are typically cited in justification of the French intervention in Mali are first, the Malian government formally inviting France to intervene, and second, the UN Security Council passing a resolution allowing multilateral forces to intervene in the conflict (Bannelier, 2013). Karine Bannelier and Theodore Christakis (2013) take these legal principles in tandem to support the legal intervention of France in the Mali conflict, also claiming that either of these two principles provide sufficient justification when applied individually. In contrast, Dan Stigall (2015) suggests that the French government relied on contestable principles of international law that governed third party military intervention. Stigall’s argument stems from different interpretations of “intervention by invitation” and the United Nations Security Council’s “implied authorization,” which he says are “less defined” in international law, especially in the use of military force (2015, p. 223).

First, the Malian government’s invitation cannot stand as sufficient grounds for the French intervention. International law explicitly states that external intervention by invitation

is unlawful when “the objective of this intervention is to settle an exclusively internal political strife in favour of the established government which launched the invitation” (Bannelier, 2013, p. 870). Before the French intervened, their support of the Malian government in Bamako was explicit within UN Security Council Resolutions 2012 and 2085, which laid out support for “the Armed and Security Forces of Mali” under the “authority of the State of Mali” (Stigall, 2015, p. 51). Debates on the French intervention generally conclude that the democratic elections that France encouraged in 2013 were not fully legitimate, because rebelling groups and displaced persons were excluded from voting (Blyth et al., 2013). It is also important to note that ECOWAS leaders agreed to prevent the Interim President Dioncounda Traoré, the Prime Minister, and other members of the transitional government from contesting the 2013 presidential election; this undermined Dioncounda Traoré’s legitimacy as president. The Malian government’s questionable legitimacy in 2012 and 2013, due to the coup d’état and the lack of free, fair, and transparent democratic elections supports the conclusion that the invitation to intervene was meant to import legitimacy to the state government over all internal actors—extremist or rebellious. Thus, while international law may allow third parties to intervene in internal conflicts at the request of the legitimate government, the limit to Traore’s presidency imposed by ECOWAS and other West African leaders negates the French government’s justification for deploying troops to Mali in January 2013.

The French Intervention as Neocolonialist

Soon after French troops were deployed to Mali in January 2013, then-president François Hollande (2013) noted in a television broadcast that the French military intervened in Mali in order to support the Malian army against the terrorist aggression that was threatening “all of West Africa.” Hollande references the movements of AQIM, MUJAO, and Ansar al-Dine throughout the Sahara-Sahel, but makes no mention of the non-extremist insurgent groups such as the MNLA. Thus, he ignores Mali’s internal rebellion and assumes that all extremist groups had universal objectives within Mali and the broader region. His statement more closely represents France’s colonial experience in attempting to quell any group opposing state authority than an accurate understanding of group dynamics within Mali in 2012. The French government and international communities held incorrect beliefs, primarily that since 2012 all armed groups existing in Mali are Islamic extremist groups with broad strategic interests in the region and the world. Furthermore, French security policy in Mali mirrors prior French military engagement in Algeria and in Chad. In both instances, references to African “tribes” or religious affiliations of participating groups “convey already formed explanations to understanding the conflict thus an implicit programme of action that a priori authorizes

violence”(Charbonneau, 2014, p. 118). The focus on combatting ideological extremism was easily extrapolated to target all armed groups within Mali.

The Kel Tamasheq and the MNLA were conceived as part of the “terrorist threat” in Mali due to the persistent French colonial stereotype that the Kel Tamasheq are “a war prone, nomad, and anarchist population” (Lecocq, 2014, p. 90). Though research on the Malian conflict specifies that the rebel groups do not all represent radical Islam or violent extremist groups, or the objectives of violent extremist groups seeking to impose Sharia law, this belief remained part of the French narrative (Marc, Verjee, & Mogaka, 2015). Religious extremism in West Africa had been rising throughout prior decades, and it did not specifically or intentionally cause the Mali conflict (Harmon, 2014). In fact, the extremists’ strict interpretation of Islam is at odds with local tradition in the Sahara-Sahel, and there was no documented proof that the armed groups in Mali were homogeneous just because they were “homegrown” (Sèbe, 2013; Marc, 2015). When the French intervened in 2013, the armed groups were still undergoing internal changes, including splintering into different factions and joining with other local groups, and the internal conflict was unresolved (Stigall, 2015).

The international community condoned the French intervention on behalf of the Malian government through the counterterrorist narrative, which unjustifiably homogenized the armed groups actively engaged in Mali. Joshua Hammer (2018) notes that some Malians attacked the overall French intervention as neocolonialist, “and lashed out at former president Nicolas Sarkozy for his central role in the NATO attacks that had unseated Qaddafi [in Libya] and destabilized the region” (p. 197). Malian author Aminata Dramane Traoré (2013) wrote of the French insistence on military intervention: “Paris has just sent to the Security Council a resolution in support, he claims, at the request of the interim president, Dioncounda Traoré, for a military intervention in the North [...] the planned deployment will be African only in name, since it was designed to serve the interests of France in the Sahel” (p. 92-93). This and other Malian perspectives of the conflict recognize France’s historical and current imposition into Mali’s national affairs, as well as Western powers’ culpability in sparking the “terrorist aggression facing all of West Africa”. These perspectives were overlooked at the moment of intervention.

After intervening, the French transitioned Operation Serval into the broad counterterrorism effort Operation Barkhane, thereby reinforcing Malians’ criticism regarding France’s neocolonial, long-term interests. Heisbourg believes that when the French were calculating the cost-benefit of intervening, Mali was most likely seen as a “convenient location for positioning forces in the relatively low-cost ‘light footprint’ mode which has served France so well” in protecting its economic, financial, and political interests and investments in West and North Africa (2013, p. 10). Traoré wrote again to her friend Boubacar Boris Diop two days after French troops landed in Mali, stating: “They have simply stolen our country from us,

Boris. I am Malian and I say forcefully and loudly that they have stolen Mali, under the pretext of protecting it from jihadists” (2013, p. 127). Like Traoré, many Malians were aware of the need for security during the 2012 conflict and the subsequent power struggle over northern Mali, but they neither wanted nor accepted prolonged French occupation (Traoré and Diop, 2013).

Regional Responses to the 2012 Conflict

Powerful actors in North and West Africa, the African Union, ECOWAS, and regional hegemony like Algeria and Nigeria had active interests in Mali. ECOWAS (along with support from non-ECOWAS members Algeria, Chad, and Mauritania) was prepared to deploy approximately 3,300 troops to support a multilateral United Nations stabilization and peacekeeping force in October 2012 (Fomunyoh, 2013). Though Algeria, Mauritania, Chad, Libya, Morocco, and the fifteen ECOWAS members had collaborated on a resolution outlining such objectives at an October 2012 conference, the UN Security Council claimed that information about a regional military force’s objectives and means was lacking. Consequently, the UNSC refused to authorize an ECOWAS or African Union-led peacekeeping or operational force (United Nations Official Document: Resolution 2056, 2012). UN Resolution 2085 came close to authorizing force in Mali in December 2012, calling on all member states to “provide coordinated assistance” to Malian forces in the fight to maintain the territorial integrity of the state and to hamper the threats posed by terrorist organizations (Stigall, 2015). Though, this resolution only uses the phrase “all necessary means” in reference to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) as a potential military force (Stigall, 2015). This phrase is typically accepted as the legal and principled justification for third-party military interventions, but the French military never received such clearance.

Algeria and Tunisia openly rejected the 2013 French deployment because both governments feared protracted French involvement in the region, and they also had concerns that a French-led intervention would inspire retaliation against Western powers or Western-affiliated North African governments (Ammour, 2013). France’s push for hasty elections in 2013, as discussed earlier, also demonstrates its political neocolonialist agenda; the French government benefited from a Malian state with the semblance of a democratic government that agreed to ongoing French military presence. Senegalese author Boubacar Boris Diop summed up the French intervention, writing in June 2013, “of all the European powers, France is the only one to have never been able to resign itself to decolonize and Operation Serval will evidently comfort it in its reactionary stubbornness” (p. 132).

Aftermath and Ramifications

Hollande and the French government mitigated international concerns outside of Africa over any neocolonialist intentions by establishing counterterrorism as the primary motivation for intervening in Mali. Operation Barkhane was viewed as a reorganization of France's prepositioned troops in Africa, and it addressed the expanded territory in which terrorist groups operated (Hicks, 2017). Although 1,000 French troops were planning to remain in Mali under Operation Barkhane, Hollande only met with the governments of Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, and Chad to discuss plans for Operation Barkhane's expansion (Fini Serval, Voici Barkhane, 2016). The French government continued to dictate plans to the Malian government without taking into account the Malian citizens' open belief that "the question of the North is, obviously, the most urgent to resolve. Detonator of the crisis, it remains the main threat to its settlement" (Le Mali Après Serval : éviter La Rechute, 2014). By ignoring the internal conflict, the French intervention gave power to the Malian government and shut down dialogue with armed groups in the north and real peace talks with all representatives of northern Mali (Le Mali Après Serval : éviter La Rechute, 2014). The argument for counterterrorism consumed the French and Malian governments and prevented any legitimate contest of state authority.

Policy Recommendations

The French and Malian governments' simplified analysis of the terrorist groups' threats to Mali's boundaries excluded numerous voices from the national decision-making structure. The current Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta must increase the representation of all political, ethnic, economic, religious, and social groups within the government—as long as the state maintains control over security solutions. The question of northern Mali and its major ethnic groups' claims to autonomy, including the Kel Tamasheq, the Songhai, Arabs, and the Fulani, necessitates a reconsideration of Mali's national identity to accommodate the rights of all ethnic, religious, political, and social groups.

As Mali reconfigures its internal affairs in relation to various groups, international, regional, and national actors must revisit the details of the 2012 conflict, the northern rebellion, and Mali's capabilities in addressing remaining terrorist groups. Jonathan Sears recommends that any assistance given to Mali, including political, economic, developmental, or military, also "appreciates Mali's dynamic and sometimes contentious indigenous social regulation mechanisms" (Sears, 2013, p. 444). The French government must also acknowledge its turbulent history in West Africa and the illegality of the Malian intervention, in order to transition from military assistance to other forms of aid, because its military does not have the full consent of each represented group in Mali to remain. Following the rationale for removing

the French military from Mali, any future French monetary or political assistance to the state “should not assume that the authority of the Malian nation-state is uncontested, particularly in light of Mali’s regional, urban, rural, and identity-based cleavages” (Sears, 2013, p. 445). France can still assert its national interests by combatting terrorism in the Sahara-Sahel through recognized “soft” counterterrorism methods, such as programs that attempt to de-radicalize individuals and promote economic stability (Khalfan, 2016). France’s colonial history must always factor into contemporary action in North and West Africa.

The Malian case demonstrates the need for more effective collaboration among regional authorities when crises occur. In order to build on the recommendation for increased representation, North and West African authorities and the African Union should expand their current institutions to include representatives who can attest to various groups’ needs and claims. Nevertheless, in order for these institutions to act efficiently and effectively, the international community and the United Nations must accord these bodies with legal mandates to use “all means necessary” when agreed upon by the states in question, the African Union, and the representative bodies. Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger already have political mechanisms with regular consultations at the ministerial level, intelligence mechanisms, and military mechanisms (Okereke, 2016). These countries are also in the process of implementing a regional security strategy, developed at the 2011 high-level conference on Security, Development and Partnership, but they will need external support and recognition to act without oversight or intrusion from international actors (Okereke, 2016). Thus, the efforts made to address regional security and development concerns should be prioritized and supported by external partners. Regional bodies at the national and local level will be most effective at adequately representing the needs of West African peoples and states, and the international community must forgo any further stereotyping of these nations as underdeveloped or without recourse to address regional, national, and local issues just to justify military, political, and economic intervention.

Conclusion

As this essay has demonstrated, the Malian conflict includes more complex dynamics than terrorist threats and general instability. The French government’s continued simplification of the security concerns in West Africa has ramifications for counterterrorism operations and third-party military interventions in sovereign states. In taking control of the stabilization process in Mali, the French government hinders national and regional West African abilities to institute long-term order throughout the Sahara-Sahel. With continued French presence in West Africa, the greatest threat facing West African states is local, national,

and regional backlash to French neocolonialism and militarization of the region. The policy recommendations above are beginning steps for Mali, France, and African authorities to replace the pattern of neocolonialism with accountability, equal representation, and resilience.

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Notes

“La France, a la demande du president du Mali et dans le respect de la charte des Nations Unies, s’est engagée hier pour appuyer l’armée malienne face à l’aggression terroriste qui menace toute l’Afrique de l’Ouest”. [France, at the request of the president of Mali and in respect of the United Nations Charter engaged in war yesterday to support the Malian Army against the terrorist aggression that menaces all of West Africa].

“Stop Trying to Make Fetch Happen”: The Disempowerment of Women’s Voices in the Film *Mean Girls*

Anna Kaplan, Communication & Media

Faculty Mentor: Julie Holmchick Crowe, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Julie Holmchick Crowe, PhD

Student Editor: Falen Wilkes

Abstract

Since its release in 2004, *Mean Girls*, which depicts high school life in the early 2000s, still reigns as the premier cult classic film of the era. Through critical rhetorical analysis of the film, this research explores the different types of “Mean Girls” presented in the film and how they each use specific voices to obtain their goals. Looking closely at three archetypes: the “Queen Bee,” the “Rebellious Goth,” and the “New Girl,” the results found that all three women used particular voices and personas to increase their social standing or to exact revenge — thus disempowering other women. This portrayal of teenage girls presents a problematic form of feminism that consists of cacophonous fighting and competition against each other in a way that goes against the overall interests of women.

Introduction

“What day is it?” Aaron Samuels asks Cady Heron in their junior-year calculus class. Cady responds, “It’s October 3rd” (Waters, 2004). Every year on this unofficial *Mean Girls* Day, internet posts appear depicting this exchange, and this anniversary indicates the film’s ongoing cultural relevance. Although *Mean Girls* was released in 2004, the film has been celebrated continually for a decade and a half, underscoring its status as a cult classic. Cult cinema is defined as:

a kind of cinema identified by remarkably unusual audience receptions that stress the phenomenal component of the viewing experience, that upset traditional viewing strategies, that are situated at the margin of the mainstream, and that display reception tactics that have become a synonym for an attitude of minority resistance and niche celebration within mass culture. (Mathjis & Sexton, 2012, p. 8)

Mean Girls was written by Tina Fey, an actress, comedian, and writer known for her contributions to *Saturday Night Live* in the early 2000s, as well as starring in, writing, and directing many other films and television shows. Fey conceptualized *Mean Girls* as a film that satirizes and dramatizes the complex social dynamics of teenage girls in high school. Fey notes that the film’s relevance has increased as the years have gone by. In an interview, Fey cites the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements as examples that bolster the film’s relevance in key societal issues, years after the film came out.

[The film] has metastasized. Calling someone a loser doesn’t make you a winner [...] It’s so incredibly obvious, but still, apparently, we need to be reminded. We all do it, on both sides. Once you’re laying the mud, you’re all the mud. People have connected *Mean Girls* and politics. (Setoodeh, 2018)

Inspired by this interview, I set about unpacking what types of characters were presented to my generation, and further, how these portrayals could have influenced young girls’ perceptions of high school, other women, and feminism itself.

For this study I asked the following research question: what archetypes of Mean Girls are presented in the film *Mean Girls*, and how do they embody different versions of feminism? Per my findings, I argue that three characters in *Mean Girls* used language to inhabit three

specific archetypes: the “Queen Bee,” the “Vengeful Goth,” and the “New Girl.” While such characters may seem to symbolize empowerment of young women, as their archetypes subvert certain patterns in the representation of women in film, the cacophonous fighting of these three characters presents a problematic collection of anti-feminist voices that are not celebrated in the same way as their male counterpart in film, the Rebel Male.

Literature Review

Before detailing the results of my study, I want to show how my findings will add to past and current literature surrounding the topic of the representation of archetypical Mean Girls in film. From my research, I identified three major themes in existing critical film, communication, and feminist scholarship: feminist film, male villains versus female villains, and contemporary Mean Girls in film.

What is Feminist Film?

Scholars have been critiquing film through a feminist lens for decades. Feminist critique first began to influence film critique in the 1970s with the writings of Simone de Beauvoir and has continued to evolve. Feminist film critique in its own right emerged during the rise of second-wave feminism in the 1980s (McCabe, 2004). Janet McCabe writes that “stereotypical images of women [in the 1980s] afford female audiences little chance for authentic recognition. Instead they produce a false consciousness for women, offering them nothing but an escape from fantasy through identification with stereotypical images” (McCabe, 2004, p. 8). This continued throughout the 1990s as feminist scholars began to rethink the limits of existing theories in order to develop more sophisticated critiques of female subjectivity, inferiority, and difference in film (Hollinger, 2012). In the twenty-first century, more labels and tests have been created to determine what makes a film a feminist film, such as the Bechdel test, in which two named female characters with names must talk about something other than men to “pass” the test (Sutherland, 2017, p. 619). More recently, scholars have defined a feminist counter-cinema, where “a representation of ‘woman as woman,’ or a woman’s voice or ‘look,’ no longer serve as primary impetuses” (Radner, 2011, p. 3). Although feminist cinema plays a significant role in film today, it has only been defined as a discrete category for approximately the past 50 years. It is necessary to go further back in film history to compare representations of women and men.

Male Villains Versus Female Villains

There have been many iterations of “bad boys” in film. Many scholars have analyzed James Dean’s role as Jim Stark in the 1955 film *Rebel Without a Cause*. This role established the “Rebel Male” archetype, which is considered “a new representation of masculinity that reconfigured film style as a whole” (Scheibel, 2016, p. 130). Stark’s promiscuity, appearance, and continual need to fit into the prescribed roles of normative masculinity propelled the Rebel Male into one of the most researched character types (Scheibel, 2016). Dean’s character transcended film and influenced broader cultural iterations of the Rebel Male archetype, including the “greaser” (for instance C. Thomas Howell’s role of Ponyboy Curtis in the 1983 film *The Outsiders*) and the “rock n’ roller,” such as Iggy Pop and David Bowie. Rossella Valdrè argues that the male antagonist of the 2011 film *We Need to Talk About Kevin* was either “born bad” or was “shaped bad” (2014, p. 151). This is a classic nature-versus-nurture argument.

However, very few scholars have afforded similar arguments for female villains. While rebellious male characters and personas have been celebrated for decades in American society, there has been much less research on female “anti-hero” characters in film. Cartoon female villains were some of the first iterations of “bad girls,” perhaps beginning when Disney featured some of its first female villains, such as *Sleeping Beauty*’s Maleficent (1955). Over time, female cartoon villains evolved into supervillains and superheroines, rather than beasts and witches (Wright, 2012). Interestingly, a study conducted with Midwestern female college undergraduates in 2015 found that women who viewed female supervillains and superheroines in film had lower self-esteem and decreased egalitarian gender role beliefs after watching selected clips (Pennell & Behm-Morawitz, 2015).

In the late 1950s and 1960s, these villainous female characters began to more commonly manifest as the “Mean Girls” we are familiar with in film today. In the film *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006), the antagonist, Miranda Priestly, is an older Mean Girl played by Meryl Streep, who eventually apologizes for her actions. Although protagonist Andy accepts Miranda’s apology, Miranda is never truly forgiven, and is resented for the rest of the film, which Waters argues presents an ageist, unequal representation of female power compared to the film’s younger women (Waters, 2011). Jean Sutherland also writes that although Streep’s character is presented as successful in the film, she “pays the price in loneliness and isolation” due to the older woman’s inability to radiate traditionally feminine characteristics (2017, p. 619). While characters that women portrayed in the twentieth century often fell short of feminism, but there has been significant progress in the twenty-first century so far. However, there have been very few female figures that can compete with the Rebel Male in terms of societal celebration.

Contemporary Mean Girls in Film

Lastly, literature regarding contemporary Mean Girl characters in the 2000s is relevant to this discussion. Female characters in the first decade of the twenty-first century may offer successful and dynamic representations of women but are often still presented as one-dimensional. Scholars say that early 2000s “chick flicks” present a form of “girly feminism” that promote a form of feminism directly tied to consumerism, making them “free to shop (and cook),” but not truly free (Ferris & Young, 2007). However, other films from the period, such as *The Hunger Games*, “refigure the dominant male gaze [...] by focusing on the power and agency of the female protagonist, legitimizing a female perspective, and encourage a questioning of patriarchal power” (Keller & Gibson, 2014, p. 28). Amanda Stone argues that Penny, the female lead in the television comedy *The Big Bang Theory* often challenges the stereotype of the “dumb blonde” (Stone, 2014). Through her physical strength and social abilities, she far surpasses her male counterparts, leading to a representation of a woman who, although inept at the sciences, still breaks gender norms and is successful (Stone, 2014). Yet although these scholars show that women can have varying skills and contributions to society, American cinema still neglects to show an unapologetic woman who acts for herself, not for the attention of men, recognition of others, or elevation of her qualities above other women.

Regarding *Mean Girls* specifically, the few articles written about the film primarily focus on alternative aggressive behavior and its effects on teenagers, or on the gender portrayals in the film (Behm-Morawitz & Maestro, 2008, Meyer, 2008). My research will be based on how the characters in *Mean Girls* use distinct voices and archetypes within their high school to deceive others into supporting them or to increase their social standing. I argue further that *Mean Girls* does something rare in American film history: it offers to young women a female rebel as a dynamic, complicated counterpart to America’s beloved Rebel Male. Nevertheless, the female rebel takes the form of Mean Girl. While Mean Girl characters appear to act in a feminist manner through their ability to wield power freely, they often do so with the intention of either impressing men or tearing other women down. Fey thus presents these young women as anti-feminist and demonstrates discordant in-group fighting that the film looks at with disgust, rather than admiration. Therefore, while the Rebel Male is revered, the Rebel Female is denigrated.

Theory

I propose to apply Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony to this film. Investigating culturally dynamic aspects of language, Bakhtin argues that all written and spoken communication is generated through processes of appropriation. One such appropriation is polyphony, or how people embody distinctive and multiple voices or inhabit different roles

in both art and life. People appropriate and use different voices, associated with the roles they play in life, as the situation and cultural community warrants (Jasinski, 1997). Equally relevant is Bakhtin's closely related theory of heteroglossia. While polyphony refers to voice appropriation, heteroglossia refers to language appropriation, and describes how specific individuals appropriate language to make it their own (Bahktin, 1993). Polyphony and heteroglossia combine when the speaker creates a specific persona through vocal and gestural appropriation. For instance, a doctor will "play the role" of doctor in front of patients, or an attorney in front of clients, exercising polyphony. They use heteroglossia by using medical or legal terms while speaking to patients and clients—and thus speak far differently from how they do at home. (Jasinski, 1997). Jasinski notes that "advocates will, on occasion, speak or write in an explicitly fictitious or contrived voice" (1997, p. 438). In applying these theories to *Mean Girls*, it becomes apparent that the "Plastics"—the elite clique at Cady's high school—use voice and language appropriation to develop their own sub-language, which I will refer to as "Plastic-speak." This exclusive sub-language, different from normal student-to-student conversation and typified by critique and insult, is used to maintain the dominant position of the Plastics within the school's power structure.

The theories of polyphony and heteroglossia have been primarily applied to literature, television, and film. In this study I use polyphony and heteroglossia to show how three main characters, Regina George, Janis Ian, and Cady Heron, use voice and language appropriation to inhabit different Mean Girl roles, and how this appropriation ultimately functions to create a cacophony of anti-feminist rebelliousness. For the purpose of this research, I will be defining feminism through Kimberlé Crenshaw's definition of intersectionality, which calls for equality for woman of every race, ethnicity, sexuality and gender orientation (2018, p. 75).

Analysis

Mean Girls is set at North Shore, a high school in suburban Chicago, Illinois. The film follows protagonist Cady Heron, who has recently moved from Africa, as she transitions into suburban American life and high school. On her first day she meets Janis Ian, a stereotypically "goth girl" who takes Cady under her wing and tells her the ins and outs of North Shore. On her second day she meets the Plastics, a popular clique commanded by Regina George. Over the course of the film Janis persuades Cady to pretend to be Regina's friend to gain access to her inner circle and "ruin her life" (Waters, 2004). However, as the film progresses, the lines of who is and is not a Mean Girl begin to blur as the role is used in various ways, though mostly for social advancement.

The three main roles I identified are the Queen Bee, the Vengeful Goth, and the New Girl. The Queen Bee is a stereotypical Mean Girl; she is the most popular girl in the school's most exclusive clique and sets all the trends. There can only be one Queen Bee, and she wields her social power to remain at the top. The Queen Bee's opposite is the Vengeful Goth, a social outcast with few friends. This Vengeful Goth is the most closely aligned with the Rebel Male, because of their radical viewpoints and actions. Her keen awareness of the social dynamics in the school, from an outsider's perspective, gives her an edge in planning a revenge scheme to take down the Queen Bee. Lastly, there is the New Girl. The New Girl just moved from being homeschooled in Africa to North Shore, and therefore is unfamiliar with the ins and outs of high school social dynamics. She is therefore easy to manipulate because of her lack of awareness of key social cues. At first, she is not a Mean Girl, but as other girls use her for their benefit, she begins to act in ways similar to the Queen Bee.

Regina George: The Queen Bee

Regina George has claimed the title of Queen Bee, leader of the three-person "teen royalty" clique (Waters, 2004). Regina, slim, with blonde hair and blue eyes, is conventionally pretty by Western beauty standards; through this appearance and the authority it confers, she dominates the school. Through years of inhabiting the Queen Bee role, Regina has obtained total social superiority. In a rolling montage of North Shore students speaking about Regina, they list off numerous rumors, describing her as anything from "a slut-faced hoe bag" to "where evil takes a human form" (Waters, 2004). One girl recounts, "one time Regina George punched me in the face. It was awesome," a comment that reinforces Regina's status as the Queen Bee (Waters, 2004). Thus, Regina's reign is oppressive to nearly every other woman in the school, something that Fey's satirization of high school dynamics highlights quite effectively.

Regina's disempowerment of other women is clear in the scene where Cady first walks by the Plastics' lunch table. Regina stops her and tells her to sit down, saying:

REGINA: Why don't I know you?

CADY: I'm new. I just moved here from Africa.

REGINA: What?

CADY: I used to be homeschooled.

REGINA: Wait, what?

CADY: My mom, she taught me—

REGINA: No, no I know what homeschooled is, I'm not

retarded. So you've never actually been to a real school before?

Cady shakes her head.

REGINA: Shut up... Shut up!

CADY: I didn't say anything. (Waters, 2004)

While Regina doesn't truly mean for Cady to shut up, but rather uses the phrase as an exclamation of disbelief, the voice she establishes with Cady is dismissive and threatening. This is a crucial aspect of *Plastic-speak*: Regina establishes her power and dominance in this social scenario with a girl who is a threat because she is an unknown factor and could possibly become popular enough to claim the role of Queen Bee. This scene also highlights Cady's initial innocence; Cady just moved to the United States, and therefore doesn't understand the social connotation of "shut up!" as an expression of astonishment rather than command. Regina arguably knows that Cady would misinterpret this phrase and is using it to confuse and distress her. Furthermore, under the guise of compliments, Regina wins the unassuming Cady over as a possible friend. But Regina uses the role of Queen Bee to absorb and neutralize Cady; since Cady herself is a conventionally pretty girl, she may be either a useful ally, or social competition.

Later in the film, Cady develops a crush on senior Aaron Samuels. She discloses this to one of the Plastics, who immediately tells her she "can't like him" because he's Regina's ex (Waters, 2004). As soon as Regina learns about the crush, she plots a scheme to get back together with Aaron; this emphasizes her ability to manipulate others for her own pleasure and to maintain power. Once Regina and Aaron are back together, he joins the Plastics' lunch table. When Cady approaches the table, Regina begins to play with Aaron's hair, in another power play:

REGINA: "Doesn't he look sexy with his hair pushed back?"

Cady smiles and shrugs, and Regina forcefully repeats:

REGINA: "Cady, will you please tell him his hair looks sexy pushed back."

CADY: "You look sexy with your hair pushed back." (Waters, 2004)

This is an authoritative move to establish Regina's social dominance over Cady through an interrogative twisted into a command. Because Regina knows that Cady still has a crush on Aaron, Regina uses heteroglossia to use the role of a Plastic to assert control over Cady. This demonstrates Regina as a manipulator and Mean Girl: she uses Aaron to belittle Cady into submitting to her authority and to reinforce that she is the only Queen Bee.

Later in the film, Regina invites Cady and the Plastics to her house. While in Regina's

room, Cady discovers a pink scrapbook titled “The Burn Book.” The Plastics explain that it’s where “we cut girls’ pictures out of the yearbook and write comments” (Waters, 2004). By calling these “comments” instead of rumors, insults, and lies, they use Plastic-speak to frame their work to Cady, who is still unfamiliar with American speech patterns. Many of the “comments” in the Burn Book categorize the North Shore girls in a negative and offensive way; the majority of the remarks are based on appearance, sexual history, sexual orientation, and race. As the Plastics are controlled by Regina, it’s fair to say that her influence is wide-ranging, and that many of her exclusionary ideas towards other girls impact the other Plastics’ opinions, especially through Plastic-speak.

Near the climax of the film, Janis confesses her and Cady’s plan to ruin Regina’s life, and Regina retaliates by circulating hundreds of copies of the Burn Book pages around the school to frame Cady and the other Plastics. Chaos ensues and a mandatory assembly is called for all junior girls. At the assembly, the principal calls for a “total attitude makeover,” which Regina resists:

REGINA: “Can I just say that we don’t have a clique problem at this school, and some of us shouldn’t have to take this workshop because some of us are just victims in this situation?”

MS. NORBURY: “That’s probably true. How many of you have ever felt personally victimized by Regina George?” (Waters, 2004).

Every girl in the auditorium raises her hand. It’s evident that, due to Regina’s social power, the hierarchies she establishes affect the entire junior class. Later in the scene, Regina exclaims, “it’s her dream...Jumping into a pile of girls!” when Janis, a rumored gay woman, goes on stage (Waters, 2004). Many of the girls laugh—again, showing that the hierarchies Regina enforces, such as her homophobia, have social power. As mentioned before, Regina uses the sub-language of the Queen Bee to categorize the girls of North Shore into people she should and shouldn’t hang out with, the cool and the uncool. The other students laughing at her comment shows that what Regina says and thinks, however harmful to the overall wellbeing of the North Shore girls, overrides the other high schoolers’ thoughts and opinions.

Regina’s role as Queen Bee perpetuates the Rebel Female as one that is obsessed with tearing down other women. While the “Rebel Male” is critically celebrated, Regina is represented as anti-feminist, which makes her much less admirable to audiences. From using homophobic and ableist slurs to manipulating other people into doing what she wants, Regina uses Plastic-speak and her social power as Queen Bee to exclude others from her elite level. But

this is a double-edged sword. Her fellow-high schoolers are infatuated with her social power but are afraid of and hurt by her actions. In her role as the Queen Bee, Regina uses her power and authority to terrorize other girls.

Janis Ian: The Vengeful Goth

Janis Ian is a clichéd goth character, with black-dyed hair, all black clothing, and thick black eyeliner. She has one true friend, another outcast at North Shore due to his homosexuality. As the goth trope is generally associated with being radical and nonconformist, as a Rebel Female Janis isn't an obvious Mean Girl at the beginning of the film. But under close inspection, it's clear that Janis is mean—just in a different way than Regina or Cady. Initially Janis appears friendly; when Cady walks into her first class on the first day of school, Janis gives her advice on where to sit. Afterwards, she gives Cady directions to her next classes and general tips on the North Shore social scene. Specifically, she talks about the social layout of the cafeteria, and advises Cady to sit at her table at lunch.

After the scene in which Regina orders Cady to sit at the Plastics table, there's a cut to Janis asking Cady what Regina said. Cady explains that Regina invited her to sit at their lunch table for the rest of the week, and Janis starts hilariously laughing, saying "you have to do it and tell me all the horrible things they say" (Waters, 2004). This is an appropriation of Plastic-speak, as Janis is simultaneously tearing down Regina and ordering Cady around. Regina and Janis' friendship before the film begins is crucial to understanding Janis' mean motives. About halfway through the film, Regina sees Cady talking to Janis. She says:

REGINA: "Why are you talking to Janis Ian?"

CADY: "Oh, I don't know."

REGINA: "She's so pathetic. Let me tell you something about Janis Ian. I was best friends with her in middle school. I know, right? It's so embarrassing, I don't even...whatever. Then, in eighth grade, I started going out with my first boyfriend, Kyle, who was totally gorgeous, but he moved to Indiana, and Janis was, like, weirdly jealous of him. Like, if I blew her off to hang out with Kyle she would be like, 'Why didn't you call me back!?' And I would be, like, 'Why are you so obsessed with me?' So, then my birthday was an all-girls pool party and I was like, I can't invite you, Janis, because I think you're a lesbian. I mean, I couldn't have a lesbian there. Girls were going to be in their bathing suits. I mean, right?" (Waters, 2004)

This instance of Regina's homophobia explains why Janis wants to exact revenge on Regina. Janis' revenge plan is deliberate: knowing she cannot instigate the plan herself, as Regina would never be seen with her, Janis knowingly uses Cady as a pawn to execute the plan for her. This complex relationship primes Janis' foray into becoming a different type of Mean Girl—one that is attempting to take down the Queen Bee as the Vengeful Goth. Furthermore, Janis suggests the plan to Cady soon after Regina kisses Aaron on Halloween night—Regina's move to rekindle their former relationship to neutralize Cady's crush on Aaron. It is here that Janis begins to use voice appropriation of Plastic-speak to trick Cady into thinking this plan would exact revenge for Regina's betrayal. Janis presents herself as a caring friend who is willing to do anything to get Regina back for the pain she causes Cady. However, this plan to ruin Regina's life is much deeper, rooted in personal revenge for Regina cutting her out of her life due to her (presumed) sexual orientation years prior. The threefold plan consists of getting Aaron and Regina to break up, making her gain weight and making the other two Plastics turn against her.

Like Regina, Janis capitalizes on Cady's innocence to manipulate her. She builds Cady's trust by being the first, and perhaps only, dependable friend that Cady has throughout the first half of the film. Through her outsider's perspective of school dynamics, Janis assures Cady the plan is a good idea, whether it is in Cady's best interest or not. Janis' plan itself is designed to "cut off [Regina's] resources" (Waters, 2004). Although it's Cady who ultimately completes most of these tasks through finding necessary information, spreading rumors and outright lying, it is Janis who is calling all the shots—and thus Janis is presented as an unconventional Mean Girl. While she isn't as obviously "evil" as Regina, in her role of Vengeful Goth Janis is still conniving and absorbed in her own plan to ruin Regina's life, and perhaps even Cady's as collateral damage. Near the end of the film, Janis confesses the entire plot. She says:

"Okay, yeah. I've got an apology. So, I have this friend who is a new student this year, and I convinced her that it would be fun to mess up Regina George's life. So, I had her pretend to be friends with Regina, and then she would come to my house after and we would just laugh about all the dumb stuff Regina said. And we gave these candy bar things that would make her gain weight, and then we turned her best friends against her. And then...Oh yeah, Cady? You know my friend Cady. She made out with Regina's boyfriend, and we convinced him to break up with her. Oh God, and we gave her foot cream instead of face wash. God! I am so sorry Regina. Really, I don't know why I did this. I guess it's probably because I've got a big lesbian crush on you! Suck on that!" (Waters 2004)

Here, Janis' role as the Vengeful Goth allows her to create a sarcastic, unapologetic version of herself, someone who is unbothered by Regina's previous homophobic actions towards her. However, after analyzing Janis' background with Regina, and her extensive plot to destroy her life, it's clear that Janis is doing this for revenge, not fun. Through her rebellious anti-Plastics attitude and select use of heteroglossia, Janis represents the unconventional Mean Girl because as Vengeful Goth, no one suspects her to be the mastermind behind Regina's downfall.

Cady Heron: The New Girl?

The film begins with Cady Heron moving to the suburbs of Chicago because her parents, both research zoologists, have received job offers at Northwestern University. Before the move, Cady spent her entire life being home-schooled in Africa, where her family lived for her parents' research. This setup explains why Cady wouldn't understand many of the social cues and dynamics that the average American high schooler would. Therefore, Cady begins as an innocent, non-partisan witness to the fighting and mutual destruction happening at North Shore. Cady's role as the New Girl offers North Shore the opportunity to incorporate new or change old sub-languages, but instead Cady adopts the existing sub-languages and begins to be manipulated by both Regina and Janis. In fact, Cady's naiveté made it relatively easy for Regina and Janis to influence her in order to advance their respective agendas.

As the film progresses and Janis' plan intensifies, Cady rapidly learns how brutal and calculated "girl world" is (Waters, 2004). As Janis' ideas for ruining Regina's life escalate, Cady must become closer to Regina so she will confide in Cady and take her advice. Through this process, Cady begins to form her own opinions about both Regina and Janis. About midway through the film, Cady affirms to herself and others that although she was spending more time with Regina, she was not enjoying it. For instance, Cady says, "The weird thing about hanging out with Regina is that even though I hated her, I became more and more obsessed with her," and, "I know it seems like I was a bitch, but I was only acting like a bitch" (Waters, 2004). This series of declarations is the first sign that Cady's innocence as the New Girl is waning; she becomes more aware of her own actions, and her appropriation of Plastic-speak to grow closer to the Plastics increases. While Cady initially embodied the New Girl, she changes into more of a chameleon in terms of her role—she begins her vocal appropriation of Regina, the Queen Bee, and not only tricks the characters in the film, but also the viewers of the film itself. On the surface, it appears she still doesn't like Regina and is acting to humiliate her, but as the film progresses it becomes apparent that she is either enjoying the ruin of Regina, or is actually becoming friends with her, or perhaps both.

After two thirds of Janis' plan is complete (Aaron breaks up with Regina and the Plastics unfriend her), Cady decides to throw a party at her house while her parents are out

of town. She only invites a few people to the party, excluding Regina, but virtually the entire school shows up. Cady seems proud of this and asks herself, "am I the new Queen Bee?" (Waters, 2004). This rhetorical question marks a significant shift in Cady's priorities and values, indicating she is ruining Regina's life, no longer for Janis' revenge, but to dethrone Regina entirely and become the new Queen Bee. Unfortunately, the only way she knows how to play the role is by becoming more and more like Regina. This newfound vocal appropriation can be seen when Cady finds the newly single Aaron Samuels in her bedroom:

CADY: "I just wanted a reason to talk to you."

AARON: "So why didn't you just talk to me?"

CADY: "Well, because I couldn't because of Regina...because you were her property."

AARON: "Her property?"

CADY: "No, shut up! Not her property..."

AARON: "No, don't tell me to shut up."

CADY: "I wasn't..."

AARON: "God, you know what? You are just like a clone of Regina." (Waters, 2004)

Here it is clear that Cady has incorporated aspects of Regina's vocabulary into her own to gain Aaron's affection. However, this plan backfires, as Aaron proclaims that he doesn't like Regina, and therefore does not like how Cady is currently acting. Cady describes feelings of losing "total control" (Waters, 2004), but I would argue that she is simply reeling from the effects of her appropriation of Plastic-speak.

This voice and language appropriation can be seen clearly when Janis confronts Cady on the night of the party. Cady was supposed to go to Janis' art gallery opening the same night but forgets about Janis' event. Janis finds out about the party and shows up to confront Cady:

CADY: "You know I couldn't invite you! I had to pretend to be plastic!"

JANIS: "But you're not pretending anymore! You're plastic! Cold, shiny, hard plastic!"

CADY: "You know what? You're the one who made me like this so you could use me for your eighth-grade revenge!"

JANIS: "God! See, at least me and Regina George know we're mean! But you try to act so innocent like, 'Oh, I use to live in Africa with all the little birdies, and the little monkeys!'"

CADY: “You know what! It’s not my fault you’re like, in love with me, or something!”

JANIS: “See, that’s the thing with you Plastics, you think everyone’s in love with you, but in reality, everyone hates you, like Aaron Samuels for example! He broke up with Regina and guess what, he still doesn’t want you, Cady! So why are you still messing with Regina? I’ll tell you why, because you are a mean girl, you’re a bitch!” (Waters 2004)

Here Cady appropriates Plastic-speak to tear down her former best friend, signifying ascension to Queen Bee. Because of this, I argue this makes Cady one of the meanest girls in the film, as she knowingly hurt and tried to disempower both Regina and Janis. While becoming fake friends with Regina as part of Janis’ plan, Cady destroyed her friendship with Janis. On the other hand, while becoming friends with Janis, she betrayed her by actually becoming invested in the toxic, exclusive social structure of the school that hurts and ostracizes people like Janis. Cady began to act in her own self-interest once she shifted into actually wanting to become the Queen Bee, and therefore, Cady’s character is an accurate portrayal of the Mean Girl—one that is created to antagonize and degrade other women through a combination of voice and language appropriation.

Conclusion

For this study, I used rhetorical analysis and the theories of heteroglossia and polyphony to examine *Mean Girls*. Per my findings, its three main characters, Regina, Janis, and Cady, used their roles and the social power and skills those roles afforded them to achieve what they wanted; increased social standing, an image of being cool or desirable, or getting revenge. Often through the use of polyphony and heteroglossia, these girls would manipulate or lie to other girls, portraying a character who is self-absorbed and tears down other girls. The Mean Girl voices and roles constructed concrete definitions of what was cool and what was not, in a way that parallels the Rebel Male stereotype in television and film. When these qualities are portrayed by the women in this film, even if it mirrors how men perpetuate these types of behaviors, the female in-group fighting leaves some viewers with a sense of disgust, rather than admiration. These problematic portrayals of women call for continued, accurate representations of women in film that can successfully counter the celebrated Rebel Male archetype.

However, it's important to note that some members of the audience also revere this film and its characters. Mean Girls' Day continues to be a social phenomenon, and many can quote lines from this film to this day. But the three archetypes offered in *Mean Girls* are not ones that should be idolized; even though Cady offers reparations at the end of the film, she is only transformed from a Mean Girl into a Good Girl—a return to a one-dimensional, uninteresting female stereotype. This Good Girl still does not provide an adequate counterpart to the Rebel Male, and more importantly, does not embody a girl who acts for herself, let alone acts for herself without tearing down other girls.

Although the film did originally intend to satirize high school, *Mean Girls* was actually quite representative of real life. I think there could have been better judgment on behalf of the writers and directors to subvert this type of dialogue. Rather than basing many jokes, and almost the entire plot of the film, on homophobia, there could have been a more reasonable and less exclusionary reason for the plot to continue. With that being said, I assert that this film presents three anti-feminist roles that perpetuate stereotypes from decades past about young high-school-age women constantly fighting, putting each other down, and creating an exclusive sub-language that overall disempowers each other's important voices. Rather than successfully paralleling the Rebel Male archetype with its rebellious women, *Mean Girls* constructs a feminine power and agency that relies on the degradation of other women. Possible ways to expand on this study would be a quantitative analysis of how this film influenced girl viewers, or how this film impacted young girls' ongoing perceptions of other women. A future study might gather a group of women who first watched this film between the ages of nine and 13, have them re-watch certain clips, and observe their current thoughts on the film through either a focus group or a survey.

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Wright, A. (2012). A sheep in wolf's clothing? The problematic representation of women and the female body in 1980s sword and sorcery cinema. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 21(4), 401-411. doi:10.1080/09589236.2012.681183. The Influence of Living Situation on Help-Seeking Behaviors of Undergraduate Students

The Influence of Living Situation on Help-Seeking Behaviors of Undergraduate Students

Emma C. Pierce and Kallan Palmer, Psychology

Faculty Mentor: Michael Spinetta, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Michael Spinetta, PhD

Student Editor: Oliver Tufte

Abstract

Mental health issues, psychological distress, and suicidal ideation in college students have been on the rise in recent years. As a result, student intention and utilization of mental health services has dramatically increased, and many college and university campuses are unable to keep up with the growing demand. There are many variables that may influence the help-seeking intentions and behaviors of undergraduate college students, and previous literature on the subject has primarily examined the role of attitude, stigma, mental health literacy, and perceived need. Very few studies have specifically examined the role of living situation, campus culture, and connectedness to campus on help-seeking intentions and behaviors. The goal of the present study was to examine the relationship between living on or off campus and help-seeking behaviors among undergraduate college students. Help-seeking is often indicative of underlying psychological distress, so the secondary goals of this study aimed to examine various relationships between demographic variables (like sexual orientation and age), perceived stress, perception of coping mechanisms, help-seeking, and perception of barriers to psychological resources. Findings suggest that living on or off campus has no effect on help-seeking; however, the results indicate relationships between help-seeking, barriers to resources, and coping mechanisms.

Literature Review

In recent years, student use of college counseling services has increased by 30% and an increasing number of students are presenting with “threat-to-self” characteristics (Center for Collegiate Mental Health [CCMH], 2017). Much of the literature to date indicates that suicidal ideation and other mental health issues in college students are on the rise and the symptoms these students display appear to be more acute than in previous decades (Hess & Tracey, 2013; Westefeld et al., 2006). However, nearly 80% of students who need psychological services do not seek help, citing low perceived need, concerns about how effective treatment will be, lack of awareness of available options, and confusion about insurance coverage (Eisenberg, Gollust, & Golberstein, 2009; Eisenberg, Hunt, & Speer, 2012). There are many variables that influence help-seeking intentions and behaviors, such as social support, psychological distress, and anticipated risk (Downs & Eisenberg, 2012; Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009; Li, Dorstyn, & Denson, 2014). Although literature on the subject of help seeking in college-aged students is fairly extensive, a majority of it focuses on the role of stigma as a barrier to seeking psychological help and does not consider how a student’s relationship to the campus culture (the unique campus environment based on shared beliefs, values, and meaning) impacts from whom a student seeks help (Clement et al., 2015; Cheng et al., 2017; Chen, Romero, & Karver, 2016; Hess & Tracey, 2013; Morse & Schulze, 2013; Naslund et al., 2016; Thornicroft et al., 2016). In addition, there are inconsistencies in the existing research: some studies report significant relationships between variables like attitudes toward help seeking and psychological difficulties, while other studies found no such relationship (Nam et al., 2013). Many published studies on the topic of help seeking in college-age students are descriptive in nature and do not provide information on possible interventions to reduce the growing disparity between student utilization and demand of on campus mental health services (Eisenberg et al., 2012; Thornicroft et al., 2016). To fill this gap in current research, we sought to examine the effect of living situation on help-seeking behaviors of undergraduate students and the possible reasons why they may or may not utilize available resources. To do so, we evaluated participants’ help-seeking behaviors, their perception of coping mechanisms for psychological distress, and their perception of barriers to resources.

Help-Seeking, Perceived Need, and Utilization of Services

The literature on psychological help-seeking has documented that the process of seeking help can begin when a person recognizes their symptoms and their need for help

(Wilson, Bushnell, & Caputi, 2011). A variety of factors influence help-seeking behavior in university students. Eisenberg et al. (2007) identified several reasons: students were unaware of service options; students believed that therapy and medication would only be somewhat helpful or not at all helpful; growing up in a low-income family was associated with lower service use; lack of perceived need; and lack of time. Finally, the vast majority of the population in this study reported having health insurance but were unsure whether their insurance covered mental health appointments.

A few studies have used the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to inform their understanding of help-seeking behaviors (Chen et al., 2016; Hess & Tracey, 2013; Li et al., 2014). The TPB, an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), is a model that predicts behavior based on intention, a direct antecedent that is preceded by attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. These three variables are affected by an individual's beliefs and experiences, so other demographic variables can also predict how each individual behaves. TPB provides a strong and consistent empirical foundation for help-seeking, such that the intention and behavior is seeking and engaging with psychological services as a means of help-seeking (Chen et al., 2016; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Hess & Tracey, 2013; Li et al., 2014). Hess and Tracey (2013) reported a positive association between attitudes towards psychological help seeking and help-seeking intentions while Eisenberg et al. (2009) reported that barriers to treatment and stigma are negatively associated with help-seeking intentions.

Using data collected from the 2012 Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey, Nash et al. (2017) examined the relationship between behavioral variables and students who perceived the need for psychological help but chose not to seek it. The authors reported that students who perceived the need for help but did not seek it were struggling with higher levels of psychological distress related to financial difficulties, work, academic engagement, and social connections compared to students who sought counseling or perceived they did not need counseling. Czyz et al. (2013) reported a discrepancy between those who need help and those who seek help, identified the ways in which college students are not receiving help, and investigated how perception of barriers to professional services influences the effectiveness of mental health services. Interestingly, some research suggests that stigma is one of the least common reasons for not seeking psychological help; this is a result common in newer research but a result that conflicts with much of the early research on barriers to psychological help-seeking (Clement et al., 2015; Czyz et al., 2013; Downs & Eisenberg, 2012). In fact, Hess and Tracey (2013) argue that actively and continually seeking help would normalize the practice and possibly increase student utilization of campus services by students

who actually need the help. The perception of not needing help, as well as the preference for self-management, has been shown to negatively influence the likelihood of students seeking help.

Perception of Barriers to Resources

Many individuals do not seek psychological help due to their perceptions of barriers to resources. Studies have identified many barriers, some of which include decreased mental health literacy; self-stigma (but not their perception of the stigma of others) and associated shame; lack of perceived need; financial constraints; privacy concerns; and knowledge of available resources and insurance coverage (Chen et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2017; Clement et al., 2015; Czyz et al., 2013; Downs & Eisenberg, 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2012; Hess & Tracey, 2013; Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010; Kearns et al., 2015; Komiya, Good, & Sherrod, 2000; Li et al., 2014; Morgan, Ness, & Robinson, 2003; Nam et al., 2013; Nash et al., 2017; Rüschi et al., 2014). Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, international students, and Asian American students were less likely to use mental health services (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010).

Coping Mechanisms

Cranford, Eisenberg, and Serras (2009) examined the relationship between mental health problems and substance use and found that as the degree or severity of the disorder increased so did the risk of substance use. Additionally, individuals that reported greater perceived need for mental health services were more likely to binge drink. Few, if any, articles we found addressed the possible relationship between help-seeking behaviors and coping mechanisms. When dividing help-seeking behaviors into formal support (academic figures, religious leaders, and mental health professionals) and informal support (friends, family, resident assistants), students reported seeking off-campus formal help when they didn't know how to access on-campus resources. However, most students preferred seeking informal support regardless of location (Goodwin et al., 2016). Some students have reported feeling more comfortable using online support groups and social media to learn about new coping mechanisms (Naslund et al., 2016).

Living Situation and Campus Culture

Samuolis and colleagues' (2017) study indicated that a connection to campus culture increases the perceived likelihood of college women to seek help from mental health professions or school counseling services for suicidal ideation. College campuses are a unique setting where most of a student's activities revolve around the interconnected services the college provides. Proximity and connection to campus removes some of the barriers to seeking psychological help, such as distance and financial constraints (many colleges require students to have health insurance either through the school itself or through private insurance with equivalent coverage). The purpose of an institution of higher education is not only to teach work-related skills but also to help students grow intellectually, personally, and socially. College campuses are fraught with increased mental health concerns in college students, a general reluctance to seek psychological help, and extensive perceptions of barriers to resources; this makes examining mediating factors to help seeking an important area of study.

Ketchen Lipson et al. (2015) noted a variation in the prevalence of mental health problems across housing, admissions selectivity, and graduation rates. Rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation were highest among students attending campuses with no residential options and the rates were lowest among students on heavily residential campuses. The type of institution was also cited as having an impact on service utilization with those attending private institutions using services more than those attending public institutions, possibly because public institutions on average have fewer resources to offer their students but a larger population increasing the likelihood that students are seeking help from social sources. Because university counseling services mainly exist to aid in the success and overall development of the school's students, administrators and other school officials may want to emphasize the importance of mental health issues. Additionally, they should consider the fact that mental health is often predictive of students' educational experience and future career goals, which reflect on the institution's overall mission and purpose.

In previous research, we saw a lack of focus on particular variables, specifically living situation, prompting us to examine whether living on or off campus was predictive of help-seeking behaviors. Furthermore, we wanted to examine the possible ways help seeking, perception of barriers to resources, and coping mechanisms were related, because help seeking is often indicative of underlying psychological distress.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were primarily students from the Seattle University community, together with individuals associated with the investigators' Facebook pages. The survey was disseminated via Qualtrics through Facebook, SONA Systems, and internal email listservs. Due to the nature of dissemination, the sample is one of convenience as a random sampling method could not be used. By the end of data collection 90 participants opened the survey and 89 answered more than one question; of the 89 participants, 70 answered the survey in full. Participants were not required to answer every question and were able to withdraw consent at any time.

Measures

All participants completed a battery of four measures in addition to providing demographic information and data on living situation.

Demographics

Participants completed a demographics questionnaire regarding sex assigned at birth, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, years of higher education, and living arrangements. Participants had the ability to leave any question unanswered, maintaining their anonymity.

Stress and coping

Psychological stress and social support have been shown to affect an individual's help-seeking behavior (Hess & Tracey, 2013). Help-seeking behaviors can be defined as "seeking assistance from mental health services, other formal services, or informational support sources for the purpose of resolving emotional or behavioral problems." (Srebnik, Cauce, & Baydar, 1996, 210) Stress, and subsequent coping with stress, were assessed using the Brief COPE scale (Carver, 1997). The Brief COPE scale was used to measure the frequency with which each participant had engaged in each mechanism and consisted of coping subscales ranging from positive reframing (items 12 and 17) to behavioral disengagement (items 6 and 16) and more. Each item was assessed using a four-point Likert scale with 1 indicating "I have not been doing this at all" and 4 indicating "I've been doing this a lot."

Perceived stress

Perceived levels of stress were also analyzed using Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983). Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale (CPSS) measured the frequency with which each participant thought or felt a certain way within the last month. Questions such as "In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?" and "In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?" were asked. Each question was answered using a five-point Likert scale with 0 indicating "never" and 4 indicating "very often."

Help seeking

Intentions to seek help were assessed using the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (Wilson, Deane, Ciarrochi, & Rickwood, 2005). The General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ) asked participants to indicate the degree to which they are likely to seek help from the available support options, 1 being "extremely unlikely" and 7 being "extremely likely." The items were coded into both formal and informal support systems; informal support systems were operationally defined as intimate partners, friends, parents, family members, resident assistants, no one, and the fill-in option; whereas formal support systems were operationally defined as academic advisors, professors, support groups (on- or off-campus), mental health professionals (psychologist, social worker, counsellor, etc.), phone helpline, doctor or general practitioner, and religious or spiritual leader (see Figure 1).

Barriers to seeking help

Barriers to seeking help or treatment were assessed using the Barriers to Seeking Psychological Help Scale (Topkaya, Sahin, & Meydan, 2017). The Barriers to Seeking Psychological Help Scale (BSPHS) is a self-reported scale through which participants specify the extent to which they agree or disagree with each item; the options ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree" on a five-point Likert scale. The items consisted of five subscales, including fear of being stigmatized by society (items 2, 6, 9, and 14), trust in the mental health professional (items 4 and 12), difficulties in self-disclosure (items 1, 5, and 8), perceived devaluation (items 11, and 13), and lack of knowledge (items 3, 7, and 10). All subscales were summed and then by comparing the means of these scores, it was determined in which subscales an individual perceived more or fewer barriers.

Qualitative data

Three qualitative questions were asked at the end of the survey. The first question asked about the participants' general experience with seeking help from on-campus resources and the second question asked about the participants' general experience with seeking help from off-campus resources. From these responses, we conducted a thematic analysis and came up with three overall themes: accessibility, well-being, and progress. The third qualitative question asked for three words to describe the participants' overall experience with seeking help and were organized into a word cloud based on the frequency of the words provided. We used data from all of the qualitative questions in the discussion section of this essay to add an element of human element which will inform future directions.

Results

Quantitative Results and Discussion

We used an anonymous online survey distributed through Facebook, SONA Systems, and internal email lists to recruit participants. Although a true response rate could not be calculated because of an inability to determine how many students opened the anonymous survey link, a total of 90 college students participated in the survey. The present sample consists of 89 participants after excluding one individual who did not answer any questions. One participant was excluded from the GHSQ, three participants were excluded from the Brief COPE, six participants were included only in the demographic data and the CPSS, three participants were excluded from all measures except demographic variables, three participants were excluded from all measures except for demographic variables minus age, and one participant did not include their age but completed all other measures. Of the 89 included surveys, 70 were completed.

The sample consisted primarily of self-identified females (76.4%, $n = 68$) and males (19.1%, $n = 17$) as well as two participants identifying as gender fluid (2.2%) and two participants identifying as gender non-binary (2.2%). The majority of the participants were Caucasian (71.9%, $n = 64$) followed by Asian (15.7%, $n = 14$), Mixed Ethnicity (5.6%, $n = 5$), Black (2.2%, $n = 2$), Hispanic/Latinx/Mexican American (2.2%, $n = 2$), with one individual declining to answer and one individual self-identifying as Middle Eastern. Of the sample, 39 participants (43.8%) live on campus and 47 (52.8%) live off campus.

A mixed-design analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the main effect of cohabitation status (defined as living with no one, parents, family, one roommate, two roommates, three or more roommates, and a partner) and years of education and the

interaction effect of living situation and years of education on help-seeking behaviors (informal and formal support). There was no main effect of living situation, $F(6, 51) = 10.98$, $p = .812$, or years of education, $F(6, 51) = 4.844$, $p = .970$, on informal help seeking. The interaction effect between living situation and years of education was not significant, $F(10, 51) = 0.431$, $p = .924$. Furthermore, there was no main effect of living situation, $F(6, 51) = .917$, $p = .491$, or years of education, $F(6, 51) = 1.634$, $p = .157$, on formal help seeking. In addition, the interaction effect between living situation and years of education was not significant for formal help seeking, $F(10, 51) = .597$, $p = .809$.

Linear regression analyses were conducted to predict help-seeking behaviors based on whether a student lives on or off campus. In order to do the linear regression we assumed equality of variance, a linear relationship between variables, and no multicollinearity. Living on or off campus was not predictive of informal help seeking ($\beta = .060$, $t(13.052) = .506$, $p = .615$) or formal help seeking ($\beta = -.169$, $t(8.751) = -1.459$, $p = .149$). We also examined the predictive behavior of help seeking on perceived stress (CPSS) and coping mechanisms (Brief COPE) and found that informal help seeking was predictive of perceived stress ($\beta = -.30$, $t(15.177) = -2.539$, $p = .013$, $R^2 = .061$) but formal help seeking was not predictive of perceived stress ($\beta = .027$, $t(15.177) = .225$, $p = .822$). Interestingly, when examining the predictive role of help seeking on coping mechanisms, informal help seeking was significantly predictive of less substance use ($\beta = -.280$, $t(5.625) = -2.312$, $p = .024$, $R^2 = .049$) and formal help seeking was significantly predictive of using religion as a coping mechanism ($\beta = .389$, $t(.890) = -.348$, $p = .001$, $R^2 = .139$). See Figure 2 for regression model.

Next, Pearson correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between living on or off campus and coping mechanisms (Brief COPE subscales). Living on campus was positively correlated with active coping ($r(73) = 0.296$, $p = 0.011$, $R^2 = 0.087$), and it was negatively correlated with humor ($r(73) = -0.282$, $p = 0.016$, $R^2 = 0.079$) and self-blame ($r(73) = -0.346$, $p = 0.003$, $R^2 = 0.119$). Living off campus was correlated with the same coping mechanisms but a reverse relationship was found, such that living off campus was negatively correlated with active coping ($r(73) = -0.296$, $p = 0.011$, $R^2 = 0.087$) and positively correlated with humor ($r(73) = 0.282$, $p = .016$, $R^2 = 0.079$) and self-blame ($r(73) = .346$, $p = .003$, $R^2 = 0.119$). No relationships were observed between living situation and the other Brief COPE subscales (self-distraction, denial, substance use, use of emotional support, use of instrumental support, behavioral disengagement, venting, positive reframing, planning, religion, or acceptance [see Table 1]).

Barriers to resources have been shown to affect the help-seeking intentions and behaviors of college students. A regression analysis was conducted to examine whether perceptions of barriers to resources (BSPHS) was predictive of living on or off campus. Results

demonstrated that perception of barriers to resources was not predictive of living on or off campus. These barriers include fear of being stigmatized by society, trust in mental health professionals, difficulties in self disclosure, perceived devaluation, and lack of knowledge. In addition, a Pearson correlation was conducted to examine whether age and perception of barriers to resources were related. Results showed that there was no relationship between age and the perception of barriers to resources among college students. There were, however, inter-correlations between the five perceptions of barriers to resources (see Table 2) indicating that if an individual perceived one barrier to seeking psychological help, then it was likely that other barriers would impede psychological help-seeking intentions and behaviors.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect of the perception of barriers to resources on gender identity. The results indicated that there was no main effect of the perception of barriers to resources, falsifying our hypothesis. However, there was a main effect of perception of barriers to resources on sexual orientation. Although no effect was observed for the categories of fear of being stigmatized by society ($F(4,73) = 1.387$, $p = 0.248$), perceived devaluation ($F(4,73) = 1.738$, $p = 0.152$), or lack of knowledge ($F(4,73) = 0.749$, $p = 0.562$), there was a main effect of trust in mental health professionals ($F(4,73) = 4.715$, $p = 0.002$, $d = 1.178$) and difficulties in self-disclosure ($F(4,73) = 3.924$, $p = 0.006$) on sexual orientation. However, individual post hoc Tukey corrected comparisons revealed that the only significant finding was the effect of trust in mental health professionals on sexual orientation, such that those who identified as heterosexual experienced less trust than those who identified as homosexual ($p < .003$) (see Figure 3).

Qualitative Results and Discussion

Participants were asked to answer three qualitative questions regarding their general experience seeking help both on and off campus. From the responses, we conducted a thematic analysis and developed three themes we believe encompass our participants' experiences: accessibility, progress, and well-being.

Accessibility

Student use of mental health services on campus is often at the mercy of the limited resources a university allocates to such programs. Wilson, Bushnell, and Caputi (2011) explain the importance of early access to mental health services arguing that "[early help] can reduce the long-term impact of many mental health problems and [...] can also reduce risk for suicide

completion when suicidal thoughts are experienced or suicidal behaviors are exhibited” (p. 34). The majority of participants who commented on Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at Seattle University indicated having difficulty accessing the designated services:

I have chose [sic] not to seek psychological help from people on campus because I heard that there is an extremely long wait list and it’s almost impossible to be seen. Even if you are seen, you only get a maximum of maybe three sessions with the therapist and I wouldn’t want to get comfortable with someone and then not be allowed to see them again.

Many respondents mentioned feeling rushed when they did get an appointment, feeling more distressed after leaving CAPS, and feeling that they were subtly told not to come back because their symptoms did not constitute an emergency. What these Seattle University students reported is consistent with previous literature on university campus services; Goodwin et al. (2016) discussed being surprised at their result that “only 3.77% of students used the university [free] mental health support systems” (p. 133) and that more students, in comparison, sought help from private counseling services. Some participants commented on both the difficulty of receiving services from CAPS and on the service as having ineffective referral practices:

I honestly feel like CAPS will only help you if you have a gun to your head. I went in, pretty depressed, and they sent me on my way with 20 different doctors I could call, with no way to know how far away they were/if they accepted my insurance/how expensive they were until looked them all up [sic]. It’s putting a ton of work on a student who is already stressed.

When student mental health resources were unable to assist a student due to their high volume of requests, the nature of a student’s symptoms, or simple institutional formalities, participants indicated a need for help with contacting off-campus services. Taking the initial step to ask for help is often one of the most difficult things a person can do when they are experiencing psychological distress. When a service refuses care or is ineffective in the care they do provide, that negative experience for an emotionally vulnerable person may be salient enough to prevent that person from seeking help in the future.

Progress

Accessing services is an important first step in seeking help. Once an individual has access, the experience of the mental health is what the individual will ultimately remember. Several individuals reported mixed feelings about the care they received, which was illustrated by one participant who said:

I visited CAPS, which helped, but not entirely. The professional was kind and was a great listener, in addition to being very empathetic, but [I] left feeling as if the same problems were there. Not as much of a resolution or step towards progress.

Concerns about lack of progress brings up the ideas of perceived need and trustworthiness of psychological services, both of which are barriers to seeking help. Literature on the subject suggests a level of student skepticism about the effectiveness of psychological services which, in turn, can lead to internal self-stigma regarding the nature of one's symptoms (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010; Nam et al., 2013). One participant noted their experience with therapy in childhood and the desire to get that support again but was worried about perceived consequences of doing so:

I gained so much from seeing an emotional support professional all throughout my childhood. Now, however, I would like to get that support again, and I trust confidentiality, but fear I cannot ask or go on my own without someone else knowing, and when they know, they will think differently of me or question me and break confidentiality.

According to these responses, progress was shown to play a significant role in participants' intentions to seek help, trust in mental health professionals, and continuation of care.

Well-Being

When discussing off-campus resources, many participants were enthusiastic about the care they have received. It appears that, within our sample, seeking and receiving help from formal sources, specifically off-campus sources, was predictive of overall well-being and satisfaction with care. Much of the literature on help seeking runs counter to our findings and suggests that a higher sense of mental well-being is predictive of seeking informal sources

of support (Goodwin et al., 2016). Participants also mentioned positive traits about their individual therapists that helped increase their overall mental well-being:

I have sought help from off campus resources for several years now. I've found that these sources have been far more helpful than any on-campus support I've attempted to receive. I love my therapist—it feels like she actually cares about my well-being.

Interestingly, positive experiences with on-campus support were referenced in connection to campus ministry, support groups, friends and family, and others. These participants specifically compared negative experiences with formal services from CAPS with the aforementioned alternatives: “Campus Ministry created a safe place that I could go to even though I'm not religious[;] I would trust them over CAPS any day.”

It's worth noting that access to off-campus resources often comes with a certain level of privilege, which may include financial stability or parental support, physical ability, or more free time that can be allotted to mental health care and not, for example, to a job:

I see a psychologist every two weeks. I think it has seriously helped my mental health and well-being, having access to someone who can provide coping skills and a place to 'vent' without judgement. However, I know being able to see a mental health doctor comes with a lot of privilege, mainly financial. I wish it was more accessible to all.

In psychology, the lived experience of a single person is one of the most important data points a researcher can observe. These qualitative responses outline not only individual experiences but a trend among Seattle University students and their experiences seeking help on and off campus for psychological distress. It is in the best interests of Seattle University to empower leaders for a just and humane world by investing in behavioral health services that suit the needs of its students.

Discussion

This study's primary goal was to examine the effect of living situation on help-seeking behaviors and the effects of related mediating variables such as perceived stress, coping mechanisms, and perception of barriers to resources. Contrary to our main hypothesis,

living on or off campus was not predictive of help-seeking behaviors, coping mechanisms, or perception of barriers to resources. However, our findings do suggest that help seeking was predictive of using coping mechanisms, and specifically that informal help seeking was predictive of using less substance use and formal help seeking was predictive of using religion to cope.

The qualitative portion of this study provides some significant feedback for Seattle University leadership and administration. Such negative responses regarding campus mental health services should be of concern to those whose job it is to uphold the institution's overall mission. Our data, as well as much of the literature on the mental health of college students, suggest that mental health problems and psychological distress are significant predictors of the outcomes that bolster the SU mission. It is in the best interest of Seattle University to invest more in on-campus mental health resources for its students, especially because student statistics (retention rate, number of years to graduate, etc.) provide a strong and telling resume for the school itself. Additionally, the subject of mental health and suicide prevention in higher education is not only a significant factor at the institutional level but also at the legislative level.

The Washington State Senate (in conjunction with the House) introduced, passed, and delivered Senate Bill 6514 to the governor in 2018 focused on "comprehensive suicide prevention and behavioral health initiatives for postsecondary students." (p. 1) The bill introduced information collected through a mental health and suicide prevention in higher education task force since 2015. Some of the task force's main findings included: lack of funding for behavioral health services for postsecondary students is the largest barrier to providing services in the state; the level of professional counselling is limited due to lack of funding; the ratio between counselors and students is as low as one counselor to every 8,500 students; implementing a statewide data collection system to which institutions will submit a report regarding the institutions counselor-to-student ratio, the awareness of the institution's resources among faculty, staff, and students, number of students referred to off-campus behavioral resources, the number of students identifying emotional distress as reasons for withdrawal from the institution, number of student deaths by suicide, number of student suicide attempts, information on efforts to disseminate resources across campus, specific resources for student veterans, and information about training programs regarding crisis care and suicide prevention. The implementation of a statewide data collection system will allow researchers to understand what programs work, what students need, and how to help more diversified student bodies in Washington State institutions of higher education. This sort of bill will influence further research in this field; research which we believe should investigate the relationship between sexual orientation and perception of barriers to resources and the mediating effects of demographic variables on help-seeking behaviors (due to differences in

culture, upbringing, social support, and other demographic variables). At a local level, efforts could be made to increase student awareness of available resources (on and off campus); tailoring said resources to fit the specific needs of Seattle University students by identifying said needs and re-evaluating how on campus resources support students in psychological distress.

Conclusion

Informal help seeking was shown to be predictive of several variables. First, informal help seeking was significantly predictive of perceived stress ($p = .013$) such that as the perceived likelihood of seeking help from informal supports increase, perceived levels of stress decreased significantly. Second, informal help seeking was also significantly predictive of less substance use ($p = .02$), which was a surprising result as it contradicts much of the literature on the subject. This result may be due to the fact that the mean age of our population ($M = 20.7$, $SD = 2.8$) was below the legal limit for substance use in combination with the fact that many of the students in the sample attended a Jesuit college.

Furthermore, formal help seeking was significantly predictive of using religion as a coping mechanism ($p = .001$). Again, this result may be due to the culture of a Jesuit college. During the process of this study, it was pointed out to us that Campus Ministry offers walk-in hours for students whereas CAPS does not. This difference in availability may account for such a strong predictive value.

Although we did not find a relationship between living situation and help seeking, there was a positive relationship between living on campus and using active coping mechanisms ($p = .01$) and a negative relationship with humor ($p = .01$) and self-blame ($p = .003$). A reverse relationship between these coping mechanism subscales and living off campus was observed. This result might suggest a strong correlation between various Brief COPE subscales specifically the relationship between humor and self-blame. Table 2 shows all correlations between living situation and coping mechanisms. There was a significant relationship between self-blame and humor ($p < .0001$), so it is plausible that these two coping mechanisms go hand-in-hand for our sample.

Finally, we found a main effect of perception of barriers to resources on sexual orientation; such that those who identified as heterosexual were less likely to trust a mental health professional. At first glance this finding seems curious due to the historical classification of homosexuality as a disorder by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. However, only about an eighth of our sample identified as homosexual whereas over half

of our sample identified as heterosexual. It is possible that a welcoming campus culture for sexual minorities and the location of the college in a progressive city might have impacted the experiences of those identifying as homosexual.

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Appendix A

Table 1 Correlations, Means, and Standard Errors of the Mean Among Coping Behaviors (Brief COPE) and living on or off campus. Results indicate that there was a negative relationship between living off campus and using active coping, and a positive relationship between living off campus and using humor and self-blame to cope. The reverse relationship was observed between the same coping mechanisms for those living on campus.

	Off campus	On campus	Self-distraction	Active coping	Denial	Substance use	Use of emotional support	Use of instrumental support	Behavioral disengagement	Venting	Positive reframing	Planning	Humor	Acceptance	Religion	Self-blame	M	SD
Off campus	—	—	.147	-.296* (.011)	.155	.155	-.034	-.089	.202	.085	-.037	-.133	.282* (.016)	.095	-.019	-.346** (.003)	1.45	.50
On campus	—	—	-.147	.296* (.011)	-.155	-.155	.034	.089	-.202	-.085	.037	.133	-.282* (.016)	-.095	.019	-.346** (.003)	1.54	.50
Self-distraction	—	—	—	.008	.157	.071	.219	.129	.258* (.028)	.295* (.011)	.208	.119	.212	.228	-.038	.194	5.93	1.357
Active coping	—	—	—	—	.025	-.039	.357** (.002)	.386** (.001)	-.129	.234* (.047)	.239* (.042)	.647** (.000)	-.181	.212	-.085	-.077	5.62	1.381
Denial	—	—	—	—	—	.289* (.013)	.021	-.038	.545** (.000)	.269* (.021)	.064	.052	.249* (.034)	-.120	-.058	-.379** (.001)	2.68	1.268
Substance use	—	—	—	—	—	—	.251* (.032)	.195	.223	.069	.009	-.139	.310** (.008)	-.008	-.143	-.336** (.004)	4.56	2.121
Use of emotional support	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.692** (.000)	.118	.335** (.004)	.271* (.020)	.376** (.001)	.028	.243* (.038)	0.51	.058	5.43	1.641
Use of instrumental support	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.029	.340** (.003)	.269* (.021)	.437** (.000)	-.019	.200	.139	.005	5.25	1.847
Behavioral disengagement	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.256* (.029)	.061	.027	.284* (.015)	-.046	-.105	.638** (.000)	5.00	1.787
Venting	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.136	.245* (.037)	.143	.056	-.087	.273* (.019)	4.83	1.395
Positive reframing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.462** (.000)	.074	.348** (.003)	.247* (.035)	.037	5.29	1.646
Planning	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.046	.431** (.000)	.070	.048	6.00	1.462
Humor	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.057	.030	.444** (.000)	5.29	2.051
Acceptance	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.107	.162	5.79	1.343
Religion	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.066	3.29	1.775
Self-blame	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.64	1.961

Values in parentheses indicate *p* values

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 *Inter-correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations of Barriers to Seeking Psychological Help (BSPHS)*

	Fear of being stigmatized by society	Trust in mental health profession	Difficulties in self-disclosure	Perceived devaluation	Lack of knowledge	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Fear of being stigmatized by society	—	.396**	.451**	.688**	.530**	8.93	3.88
Trust in mental health profession	—	—	.718**	.380**	.288*	4.73	1.69
Difficulties in self-disclosure	—	—	—	.524**	.363**	7.28	2.85
Perceived devaluation	—	—	—	—	.555**	4.61	2.09
Lack of knowledge	—	—	—	—	—	8.12	2.76

Appendix B

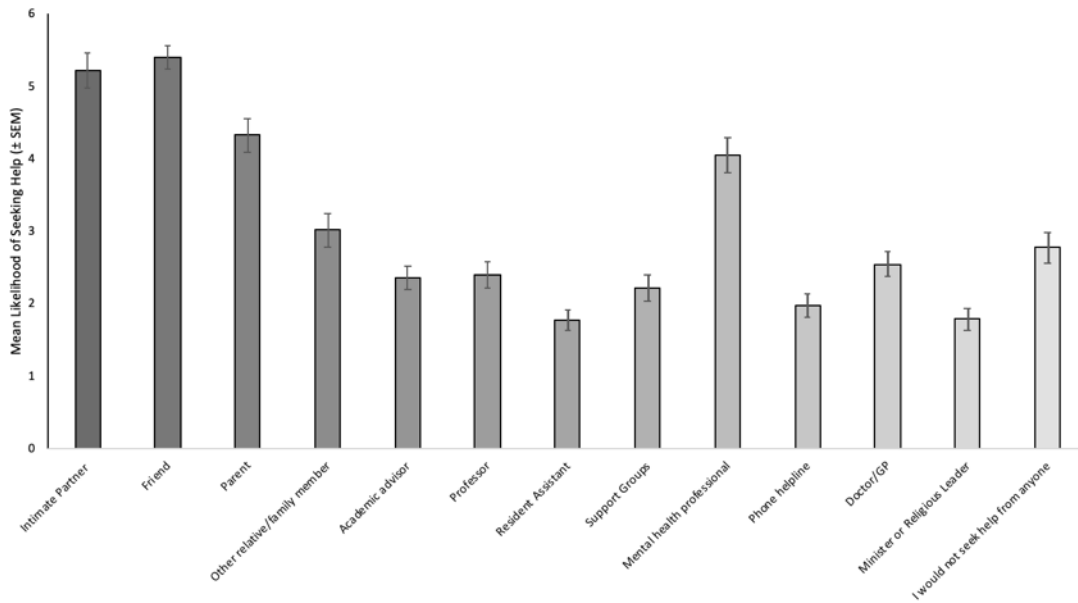


Figure 1 Frequencies of the degree to which participants would seek help from informal and formal support systems. Overall, participants indicated they were more likely to seek help from an intimate partner, friend, parent, or mental health professional.

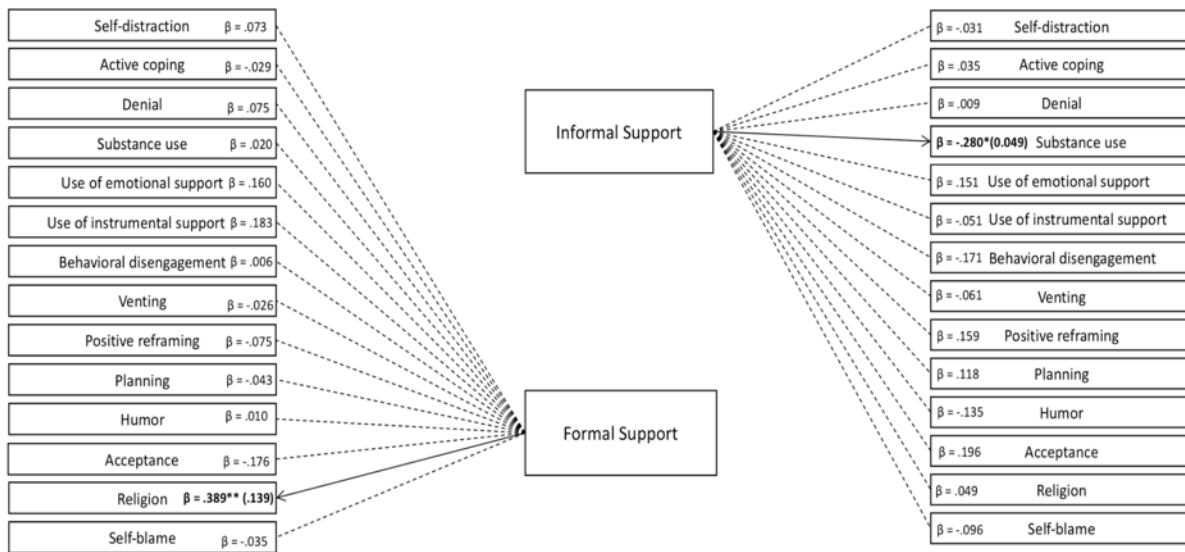


Figure 2 A regression analysis was conducted to examine whether help-seeking behavior (informal, formal) is predictive of coping mechanisms (Brief COPE subscales). Informal support seeking was predictive of less substance use ($\beta = -.280$, $t(5.625) = -2.312$, $p = .024$, $R^2 = .049$) and formal support was predictive of religion as a coping mechanism ($\beta = .389$, $t(.890) = .348$, $p = .001$, $R^2 = .139$).

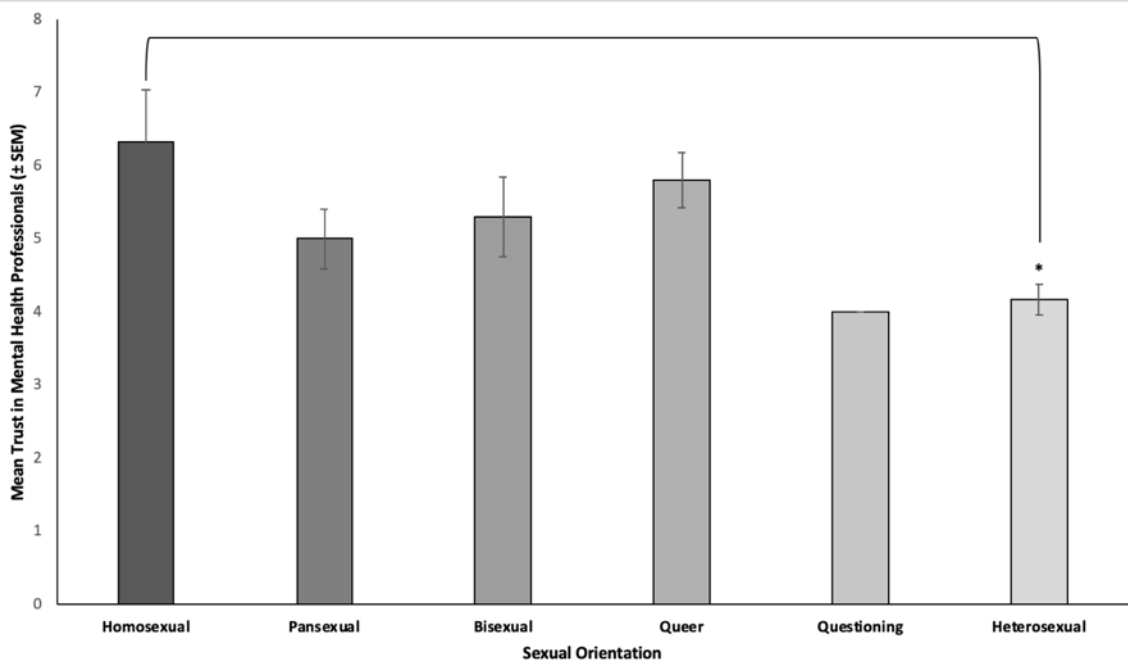


Figure 3 Main effect of sexual orientation on trust in mental health professionals, $F(4, 73) = 4.715, p = .002$. Asterisk indicates a significant difference between homosexual and heterosexual, $p = .003$, based on post-hoc Tukey analyses. Large effect size, $d = 1.18$.

Deconstructing an Assumed Shared Identity: Developing Self-Identification, Articulating Family, and Exploring Varied Experiences of College-Aged Women Adopted from China and Raised in the United States

Leah Siff, Anthropology

Faculty Mentor: Harriet Phinney, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Rob Efird, PhD

Student Editor: Lauren Lee

Abstract

Much scholarship focuses on the general topic of transnational and transracial adoption, especially regarding female Chinese adoptees to the United States. This focus is usually explained by China's one-child policy that went into effect in 1979 and ended in 2015. Most of this scholarship focuses on the adoptive parents or younger adoptive children, and commonly refers to a singular "adoptee experience." This ethnography utilizes reflective participant observation and interviews both in person and over video call as methods to collect and produce knowledge. Three major themes emerged in the search for organized knowledge of college-aged, female-identifying, Chinese adoptees: the role of family, identity, and the connection of both to theories of ethnic and racial essentialism, compounded by the endorsement of stereotypes of transnational and transracial adoptees. The informants' categorically different descriptions of their experiences prove that the "adoptee experience" cannot be essentialized. This essay analyzes instances of misrecognition, reactions to opportunities or a lack of opportunity to explore Chinese ancestry, and the impact of these factors on identity formation. Additionally, this essay introduces a much larger conversation around identity politics and how assumptions can lead to categories of solidarity.

Fieldsite

While I was sitting alone in a coffee shop one evening, doing homework, a middle-aged man, not white-presenting, approached me to ask for a donation for children in Taiwan. Clearly curious about my background, he asked where my parents were from. I supplied him with my rehearsed, though still awkward, spiel about my adoption. "Oh, you're one of the lucky ones!" he said to me, then abruptly walked away to solicit money from others at a table nearby. I blinked twice and paused, and a disgusting cocktail of feelings hit me in waves. Annoyance, shock, guilt, shame, anger, familiarity. *Okay*, I thought to myself before going back to my work.

Three years later, this experience still replays in my head every now and then. At the time, I felt vulnerable about my identity. I was having a hard time making friends, and the thought crossed my mind that if only I had stuck with Mandarin lessons as a child, I would be better able to relate to the Asian population at Seattle University. My identity as a woman adopted from China and raised in the United States is one that remains constantly in the back of my mind, and during these experiences, in the front of my mind. My thick, straight, long, shiny black hair; my dark olive skin; and my brown eyes stand in stark contrast to my mother's reddish-brown pixie cut and freckles and my father's fluffy white hair and hazel eyes. Even now, away from home and in school, the adoption spiel hasn't lost relevance.

Much scholarship has focused on the general topic of what is sometimes called transnational and transracial adoption, especially regarding female Chinese adoptees to the United States. Transnational adoption refers to adopting across borders, while transracial adoption refers to someone adopting a child that identifies as a race different from their own. In this context, the adoptions of all of the female Chinese adoptees I interviewed can be described as transnational and transracial. All of their parents were living in the United States and adopted them from China, and none of the parents were described as identifying as Chinese or as claiming Chinese descent. The scholarly focus on female Chinese adoptees is usually explained with reference to China's one-child policy that went into effect in 1979 and ended in 2015. This policy was a government-implemented and -enforced family planning program that rewarded single-child families (in urban centers and two-child families in rural areas) and strictly prohibited large families in an attempt to control the population and present China as an advanced country in the international sphere (Feng, 2014, p. 17). However, most of this scholarship focuses on adoptive parents, specifically adoptive mothers, or younger adoptive children. This research allowed me to examine myself in comparison with other women with whom I had initially perceived as sharing an identity. The results of my research revealed two things: first, a realization about the many assumptions I had to unlearn about how people see and define themselves, and second, a continuous critical reflection about my

own assumptions of why I thought we would connect. These revelations came as a result of the interviews, self-reflections, and analytical explorations I conducted that looked at the process of identification, articulation of family, and varying opportunities to explore what I will refer to as Chinese “things.”

Methods and Subjectivity

For this project, I conducted reflective participant observation. I did this by first reflecting on my own experiences that I considered to be relevant to my adoption. I then analyzed those experiences in the context of other adoptees. This action of analysis and reflection continued throughout the research process. I chose to focus on college-aged women who, like me, are between the ages of 18 and 22, in order to more accurately center the adoption conversations I would be having around both myself and my interviewees. I also assumed that people in this age group might have already engaged in some form of self-reflection, which may or may not have included thoughts on their adoptions. I interviewed five women adopted from China and raised in the United States. These interviews were done either in person or over video call. I was primarily concerned with their personal experiences related to their adoptions, and the questions I asked them reflected that focus. These were the main methods I used to collect and produce knowledge.

From the very start of this process, I knew that my own subjectivity and initial understanding of my identifiers as a woman adopted from China and raised in the United States would both inform and be informed by this subject matter. I did not try to mask this part of myself in any way, and actively advertised it to my informants both to maintain transparency and, at some points, attempt to better relate to them. I assumed that because we had this “on paper” shared set of identifiers as women adopted from China and raised in the United States, we might better connect with one another. Thinking about myself as an insider, and even making assumptions of an insider-outsider dichotomy, was both useful and precarious. Assuming the insider-outsider dichotomy only served to reinforce the homogenization of my informants and me. This labeled me as “one of them” (an insider), despite not having proof of a concrete, interactive community of adoptees who feel the same way. While I do feel that expressing these identities were helpful, it wasn’t until my first interview with Irene that I began questioning these labels, as well as my assumptions based on them.

Informants

While all five of my interviewees described themselves as adopted, female-identifying, and college-aged, they all described different parental units and upbringings. Carolyn was raised by two women (now married to each other) who she described as white, and has a younger sister who is also adopted from China; Kate was adopted by two women, who she described as white, who were in a romantic relationship and are now separated; Michelle was raised by a single mother, who she described as white, and has a younger sister who is also adopted from China; Irene was raised by heterosexual parents of different ethnic backgrounds, whom she described as “Hispanic” and “white”; and Jan did not explicitly reveal the status of her parents. Additionally, I was raised by a white-identifying heterosexual married couple and have a younger sister who is also adopted from China. None of the women described their hometowns as very racially diverse, though some described their hometowns as more racially diverse than others, and some were described as “very white.” No two families of the women I interviewed were the same.

Assumptions of Race in the United States

An important assumption to begin with, one ubiquitous to the United States, is that race is a biological fact. Goodman (2000) deconstructs the popular connection between genetics and race, and provides six reasons why thinking about race as biological does not hold up: race is based on stagnant types, human variation is continuous, human variation is non-concordant, the fact that within-group variation is greater than variation among the conceptions of races is scientifically proven, classification of race is inconsistent, and there is no clarity as to what race is and is not (p. 1700). Goodman’s concise breakdown of the undeniable fact that race is a human construction rather than a biological fact often clashes with the United States’ long history with racial issues that depended on the assumption that race is a biological fact. Smedley (2011) acknowledges this lived reality of race and the implications of these assumptions by establishing that “in whatever context race comes to play, it conveys the meaning of social distance that cannot be transcended” (p. 19). This touches on the theme of adoption central to this essay. In this way, I will continue to use non-biologically based racial terms to describe the phenotypes (physical expression of genotypes or the observable characteristics of an individual such as skin color and hair color) of some individuals. When adoptees are identified as being in a separate racial category from their parents, people often do not assume a familial relation until the adoptee or parent explicitly establishes one. This

is not only applicable to adoptees; Goodman explains that because genes do not express themselves according to our categories of race, biological children such as those that identify as biracial and multiracial (children of parents from different ancestral backgrounds who have phenotypes that are different from each other) can also be misidentified. This application will reappear later in a discussion of family and instances of misrecognition.

Examining Self-Identification as a Process

When I began this project, identity was a key theme that I wanted to explore. In my own life, defining my identity was inherently wrapped up in my status as an adoptee. I felt like what Abu-Lughod (1991) describes as “‘halfies’ — people whose national or cultural identity is mixed by virtue of migration, overseas education, or parentage” (p. 137). My cultural identity was American by virtue of both migration and claimed parentage, but Chinese by virtue of ancestry and assumed connection to phenotype. As this project developed, I looked to focus less on identity itself, and more on the process of identification. If identity is a defined, hard-and-fast determination of who one is, then identification is the “process that keeps identity at a distance, that prevents identity from ever approximating the status of an ontological given” (Fuss, 1995, p. 2). Think of identity as to “identify *as*” and identification as “to identify *with*”; an individual may not have the same “on-paper” labels as a group, but may otherwise fit into the workings of the group through identification. I apply this to the development of an identity through the process of identification in myself and in relation to my informants. Initially, I understood my identity to *be* the combination of female, adopted from China, and raised in the United States, and I attached this combination of identities to other people who were also female, adopted from China, and raised in the United States. In other words, I subscribed myself and others to an ontological and essential identity. Where I went wrong was assuming that other people who fit into this combination of categories would also use it to define their identities. A better way to think about this is to consider myself as identifying *with* them, rather than identifying *as* them. By identifying *with* them, I acknowledge that we have shared experiences based on some shared personal histories while also acknowledging that we have very different lives and reflect on them differently. If I were to identify *as* them, I would make a more unbreakable connection between having shared experiences and assuming we might reflect on them in the same way. This identification is envisioned as more of a spectrum than a set of fixed categories, allowing an ongoing development of movement across and along that spectrum as we change and undergo new experiences.

Irene sums up her identity formation through identification succinctly:

Where it really hit home for me was understanding that yeah, I'm not really Asian, but I'm not actually American. I'm Asian-hyphen-American, and that inhabits a completely different space and a completely different experience than someone who looks Asian and was raised in Asia or someone who is white and raised in America. (Irene, personal communication, May 2018)

Irene's quote served as a model for how I began reframing my process of identification. I more explicitly included the word "adoptee" into my personal definition. By finding a variety of balances between being Asian and American, accepting some labels and acknowledging their subjective nature, and allowing myself to form an identification, I can continue to develop the way that I think about myself. For other women, this description might be dramatically inaccurate according to their conceptions of themselves and the way they formed their identities depending on their own reflections, their family, and the treatment they received from strangers. Ultimately, this speaks to the impossibility of identifying a single adoptee experience, but it does not erase the ability to analyze and identify certain communal behaviors and feelings.

Articulating Family in the Context of Adoption

Without leading them too much, during my interviews I tried asking my informants to describe how they related to their families as adoptees:

Irene: You don't say, "oh my adopted parents," you say, "oh my parents." (Irene, personal communication, May 2018)

Carolyn: It's not like, "oh they're different from me," it's just, "they are my parents." (Carolyn, personal communication, May 2018)

Michelle: When I look at my mom, like, yes, I realize that she's like a brown-haired white lady, but like, that's not what I think immediately when I look at her, I'm not like, "oh my mom looks different from me," I'm just like, "mom." (Michelle, personal communication, May 2018)

For some of the women I talked to, a concept of a “normal” family was difficult to articulate. In the United States, “culture uses phenotypical resemblances as the primary way that family ties are legitimized and authenticated” (Goss, 2018, p. 111). For people who look nothing like their families or who have “non-traditional” families, such as the adoptees I interviewed, this becomes a precarious situation. My informants negotiated a mental balance between consciously and unconsciously identifying family members as their family members. Irene, Carolyn, and Michelle all expressed a combination of their unconscious identification of their parent(s) as their parent(s) with the conscious and obvious knowledge that they don’t resemble their parent(s) at all. The language they used to describe their parent(s) does not indicate that in a technical sense, their parent(s) are adoptive and not biological. They were clearly aware of this fact, but it did not change the way they felt towards those who raised them. As Michelle explained, when she sees her mother, her immediate thought is not that she and her mother differ in appearance: it is that she identifies this woman as her mother.

Because of phenotype-based notions of family in the United States, it is useful to reference Ann Anagnost’s (2000) concept of misrecognition. This refers to circumstances of dissociation, which are frequent in interactions with strangers who do not recognize that a child and mother are in fact family (Anagnost, 2000). While Anagnost focuses on the perspectives of mothers of adoptees, I apply her theory to the perspectives of the adoptees themselves. Some of my informants recalled instances where they were not recognized as being the daughters of their mothers or instances where that familial relationship was questioned. Carolyn states: “in like grocery stores people would come up to [one of my moms] and be like ‘oh are these your children?’ or ‘are these your foster children?’” (Carolyn, personal communication, May 2018). Michelle also details an experience that she and her mother had in Beijing:

My mom and I actually went to Beijing together just for fun, and we got into a taxi cab and I got in first, and the taxi driver turned and started yelling at me. He must have thought I was stealing my mom’s cab. (Michelle, personal communication, May 2018)

These interactions were the result of strangers not recognizing that adult and child were family. While both can be categorized as instances of misrecognition, Carolyn and Michelle described different receptions of and reactions to these experiences. Carolyn told this story in order to highlight the racism she felt that she and her mothers experienced. Michelle told this story without explicit reference to any race-based discomfort. It was an awkward experience, but she was not necessarily offended by the misrecognition. Despite Michelle’s interaction involving yelling compared to Carolyn’s interaction involving a question, Michelle did not

describe hers as negative, while Carolyn did. While Michelle did not describe this particular interaction as negative, she did describe some other interactions as negative.

Four out of the five women I talked to had experienced some kind of interaction with another person (usually not someone who identifies as a person of color) to which they reacted negatively. I describe these interactions as negative because my informants either described them as “negative,” “bad,” “not good,” or “uncomfortable.” However, each woman had a different conception of the negative experience based on their perception of its severity, its source, and the presence or absence of a microaggression. Often, microaggressions are common verbal or nonverbal indications, comments, or actions which reinforce racial, gender, or any other stereotype and result in the perpetuation of the marginalization of certain groups of people. Not all of my informants used this term to describe their negative interaction, highlighting the subjective experience of microaggressions. This is supported by Derald Wing Sue’s (2011) book on microaggressions, which states:

how a person of color [...] perceives a microaggression, the adaptive resources he or she possesses, his or her racial identity development, the presence of familial/ social support, what he or she decides to do [...] may moderate or mediate the meaning and impact of the incident. (p. 94)

Although I think this definition puts more of the work on the person perceiving the comment or action as a microaggression, it does point to the autonomy they have in the very definition of a microaggression. For example, Jan explained her distaste for the descriptor of “banana,” that is, someone who is “yellow” on the outside and “white” on the inside, while Michelle didn’t have strong negative feelings towards her mother using the word “Twinkie” (the same concept as a banana, “yellow” on the outside and “white” on the inside) as a term of endearment. The color yellow is historically used to describe the skin color of some East Asian peoples in the same way that white is used to describe the skin color of some people of European descent. In this way, the terms “banana” and “Twinkie” are used to describe a person who is racially identified or presents as East Asian but who acts like, speaks like, or shares a cultural background more closely aligned with a white-identifying person in the United States.

One way to understand this difference is by looking at who the comment came from, and with what motives. Michelle cites a comment from her mother, someone she is close with, and who loves her. Her mother’s motive was presumably not malicious. By contrast, Jan’s experience with the term was not connected to a close family member, and therefore she framed the intent and the meaning behind the comment as negative from the start.

Additionally, ambiguous and subjective instances like these are different when the adoptees are speaking for themselves. Irene, whose parents do not identify as white, explained in her own words that she likes to “joke” that “when people see me and my mom and dad, [it’s] always like that episode of *SpongeBob* where *SpongeBob* and *Patrick* like, raise the clam” (Irene, personal communication, May 2018). This refers to an episode created by Hillenburg (2002), on the animated television show, *SpongeBob SquarePants* where two of the main characters, *SpongeBob* (a square, yellow sea sponge) and *Patrick Star* (a pink starfish) come together to take care of a clam. Irene used this analogy to compare the animated characters’ physical incompatibilities to those of her and her family. Although *SpongeBob*, *Patrick*, and the clam baby do not *look* like a family, they *act* like a family. This humorous self-description of her family unit reinforces the importance of who is saying what about the adoption, adoptee, or adoptive parent(s). If someone else had described her family this way, it might not have been received in the same, humorous way. Because Irene made this comparison herself and was referring only to her family, she alone owned the joking statement. Although most of my informants described at least one negative interaction with reference to, or because of, their being adopted and not sharing an appearance with their families, Kate was adamant that she did not perceive any of her interactions involving questions or misrecognitions of her adoption as negative, harmful, or otherwise offensive toward herself. She explained that interactions are negative only when others feel awkward, which in turn causes her to feel awkward. She “wanted to tell them it was fine, like no worries” (Kate, personal communication, May 2018). She did, however, describe a matter involving attachment. She explained that transitional periods, such as the transition from high school to college, and even the transition between grades, “just takes me a little bit longer to adjust to the new environment or situation” (Kate, personal communication, May 2018). Kate attributed this in part to her status as an only child, as well as to the deficiency of physical touch as a baby in an overcrowded orphanage. Taken together with the experiences of my other informants, Kate’s description and interpretation shows the great variation in adoptee experiences.

Reactions to Varying Opportunities to Explore Chinese Ancestry

All the women I talked to described at least one exposure to what I am calling Chinese “things.” By this term I mean food, language, a trip, books, toys, or even other people which connected my informants to China. The way they judged this relationship varied. Irene and Kate explicitly indicated a wish to either take or keep up with Mandarin language courses,

while Carolyn noted ironically that she had taken Mandarin from elementary school through high school and still did not know the language. Michelle expressed a lack of interest in learning about Chinese culture, mentioning that when she was little, she was more fascinated with what she termed “Hispanic culture” rather than Chinese culture. Jan described the importance of having other close female friends who were also adopted from China, explaining: “I think having each other was really helpful because we all went through the same experiences even though we didn’t necessarily talk about them very often” (Jan, personal communication, May 2018).

Unlike Jan, Michelle and Irene reported a lack of close female friends adopted from China but did not feel they were missing out in any way. Similarly, though Carolyn had childhood friends who were adopted, since then she has not made any close adopted friends while in college. Additionally, Carolyn, Jan, and Michelle had all visited China since their adoptions, Irene was about to study abroad in China at the time of the interview, and Kate expressed a desire to visit and had made loose plans to go. Carolyn, Jan, Michelle, and Irene each had different goals and expectations for their visits. Carolyn and Jan travelled to their orphanages, Michelle went as part of a tourist trip, and Irene chose to study abroad in China to gain exposure to Chinese culture. These accounts fluctuated in both the amount of exposure and the desire for exposure to Chinese “things” as compared to American “things.” These variations provide even more evidence for the fact that there is no single adoptee experience.

The concept of “reculturation” (Baden et al., 2012) is useful for thinking through my informants’ responses. According to psychological knowledge and methods, reculturation is “a process of identity development and navigation through which adoptees develop their relationship to their birth and adoptive cultures via reculturative activities and experiences” (Baden et al., 2012, p. 390). According to Baden et al., reculturation ultimately results in one of five outcomes: adoptee culture, reclaimed culture, bicultural, assimilated culture, or combined culture. Adoptee culture is when adoptees identify primarily with adoptees, and secondarily with others of their birth culture or adoptive culture. Reclaimed culture is when adoptees immerse themselves in their birth culture. Bicultural is used to describe adoptees who identify with their adoptive culture and hyphenate their ethnic group with their American status (e.g. Chinese-American). Assimilated culture is when adoptees identify with their adoptive culture. Lastly, combined culture is when adoptees have a combination of any number of the previous outcomes. Because these outcomes imply the end of a constantly changing and dynamic process of self-reflection, I see this framework as useful for articulating the way some adoptees may engage with their cultures. This statement from Irene supports the temporal usefulness of these terms:

I think when you feel distances from a culture, I think that generation is always finding something to get back there, whether that be the culture or the cooking, or the language, or physically going back, so like I would like grasp onto whatever I could. (Irene, personal communication, May 2018)

Irene's description of "grasping" onto Chinese culture may suggest that she belongs in the reclaimed culture category, where adoptees immerse themselves in their birth culture. However, her response described a desire to grasp onto Chinese "things" when she was a child. Having grown, she went on to explain:

We don't need to keep holding ourselves to these standards of "oh I need to be Asian enough," or "I need to be American enough," and I think that's something so human to do, being the "not enough" of whatever identity. (Irene, personal communication, May 2018)

Irene's description suggests that when she was a child, she aligned more closely with the reclaimed cultural outcome, but over time, through self-reflection and a critical lens, her perspective and grasping desire changed to realize that she "didn't need to keep holding [herself] to these standards" (Irene, personal communication, May 2018). In this way, Baden et al. might say Irene aligns more closely with the adoptee cultural outcome since she emphasizes not needing to be Asian or American "enough." I would add on to this to include the temporal element and say that this is how Irene might align at the time of the interview.

Conclusion

Going into this project, I had my own preconceived notions about an "adoptee experience." I was seeking out women with whom I thought I would share experiences based on one aspect of shared identity. I was looking for solidarity and familiarity in the adoption community. This plan was flawed. The "adoptee experience" cannot be wrapped up in a single box with a bow on top because each woman had different conceptions of her own adoption. It was naïve to think that my informants, though they shared some of my identity markers, could possibly offer me something so simple. The role of the individual, the family, and the larger social context were all factors that went into each woman's process of identification; because they were all differently interconnected and experienced, each process of identification

varied. While this may seem obvious in hindsight and was perhaps obvious at the beginning to readers, I found this research integral to how I personally think about my identity in relation to others. I don't think it is generally invalid to seek out similarities in people you perceive as having alike features or backgrounds. However, I do think that to read too much into those perceived similarities can be inauthentic both to your results and in the representation of others. These are lessons I will continue to wrestle with, and will follow me as I continue to navigate experiences like the one with which I began this essay.

I would like to return to a seemingly simple term that I used earlier in my discussion of Chinese "things." To describe some of my informants going to China, I described them as "visiting China" as opposed to "traveling to China," "revisiting China," "taking a trip to China," or "returning to China." I did this for two reasons; first, this was the word my informants used to describe going to China. The second reason is because, to me, "to visit" implies going to a place you were not raised in, did not spend a significant amount of time in, and was not necessarily formative in your growing up. Additionally, "to visit" somewhere implies a temporality; a place you will not stay for long. I did not use the term "revisit" because that implies that they had gone to China before. Although technically we had all been to China because we were born there, it was not a place any of them described as "home."

In further research, it will be important to consider the gender of the adoptees more carefully because it is yet another layer that contributes to an individual's identification: not only in how they see themselves, but also in how others see them and subsequently treat them. In this analysis, a deeper discussion of China's one-child policy, of the intersection of race and gender in the United States, and of subsequent stereotypes that arise from that intersection is necessary. One reason I did not explore gender further in this paper was because it was not something that my informants discussed. In follow-up interviews, though, it will be crucial to creating a more holistic, intersectional analysis of female-identifying adoptees born in China and raised in the United States.

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Note

¹ All names are pseudonyms chosen by the informants.

What is a Healthy Body? Asking for a Friend. A Mini Ethnography About Undergraduate Women at Seattle University and Their Relationships with Food and Exercise.

Haley Witt, Anthropology

Faculty Mentor: Harriet Phinney, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Harriet Phinney, PhD

Student Editor: Celeste Salopek

Abstract

Transitional periods have been identified as potential triggers for eating disorders in college students (Karges 2016). Risk factors for eating disorders can be biological, psychological, and sociocultural (National Eating Disorder Association 2018). The sociocultural risk of eating disorders includes weight stigma which, according to feminist philosopher Susan Bordo, can greatly impact the self-image of North American women. Bordo refers to the “ideal” female body as the “slender body,” one that is reflected and glorified in contemporary media (1993). Although undergraduate women are a potentially fragile population, as they are away from their childhood eating and exercise routines and in an environment that provides an onslaught of perfected images, Seattle University informants described the university as being a healthier climate for body positivity than other universities. However, each of the informants also described using the weightlifting area of the campus fitness center as an uncomfortable experience. Informants ascribed their overall positive perception of the university to the absence of Greek life, widespread acceptance of cultural attitudes, and support from likeminded friends. Informants described other sociocultural factors that shaped their habits and body-image, including social media and at-home education about nutrition and exercise. By applying Bordo’s framework about gender and body image and examining the psychosocial impacts of objectification theory, this project seeks to unpack the various sociocultural factors that shape the way that three undergraduate women at Seattle University have come to form their body image, eating habits, and exercise routines as college students.

Introduction

As I turned around, my face grew hot. It wasn't just the 90-degree temperature in the room making me uneasy; it was the woman behind me who had, unintentionally, caused an emotional disruption to my normal yoga environment. The woman was wearing heavier makeup than most of the regulars, and her highlighted hair was carefully swept back. She was wearing a tight-fitting Victoria's Secret tank-top, with "University of Texas-Austin" splayed across the chest, and had left her beaded bracelets and Apple Watch on her wrists for the sweaty class. Pushing her glossy pastel-painted fingernails and toenails back into her first downward facing dog, she swiftly mirrored the postures instructed by the young and attractive male yoga teacher.

At first, I didn't understand my discomfort. Upon reflection, I realized that it was the first time I had seen someone display such a heavy dose of feminine manicuring in that environment. I immediately perceived her ensemble as an effort to impress the male instructor. I surveyed some of the other femme people in the class. As I watched them stand on their bright mats in leggings and tank tops I noticed that, when some of them felt his gaze upon them, they would push themselves harder in their poses. Was this a misinterpretation? Were they really perfecting their poses to impress him? Is that a heteronormative assumption? Is it regressive of me to assume that they would be presenting nicely just for a man? Do these femme people push themselves the same way under the gaze of any instructor regardless of their gender?

The phenomenon I was sensing was later confirmed by one of the women working at the front desk. She told me that she'd seen other noticeable displays of feminine manicuring for his class and described a woman adorned with a fresh face of makeup, and a very expensive yoga set, who had walked in to take his class the week prior. The employee added that many women who work at the yoga studio, and women who attend his classes, often gush about how they have a crush on him and come to his class just to stare at or impress him.

With my yoga classmates perceivably bending under the male gaze, I felt a flash of insecurity. As I looked at my stomach rolls in the mirror, I bent my sweaty body forward. I looked back at the well-manicured woman again. In the sleek, modern yoga studio I didn't perceive her as threatening or intimidating, per se. She just looked like a yoga-wear advertisement. Usually, when I look at print or digital media representations of models, I can identify the artifice of photoshop, posing, and lighting. But here, in my class, was a physical manifestation of those advertisements. It was unavoidable. The in-person advertisement seemed to scream in my head, "this is how models look when they do yoga. This is the gold standard. You wish you looked like this." During my short time living in Seattle this intense, familiar feeling had not yet reared its head. It felt intrusive and invasive; I had not invited this

insecurity. This was a sensation that I strongly associated with home.

I grew up in Phoenix, Arizona where “bikini season” lasted for more than half of the year. The warm-weather climate ensured that diet advertisers depicted pictures of the perfect “summer body” practically all year round. At the grocery store, checkout lines are covered with magazines urging you to “get your bikini body.” The desired aspects of this ideal are further demonstrated by the model’s whitened smile, bronzed skin, size DD breasts, hourglass waist, and muscular glutes. In Phoenix, the cultural construction and associated meanings of my “social skin,” my outward public presentation and sartorial choices that have deep social implications, are firmly rooted in a particular hegemonic femininity. I feel I am expected to mold my body to fit an ideal shape, to dress in styles that accentuate that shape, and to wear clothing brands that convey social conformity and class status. The implicit social pressures in Phoenix urge me, and women I know, to display femme bodies that are hairless, manicured, and coiffed.

When I first moved to Seattle University I immediately noticed a social contrast with Arizona, particularly regarding gender expression and body attitudes. I was delighted by the dramatic change in sartorial preferences that came with my relocation. Women walked about in noticeably androgynous looks; the cold weather climate meant that my peers were more concerned about my cool Doc Martens and fur-lined trucker jacket than how flat my stomach looked in my new swimsuit. This culture shock made me curious: are my peers at Seattle University comfortable in their bodies and gender expressions? What sociocultural factors at Seattle University are reducing or producing risk of disordered eating habits, fitness habits, or negative body images? What childhood factors do people attribute to their eating habits, fitness habits, and body images?

Methods and Fieldsites

This project was conducted over a ten-week period. I utilized a variety of research methods to gather data, including participant observation, formal interviews, informal interviews, life history interviews, visual media analysis, and document analysis. I analyzed viral online diet advertisements from celebrity figures like Kim Kardashian and Instagram photos from ultra-thin model, Alexis Ren. My participant observation took place primarily at the commercial hot yoga studio close to campus, and at the on-campus fitness center. Both of these locations are frequented by Seattle University students and alumni, but have significantly different clientele, presumably due to costs and services. The fitness center offers a variety of classes and equipment and is free for Seattle University students, while the yoga

studio costs nearly \$100 per month and only offers yoga and cycling classes.

My key informants were three Seattle University students, Lydia, Ava, and Emma. Lydia and Ava were residents of a dorm hall when I was its resident assistant. Emma and I are good friends who had met the previous year. I conducted interviews in Emma's apartment and in the residence hall where Ava, Lydia, and I resided. Ava, Lydia, and Emma are white women who grew up in the Pacific Northwest. Lydia and Ava are from Bellingham, Washington and Bend, Oregon, respectively. Emma is from Juneau, Alaska. All three women attended yoga classes at the studio I reference in this research. My findings are in no way meant to be representative of the population of undergraduate women at Seattle University or at the yoga studio.

I would like to recognize the importance of my own subjectivity and the nature of the questions I asked my informants. First, it's important to recognize that my position as a resident assistant at Seattle University alters the power dynamic in relation to Ava and Lydia who lived in the residence hall on my floor. Moreover, because we knew each other prior to this research project, the participants were aware of my current investment in body-positivity activism and my history of struggle with my own body image. It is important to point out that because my informants were already aware of my predisposition toward a body-positive and anti-diet lifestyle, it is possible that their answers were molded by that knowledge. However, I chose to interview women with whom I had a previous rapport because I hoped they would be comfortable talking to me about potentially sensitive and personal topics. I also surmised, based on my knowledge that each of these individuals talk about their bodies in casual conversation, that they would not be surprised or confused by any of our interviews.

Gender and the Body

Lydia and I sat on my couch as we prepared for the formal interview. She sat a bit stiffly at first, seemingly nervous and unsure of the questions I would ask. Lydia is tall and slender. She has medium length brown hair and speaks softly. From my previous interactions with her, I noticed she's a bit reserved in describing feelings, sensations, and experiences. She often keeps responses brief and concise. As the interview progressed, her posture loosened, and she spoke at greater length. When I asked for her thoughts on how the media portrays the female body, she said: "especially for females, with Instagram or whatever social media, it's kind of like you see the fitness models and all of these bodies. It seems like it's pushed upon girls, especially, to eat right or eat under a certain amount of calories a day" (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018). Lydia's comment, on the gendered and fixed amount of caloric

energy needed by folks who identify as women, is a pervasive theme in diet advertising and health campaigns.

While people of all gender identities experience eating disorders, or disordered eating and fitness patterns, systematic pressure placed on women to conform to a specific mold of femininity has been widely studied by many scholars. Feminist philosopher Susan Bordo cites slenderness as a contemporary ideal of feminine attractiveness and argues that women seek to control and manipulate their bodies as a means of social capital and power (1993). Bordo refers to the contemporary ideal as the “slender body,” which is a body free from excess “flab” or fat. According to Bordo, both body-building obsessions and anorexic behaviors stem from the same rejection of flab. Each is just a different manifestation of the same desire for a firm, controlled body. Pressures to conform to the slender body are found in various types of contemporary media and advertisements. Each of my informants mentioned the impacts of media on women’s bodies and confidence. Emma and Ava echoed similar sentiments about the ways that social media sets unhealthy standards for women and young girls, with Ava expressing that, “I have to remind myself, when I see a tabloid, that it’s photoshopped and not real” (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018).

Bordo theorized that the slender body is a result of varying patriarchal structures and can function to give women power in a variety of ways. A firm body, according to Bordo, is often perceived as a social indication that a woman leads an organized and composed lifestyle, whereas people often correlate fat with laziness. With the rise of women in male-dominated fields, Bordo says that women feel pressure to manipulate their figures to be more palatable to men. Bordo theorizes that some women feel pressure to neutralize and defeminize their bodies, in order to reduce visual cues that might threaten masculine power. As a result, women aim to decrease the size of their “feminine” bellies, breasts, or other features (1993). By exploring the way that gender expression is present in visual cues, such as body fat and muscle distribution, the nuanced motivations of women’s physical alterations become visible.

Caution on the First Floor of the Fitness Center

Inside the William F. Eisiminger Fitness Center, weightlifting equipment occupies the entire first floor. On a typical weekday, at peak gym times, you will find over a dozen male-presenting folks standing in front of the large mirror, watching their forms as they pump weights. They let out deep breaths that often sound like grunting. For people wanting to use the first floor of the gym, maneuvering around these men is no easy task. The safest walkway is between their bodies and the mirror, which means that they will see you as you shuffle

past. Often all of the weightlifting machines and benches are occupied, so, if you want to use one you must linger in the area until your desired equipment is free. Men occupy most free weights at any given moment. Sometimes, they come to the gym in pairs. More often, it seems, they come solo, disinterested in the actions of other men, and focused only on their own forms in the mirror. I interpret the general energy in this space as competitive, though it's arguably a competition with oneself.

Lydia, Ava, and Emma all ascribed occasional feelings of discomfort, shame, or anxiety to their experiences of exercising, or thinking about exercising, on the first floor of the fitness center. The women mainly ascribed these feelings to being intimidated by men. Fears of being judged or objectified were among their concerns. Lydia admitted to feeling self-conscious about her ability to lift weights in that particular space. She explained that she was accustomed to all-women training environments: "I know how to weightlift from being in sports in high school, but I'm still uncomfortable being on the first floor of the gym. I stick to the second floor" (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018). In 1997, psychology professors Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts developed what they refer to as "objectification theory." Often cited by other psychology scholars, objectification theory refers to the ways that the heterosexual male gaze shapes the sociocultural experience of being in a female body. Objectification can result in habitual body self-monitoring, including checking, pinching, and other kinds of active self-scrutiny. This monitoring can prompt feelings of shame and anxiety, and can potentially decrease bodily awareness cues of hunger, fatigue, or depressive symptoms. According to Fredrickson and Roberts, "accumulations of such experiences may help account for an array of mental health risks that disproportionately affect women: unipolar depression, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders" (1997, 173).

Objectification theory may provide an added layer of theoretical understanding to the stressful phenomenon described by my informants. Discomfort in a male-dominated weightlifting space is a poignantly gendered issue that these women register as an attack on the inherent worth and abilities of their bodies. Indeed, it is for this reason that these women have turned to the alternative fitness space of the yoga studio. I do wonder, however: if this gym were the only fitness space these women had access to, would their attitudes about fitness change? Would they become discouraged from using the gym? Would they eventually develop negative associations with exercise and their bodies? I'm told anecdotally that many femme people resort to using only the upstairs portion of the gym. As for myself, I have stopped going to the gym altogether. Now, I attend the same yoga studio as my participants.

Each of my three research participants attend the same local yoga studio as their primary source of exercise. I asked Emma if her yoga classes were more comfortable to her because it's predominately women who attend them. She said that, no, she doesn't mind having men in her yoga classes. Yet she described the exercise environment at the yoga studio

as being different from the gym. The way that exercise is conducted in the gym space means that men have not only a monopoly on equipment but also the perceived ability to lift heavier weights. By contrast, in the yoga studio poses, space, and equipment are more accessible and egalitarian. Lydia, Emma, and Ava feel more empowered by the space that the yoga studio provides.

No Sorority Stress? No Problem

Ava turned toward me on the couch, smiling and referencing the lunch in her hands: “have you had food from this food truck before? It’s amazing.” As she munched away, I thought about the irony of how we’d be talking diet culture as she ate. Ava has bobbed blonde hair and a loud speaking voice. She’s passionate about learning French and is generally very sociable. When I asked her about the climate around food and nutrition at Seattle University, she attributed Seattle U’s positive food culture to the lack of gendered “hierarchy” that she said is enforced by sororities and fraternities:

We don’t have Greek life here. My sister was in a sorority for only one quarter because they tried to tell her what she should look like ... they wanted her to color her hair differently, they wanted her to dress differently ... Seattle U is lucky that we don’t have some weird hierarchy on sororities and fraternities because there’s such a stigma that comes with that ... She dropped it because she’s like you’re making me feel worse about myself and there’s nothing wrong with me ... That’s why I chose this school ... We’re supposed to pull each other up, we’re in a man’s world, so to have each other pushing each other down about bodies and stuff is just the weirdest concept. (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018)

The hierarchical femininity that Ava describes echoes the way Bordo refers to the body as a vehicle that women use to achieve power and superiority, either in competition with other women or for the pleasure of men. When I talked with Lydia, she shared a similar story about a friend who is attending the University of Arizona and is in a sorority. Lydia said that, when her friend was visiting her at Seattle University, she was surprised that Lydia and her friends were going to a party in what she considered to be comparatively casual and less-revealing clothes. Lydia explained that at Seattle University you can wear something to a party

that you'd wear to class, which her friend said isn't standard at the University of Arizona, especially in Greek life (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018) My informants perceived Greek life as detrimental to the mental health and self-worth of their peers; the pressure to wear certain clothes and appear a certain way on social media is heightened for those participating in Greek life.

Social Media: Fitness Models, Food Videos, and a Growing Body Positivity Community

According to an article published in March 2017 by the Huffington Post, Americans spent over \$60 billion yearly on diet and weight loss products (Parrish, 2017). According to diet and beauty advertisements, women's bodies ought to be the right kind of thin and just the right degree of curvy, legs ought to be free of cellulite and stretch marks, and "muffin tops" ought to be eliminated. There are lotions, creams, pills, teas, cleanses, and other products that promise desirable results. Each of my informants addressed ways that the diet industry uses the media to perpetuate narratives on health and fitness that can be damaging to women's bodies. Lydia said, "I've found myself looking at these fitness Instagrams and thinking, 'Maybe I should try doing these exercises because these women have really nice bodies' and stuff like that" (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018).

When diet businesses and fitness Instagrammers make women feel like they need to adhere to a certain physique, they can be coopted into participating in food and exercise behaviors that can be dangerous to their physical and mental health (Selig, 2010). "It's really hard in this day and age," Ava said. "Women are expected to be 5' 8" and thin ... it's so wrong. Women aren't going around like they have no flaws and looking like a tiny little stick ... It is hard being a woman" (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018).

Michel Foucault's concept of "biopower" is useful for theorizing the relationship between media discourses about the body and my informant's discussions about the pressures they feel to shape their bodies. Through mass media messaging, women can deduce that they are inherently more valuable to society and potential partners, and will feel better about themselves when they adhere to hegemonic femininity. According to Michel Foucault, biopower is "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations" (1976, 140). Drawing on this concept of biopower, Cressida Heyes in her book *Foucault Goes to Weight Watchers* emphasizes that the diet industry has become wise to the changing access to knowledge about dieting and has linguistically shifted as a result. Now "diets" are being marketed as "lifestyle changes"

and “eating plans” to avoid the negative stigma associated with fad diets. The discourse is constantly changing to target new forms of consumption, all of which focus on women’s bodies. When I asked Emma where women should get information on health and nutrition, she said that was a difficult question to answer, adding, “there’s always something new, from somewhere else, that’s the new healthy thing now” (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018).

Foucault also pointed out that “where there is power, there is resistance.” (1976, 95). Beginning with the foundation of the Body Positive Institute In 1996, a countermovement called the ‘body positivity,’ or ‘body-posi,’ movement began to emerge. The movement now celebrates bodies of all sizes, abilities, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Emma, Ava, and Lydia all mentioned the movement in our conversations about media. “There’s such a big movement now, more companies are starting to display women that aren’t your average model,” Ava said. “One size doesn’t fit all, that’s not a thing. I saw an ad the other day for a swimsuit line that had a model that wasn’t your average thin model. It’s so nice seeing a variety of body types because there’s not just one ... There’s definitely a change which is huge because getting rid of the stigma that there’s a certain way women should look and eat is really good” (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018). Awareness of the body positive movement is affirming for these three women, and using body positive media to educate themselves has been an experience that has benefitted their overall sense of self.

Seattle U is Perceivably Authentic to “Whole Person” Care

Emma, resting her hands on her kitchen counter, bounced her weight from the ball of her foot back to her heels. Emma has mid-length blonde hair and an affinity for naturopathic and holistic medicine. Emma’s Alaskan heritage can be seen in her apartment décor and in her attire, which often consists of XTRATUF boots and Carhartt beanies. Emma spoke fondly of a friend she met during early high school who helped her learn about healthy food habits and cooking. Emma said that her friend, a swimmer, taught her how to make smoothies and care for her body. Emma’s friends at Seattle University are also invested in self-care and are attentive to when their food and exercise habits detract from their wellbeing, or when they cause stress. Seattle University advertises its mission (in advertising materials and on the SU website) as “caring for the whole person.” While Ava described Seattle University as almost suffocating in its positive messaging, she added “Seattle U is really good about body positivity” (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018). Lydia said that she first she heard body positive messages at Seattle University’s new student orientation at the beginning of the year:

“I think from orientation and everything, they have pushed that everybody should love their own body. It has to do with Seattle culture too. Within my own friend group, I’ve found that we’re all having fairly the same thoughts about body image and being happy with yourself” (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018). Each of my informants said that their rapport with their friends at Seattle University is positive. Ava said that she had never experienced any body or food shaming during her time at Seattle University and said that though she has advanced knowledge, because she was raised by a nutritionist, her friends seem to share similar knowledge and attitudes about food and the body (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018). My research participants also considered Seattle as a city to be an accepting environment. Emma noted that in Seattle she feels more comfortable wearing whatever she wants (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018). Lydia echoed Emma’s sentiment when she recounted the conversation she had with her friend who was visiting from out of state (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018). Because Seattle University includes care for the person as a core value of the university mission, these women feel that they have systemic support for self-affirmation and healthy choices for practical eating and exercise. They do not receive message about changing their body shapes, but rather about taking care of the vessel that allows them to exist. This systemic support has contributed to these women’s overall feelings of satisfaction at Seattle University, and in turn combatted the lure of the “slender body” perpetuated by the diet industry.

What Happens When Family Dinners End?

Disruption of mealtime routine and newfound food agency can prompt uncertainty. Emma highlighted this experience, detailing her transition into cheerleading. As cheer practice started to overlap with her family’s typical mealtimes, fixing food for herself became a new adventure: “I always had family dinner until high school when I was in sports and then I still ate what I felt like was pretty healthy. My first couple of years in high school I did not eat healthy: I would just binge on all of the junk food because I had the freedom to, I felt like, at that point” (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018). Emma added that all of her cheer exercise meant that she felt increasingly justified to eat what she wanted. However, as she started to notice a difference in athletic performance, she changed her outlook. With increased intuition, Emma said that she learned to feed her body the foods that it preferred.

Being home for dinner every night was also an important tradition for Ava’s family. Her mother, who is a nutritionist, taught her children the food pyramid and the importance of a balanced lifestyle. But when Ava left for college, she started to eat differently than she used to

with her family. Ava said that, growing up, she never had processed foods or snacks with high-fructose corn syrup in them around the house. Now she frequents the on-campus convenience store, where much of what is sold contains high-fructose corn syrup. The convenience store is in the basement of the hall where she resides, so it's easy to rely on it for snacks and late-night cravings. It's been liberating for her to eat these formerly off-limit snack foods, but it's been important for her to maintain a diet with some semblance to what she had living at home. Ava eats whatever she's craving but tries to think about balancing her diet with fruits, vegetables, grains, and protein. Ultimately, while she mentioned that access to tasty new snack foods and always-available grilled cheese is tempting, she's learning how to balance nutritional density when she's eating independently (Ava, personal communication, May, 2018).

Family mealtimes often help solidify social values and food practices. According to Elinor Ochs and Merav Shohet, who conducted research on varying cultural mealtime structures, "mealtimes can be regarded as pregnant arenas for the production of sociality, morality, and local understandings of the world" (2006, 35). They found that American families valued mealtimes for different reasons than Italian families: "at the dinner table of many U.S. families, for example, the dominant message is that children should eat their meal because it is good for their health, that is, it is nutritious. Alternatively, Italian families emphasize the pleasurable qualities of the meal they are consuming together" (2006, 46-47). Transitioning out of the routine of family dinners, which are often culturally significant, can result in different eating behaviors, depending upon how individuals think about food. Lydia described her transition to college:

"[when I came to college], I definitely heard my mom's voice in the back of my head like, 'eat your salad, eat your vegetables.' It's a little harder now because my mom always prepared meals and had a healthy vegetable or fruit to eat. Now I'm on my own to make sure I get my vegetables." (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018)

Each of my informants cited the opportunity to establish a healthy relationship with food and diet before coming to college as a very important milestone. Cultural dinner practices and childhood food habits have significantly contributed to the mindset of each of these women.

Conclusion

When Emma was told by her doctor that she had a chronic health condition that required her to rest and stop exercising, she heeded her doctor's caution. She took a break from yoga, adjusted her diet as her doctor advised, and then returned to yoga with more energy than before. She knew that she needed to take care of her mental and physical health to have the energy for one of her favorite activities (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018). This response seems to indicate that Emma values her health over her desire to exercise, which is not the case for women across the country who exhibit disordered fitness patterns. To get to a place where she can put her health before her physical appearance, Emma endured a few significant life events. First, Emma grew to develop a healthy attitude toward her body while she lived at home. Next, Emma chose a college that advertises itself as intentionally fostering an inclusive and positive climate, and one that does not have a Greek life system. Finally, Emma found likeminded friends who supported her healthy eating, exercising, and living choices, and in the process, learned about nutrition, probiotics, and the body positivity movement. During our conversations, Emma attributed her happiness to each of these events (Emma, personal communication, May, 2018). Ava and Lydia's stories share similar features with Emma's. As Lydia said, "healthy for me has to do with my own mental wellbeing and happiness" (Lydia, personal communication, May, 2018). Many of my own peers from Phoenix, who grew up with negative body images, chose to go to schools that are unlike Seattle U. As a result, they consume different media, and struggle greatly with their confidence, their food, and their exercise habits. However, the women in Seattle that I spoke to experienced and embraced a variety of different sociocultural processes that allowed them to be comfortable with their bodies at this time in their lives.

Nevertheless, while Emma, Ava, and Lydia expressed mostly positive feelings about how their time at Seattle University has impacted their body image, they spoke most negatively of the male-dominated weightlifting space in the fitness center. It seems that even Seattle University students are not exempt from the effects of objectification. This phenomenon prompts me to wonder why the fitness center is so markedly different in its gendered atmosphere than the rest of Seattle University's campus. If objectification theory is accurate and the male gaze can be harmful to the female psyche, and removing patriarchal pressures from social spaces allows women to feel more comfortable in their bodies and prevents eating disorders, are women-only spaces necessary for women's confidence? This research leaves me with many more questions about how women form their ideas of health and beauty. In regard to upbringing, I wonder, how can the nature of family dinners predispose women to disordered or healthy eating habits? Is toxic femininity at play in sororities? Examples from my

informants' lives indicate potentially significant sociocultural factors that contribute to health and wellness in a digital era that seems to be ridden with the influence of diet-culture. How can these stories be educational for undergraduate women, undergraduate universities, and families in preventing disordered habits and low body confidence?

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Notes

¹ When the gender identity of individuals or groups of people is unknown, but they appear to be femme-presenting, I will refer to them as "femme people" or "femme persons" so as to not assume their preferred gender.

² I refer here to the term coined by Terence S. Turner in his work "The Social Skin."

³ Personal names used in this paper are pseudonyms, unless otherwise specified. All research participants provided informed consent. Seattle University Office of Sponsored Projects granted IRB approval to conduct this research.

⁴ As I am writing this, I'm reviewing an Instagram post written by a dear friend who is devastated because she got rejected by every sorority she had tried to join.



Contributor Biographies

Chief Faculty Editor

Molly Clark Hillard, PhD, is an Associate Professor of English, and Chief Faculty Editor for *SUURJ*. She is thrilled to be collaborating with students and faculty across campus for a third year of this amazing journal. She is also the Director of the Student Research Program at Seattle University, for which she hosts the student conference SUURA, and awards research grants. When she is not busy supporting student research initiatives, Dr. Hillard can be found teaching and writing on Victorian literature and culture for the English Department, University Honors, the University Core, and Women and Gender Studies. She is the author of *Spellbound: the Fairy Tale and the Victorians* (Ohio State University Press, 2014), and has published widely in peer-reviewed journals and books in her field. Dr. Hillard has moonlighted as a technical writer and copyeditor for various non-profit and for-profit organizations, where her subjects are as various as snow leopards, ultrasound technology, and black holes. In her other waking hours, Dr. Hillard is an avid runner and cake decorator, and parent to two small kids and two large cats.

Journal Design

Caleb Hou graduated from Seattle University's Digital Design program in 2014. He designed the logo, brand, and visual aesthetics of *SUURJ* after joining the team in Fall Quarter of 2017. He currently works as a User Experience Designer at Best Buy's Mobile Apps team and enjoys socializing and bringing his dog, Audrey, to the park in his free time. He is passionate about design and hopes to continue to find more opportunities to exercise his visual and creative skills in projects such as *SUURJ* in the future.

Student Editors

Leah Dooley is a third-year student majoring in Women and Gender Studies and English Literature and minoring in LGBTQ Studies. She anticipates graduating June 2020. During winter quarter 2018, she edited "I Warrant You We Will Play Our Parts:...." by Amanda Fawcett. In the summer of 2019, Leah won a fellowship through the US-UK Fulbright Commission and took classes at the Globe theatre in London. She is also a contributor to Volume 3.

Amy Gulley is a senior at Seattle University, graduating in 2019 with a BA in English for Creative Writing with Departmental Honors. Amy edited Serena Oduro's essay titled "The Travail of the Freedmen's Daughters" and Raechel Warren's essay titled "What About the Patient? The Effects of Mergers and Acquisitions in the Hospital Industry on Patient Care." Though unsure what she'll do with her degree after graduating, Amy is grateful to *SUURJ* for providing her with valuable professional experience that she can use to pursue a career in editing or any other job that involves completing tasks on time, planning, working with peers, leadership, emailing, writing in English, or communicating with people in general. Her year-long experience with *SUURJ* has been incredibly rewarding and one of the best endeavors of her time at SU.

Tzu Hung (John) Huang is a senior at Seattle University majoring in photography. Born and raised in Taiwan, John has traveled to Seattle, Boston, and Tokyo for college, and has interests in Art and Publishing. John was an editor for Leah Dooley's "Berthe Morisot and Painted Mirrors" and Chhavi Mehra's "The Consequences of Universities Overlooking the Challenges Faced by International Students." He enjoyed this year-long process of working with *SUURJ* and gaining hands-on experiences with Dr. Hillard and his classmates. John will graduate in June 2020.

Lauren Lee is a junior Cultural Anthropology major with a minor in Writing Studies. She served as the student editor for Leah Siff's essay, "Deconstructing an Assumed Shared Identity: Developing Self-Identification, Articulating Family, and Exploring Varied Experiences of College-Aged Women Adopted from China and Raised in the United States." *SUURJ* has been an instrumental experience in shaping Lauren's professional skills and development. She is excited to be able to take the skills learned throughout this course and apply them to her everyday and professional life.

Mikayla Medbery is graduating in June of 2019 with a Bachelor's Degree in Cultural Anthropology and a minor in Writing Studies. She served as the student copyeditor for Emily Boynton's essay, "Romanticizing Abuse: Comparing the Depiction of Violence in Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Meyer's *Twilight* series." Her experience on the *SUURJ* team provided her with a valuable introduction to the publishing field. She hopes to utilize the skills and knowledge gained during her involvement with *SUURJ* in a professional capacity—combining her passion for writing and social justice at a publishing firm which elevates historically underrepresented voices in academia and literature.

Thea Mercer, currently in her junior year at Seattle University, is majoring in Arts Leadership with a minor in Anthropology. Prior to her admission into the program, she conducted an independent ethnographic research study on forced migration in Mongolia while living in Ulaanbaatar. This experience renewed her dedication to higher education and she remains an advocate of searching for ways to make education accessible for all. She feels the work accomplished by *SUURJ* has strengthened her ability to pursue research and professional opportunities which contribute to the global community. Thea was the student editor for Anne-Celine Jeffroy-Meynard's essay in Volume 3, and will be acting as the student liaison for Volume 4 in the 2019 - 2020 academic year.

Celeste Salopek is a senior at Seattle University and will be graduating with her BA in English Creative Writing. Celeste was born, and partly raised, in New Mexico, but she moved to Connecticut for high school. Although Celeste started school at Seattle University as a swimmer on the swim team, she soon discovered her true passion to be words. After graduating, Celeste hopes to earn her copyeditor's license and begin work as a career copyeditor. Until then, Celeste will continue working her current jobs as a swim instructor for young kids and swim coach.

Oliver Tufte is a second-year Mathematics major with intended minors of Writing Studies and Computer Science. This year, he edited "The Influence of Living Situation on Help-Seeking Behaviors of Undergraduate Students." He is very grateful for the opportunity to join the *SUURJ* community and work on a project that he is passionate about. Oliver plans on graduating in 2021 and pursuing a career in STEM communications.

Rachel Van Liew is a second year Premajor with a Writing Studies minor. She copyedited the piece "The French Intervention in the 2012 Malian Conflict: Neocolonialism Disguised as Counterterrorism" during winter quarter of 2018, and then continued to work with *SUURJ* on the marketing team for the journal's launch. In addition to her work with the journal, she also works as a writing consultant for Seattle University's Writing Center and is a member of the Track & Field team. Rachel has greatly appreciated her opportunity to be a part of *SUURJ* Volume 3, and she believes that it has contributed to her professional development during her time at Seattle U.

Falen Wilkes is a junior at Seattle University, graduating in 2020 with a BA in History, Philosophy, and Women and Gender Studies with an English minor. Falen edited Anna Kaplan's essay titled "Stop Trying to Make Fetch Happen." Falen is looking forward to tying together her fields of study next year with an interdisciplinary honors thesis and is grateful to SUURJ for teaching her editing skills that will aid her in this task. Her experience with SUURJ has re-ignited her love for writing, and she will be traveling to Ireland this summer for the SU Writer's Workshop and independent research.

Student Authors

Emily Boynton graduated from Seattle University in winter 2018 with a major in English and a minor in Psychology. During her senior year she took part in departmental honors, which led to her research in Victorian literature and depictions of abuse. This research paper combines her interest in literature and psychology by examining how novels and media shape the way people think and interact with the world, particularly the impact cultural narratives have on adolescent identity formation. She hopes to continue researching and exploring these themes in the future. Currently, Emily works as an assistant editor for SagaCity Media.

Leah Dooley: Bio included above.

Amanda Fawcett is a fourth year Departmental Honors English Major who will graduate in June 2019. Her research paper investigates the role of metatheatrics and gender performance in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. This project stems from her persistent interest in the role of social technologies in shaping human life, and the project seeks to complicate the prescriptive interpretations of the play's gender politics. Hoping to become a researcher and scholar, Amanda's primary academic focuses are feminist technoscience, film as literature, and medieval studies. She plans to pursue a PhD with the goal of teaching at the university level.

Anne-Celine Jeffroy-Meynard is a Seattle University graduate with a Bachelor's degree in International Studies with Departmental Honors. She focused on public and global health and studied abroad in India, South Africa, Brazil, and Guatemala. Anne-Celine interned with USAID and Malaria No More, and had a fellowship with the Slade Gorton International Policy Center during her undergraduate studies. While in Guatemala for the International Development Internship Program, Anne-Celine recognized the importance of nutrition and food access. After returning from the internship in Guatemala with Friendship Bridge, she

wrote her Honors International Studies thesis on nutritional transitions in Guatemala. In the future, Anne-Celine plans to attend graduate school to further her experience conducting research on public health issues through community driven strategies.

Genevieve Jesse is a recent graduate of Seattle University, having completed her Bachelor of Arts in International Studies with Departmental Honors and French in May 2018. Her research was inspired by her first trip to the African continent—to Morocco—in June 2017. She then conducted her research on Mali and post-colonial dynamics in her International Studies and French capstone courses. She traveled to Washington, D.C. in May 2018 to conduct an interview with a Department of Defense official and research at the Library of Congress, acquiring unique insight into the policies and perspectives surrounding the French military intervention into Mali in 2013. Upon graduating, Genevieve moved to Washington, D.C. where she is completing a Master of Arts in International Affairs with concentrations on Africa and security issues. She works full-time, researching and writing about African economics and politics, highlighting African scholars' voices and the positive developments on the continent.

Anna Kaplan is a fourth-year student at Seattle University from Charlotte, North Carolina. She will graduate in March 2019 with a B.A. in Communication and Media with a specialization in Journalism. Her research was conducted with Dr. Julie Homchick Crowe in the Research Seminar in Communication course during spring quarter 2018. Her paper analyzes how the "Mean Girl" archetype is represented through different roles and voices in the early 2000's film *Mean Girls*, and how those portrayals of women present a problematic form of feminism. She plans to pursue a Master's degree in Journalism in 2020, and begin her career in as an investigative reporter after graduation.

Chhavi Mehra came from India at the age of 19 to pursue her dream of attaining an university degree. She is majoring in Communication and Media (Journalism). As a woman coming from India, Mehra experienced firsthand how she was once among the "voiceless" and learned to speak up for herself through writing and public speaking opportunities presented to her by the campus community. To advance her communication skills, she works as a KXSU news reporter and Alfie Scholars Program's communications coordinator. She believes in giving voice to the voiceless. After earning a bachelor's degree in journalism, Mehra plans to use her writing abilities to shine light on the stories of the underrepresented communities in India and America and provide them with a safe space where they can comfortably speak. Through her piece, Mehra hopes to empower her fellow international students by increasing awareness of their challenges and advocating for better support on university campuses.

Serena Oduro is a third-year student from Portland, Oregon, and is pursuing a BA in History and minors in Philosophy, Business Administration, and Chinese. Her interests in art history began at the University of Sussex as a Fulbright Summer Institute recipient taking the course “Royals: Art and Architecture.” Serena pursued art history to strengthen her historical and social analysis. She continued to pursue her interests in art through writing “The Travail of the Freedmen’s Daughters” in her University Honors course “Representation and Culture” taught by Dr. Ken Allan and through her marketing internship at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Serena immersed herself in the dynamics of race through art in writing “The Travail of the Freedmen’s Daughters” and is continuing to use her art history skills to deepen her understanding of society, both past and present.

Emma C. Pierce is a senior Psychology major with interests in quantitative and qualitative methods, modern perceptions of madness, and mental health resources for college-aged students. Her research was conducted in the Statistics and Research Methods course at Seattle University and investigated the relationship between living on or off campus and help-seeking behaviors. Emma is graduating in June 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and recently accepted a two-year position at McLean Hospital in Belmont, MA, as a Post-Baccalaureate Clinical Fellow in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Leah Siff is a fourth-year student studying Cultural Anthropology with a minor in History, and is interested in exploring user research after graduation in the spring. As a woman adopted from China at a young age, she was interested in applying some anthropological methods to examine other female-identifying adoptees' experiences. The interviews she facilitated resulted in a specific and personal interpretation of how her informants conceptualized their own adoptions. While her project was not an auto-ethnography, it was rooted in her own history, experiences, and reflections. She hopes that you find her study into adoption and identity formation interesting and that it encourages you to think about what we mean when we describe “the experience” of a group of people.

Raechel Warren completed her Bachelor of Arts in Economics at Seattle University with a minor in Business Administration in March of 2019. It was during Raechel’s junior year that Dr. Erin Vernon, now her Faculty Content Editor, helped Raechel to discover her niche: Healthcare Economics. The research for this essay stemmed from her interest in developing a deeper understanding of the role business plays in how healthcare is administered and how patients are affected. What fascinates Raechel most, and drives her to make a difference, is how quickly this field is changing and how its complexities have made the process so difficult for

patients. Passionate about continuing this research, she hopes to further her knowledge in the field by pursuing a Master of Health Administration and a JD in Health Law, so she can help facilitate change that enables consumers to have better understanding and preparedness.

Haley Witt was born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. She will graduate from Seattle University in 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Media and a specialization in Journalism. After Haley experienced working as a resident assistant and supporting first-year students in transitional crises, she was inspired to examine food and exercise habits among undergraduate women under the supervision of Dr. Harriet Phinney. Some of her other work has been published in the Colorado Springs Gazette and in the Seattle University newspaper *The Spectator*. Haley is currently co-authoring a research paper about the effects of online harassment on women journalists and developing a viral media campaign on social media literacy. Haley would like to continue her professional development as an educator, and further explore her passions for storytelling and advocacy. Haley hopes that young people will transform the world.

Faculty Content Editors

Kenneth Allan, PhD, is Associate Professor of Art History at Seattle University and his research focuses on issues such as urbanism and spectatorship in postwar American art and the rise of the Los Angeles art scene in the 1960s. Allan's work on artists Ed Ruscha, Wallace Berman, and others has been published in journals such as *The Art Bulletin*, *Art Journal*, *X-Tra Contemporary Art Quarterly*, and the book *Pacific Standard Time: Los Angeles Art, 1945-1980* (Getty Publications, 2011). He has also written essays for exhibition catalogs such as *Jonas Wood* (Dallas Museum of Art/Yale, 2019), *American Aleph: Wallace Berman* (Kohn Gallery/D.A.P., 2016), *Pop Departures* (Yale, 2014), and *The City Lost and Found: Capturing New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, 1960-1980* (Yale, 2014). He served as the faculty content editor for Serena Oduro's paper about Robert Colescott's 1985 painting *Les Demoiselles d'Alabama: Vestidas, race, and the legacy of primitivism in European art*.

Nathan Colaner, PhD, is a senior instructor in the Department of Management and the Director of the Bridge MBA program. Colaner's PhD is in philosophy, with a focus on ethics and epistemology in general. But his subsequent MBA & Business Analytics degree led him to focus on three areas within applied ethics: organizational ethics, data ethics, and the ethics of machine learning & artificial intelligence. His recent research is on the ethical, technical, and epistemological aspects of machine learning, specifically regarding the creation of explainable artificial intelligence. As a teacher, he focuses on the ways that business organizations can create a nurturing environment for their employees, the ethical and legal implications of data use, and responsible business uses of artificial intelligence. As a consultant, he works directly with private and governmental organizations to implement ethical data and machine learning solutions.

Serena Cosgrove, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in International Studies. She is an anthropologist and sociologist. Her current research interests focus on women's leadership in post-conflict settings in Central America and the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as indigenous rights and constructions of indigeneity in Nicaragua. Dr. Cosgrove is the author of *Leadership from the Margins: Women and Civil Society Organizations in Argentina, Chile, and El Salvador* (Rutgers 2010) and co-author of the book, *Understanding Global Poverty: Causes, Capabilities, and Human Development* (Routledge 2017). Dr. Cosgrove serves on the SUURJ faculty advisory board and was also the content editor for Anne-Celine Jeffroy-Meynard's essay.

Rob Efird, PhD, is an applied cultural anthropologist with a special interest in environmental education and collaborative research with community partners. His current research is focused on children's environmental learning both in China and here in the Pacific Northwest.

Naomi Hume, PhD, is Associate Professor of Art History in the Department of Art and Art History at Seattle University. She specializes in 19th- and early 20th-century European art and visual culture with a particular focus on Central and Eastern European art. She is particularly interested in the representation of gender and in the work of international artists who borrowed and adapted French visual vocabularies to serve their own local social, national and political purposes. Her work has been published in international journals including *Slavic Review*, *X-tra Contemporary Art Quarterly* and *Centropa*.

Harriet M. Phinney, PhD, holds a BA in Anthropology from Grinnell College, a MPH from the University of Michigan, and a PhD in Sociocultural Anthropology from University of Washington. She has worked professionally in the field of reproductive health and has taught ethnographic research methods as a consultant in Vietnam. At Seattle University, Dr. Phinney teaches classes where she looks at cultural and critical medical anthropology through a cross-cultural lens. Her research interests focus on global reproductive health, the politics of reproduction, and how changing social structures (ideologies and practices of marriage and gender) influence the epidemiology of HIV transmission. Dr. Phinney speaks Vietnamese and conducts research in northern Vietnam. She is currently writing a book manuscript, titled *Xin Con (Asking for a Child): Reproductive Agency and Vietnamese Politics of Inclusion*, based on a 20-year longitudinal ethnographic study about postwar and contemporary single women, in Vietnam, who intentionally chose to get pregnant out of wedlock.

Nova Robinson, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the History and International Studies departments. She is a historian whose work bridges the fields of Middle Eastern history, women's history, and the history of international governance. She just finished her book manuscript, *Truly Sisters: Syrian and Lebanese Women's Activism*, which she expects to come out in 2020. She advised Genevieve Jesse's undergraduate thesis and was faculty content editor for her work in *SUURJ*.

Tara Roth, MA, is a Senior Instructor in English. She teaches thematic writing courses in the Core, including *The Rhetoric of Art for Social Change*, *Writing Seattle: Local Narratives*, and *Literature and Music: Songs of Resistance*. She served as faculty content editor for Emily Boynton.

Michael J. Spinetta, PhD, is an associate professor of Psychology. He served as the faculty content editor for Emma Pierce and Kallan Palmer's essay that examined the influence of living situation on help-seeking behaviors in undergraduate students. Dr. Spinetta has a Ph.D. in Behavioral Neuroscience. He is particularly interested in learning and memory and psychopharmacology, with an emphasis on the consolidation and reconsolidation of emotionally salient events and the effects that drugs of abuse and therapeutic drugs have on the learning process, including the formation, storage and retrieval of memories.

Erin Vernon, PhD, is an assistant professor of economics. Her area of research and specialization is health economics. Dr. Vernon has led numerous seminars on the topics of the economics of the US medical care system, the economics of childhood nutrition, hospital community benefits, and the economics of genetic screening. Her work is published in *Applied Health Economics and Health Policy*, *Journal of Applied Business Economics*, *Journal of Personalized Medicine*, and *Journal of Child Nutrition and Management*. Dr. Vernon served as the faculty content editor for Raechel Warren's essay on hospital mergers' potential impact on patients.

Faculty Advisory Board

Marc A. Cohen, PhD, is an Associate Professor with a shared appointment in the Department of Management and the Department of Philosophy. He earned a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania and, prior to joining Seattle University, worked in the banking and management consulting industries. His research concerns trust, moral psychology, management theory, and questions in social/political philosophy about what makes society more than an accidental crowd.

Serena Cosgrove, PhD: Bio included above.

Lynn Deeken, MLIS, is the Director of Public Services and Coordinator of the Learning Commons Partnership at the Lemieux Library and McGoldrick Learning Commons. As a member of the library faculty, her areas of responsibility include Circulation, Research & Information Services, Instruction and collaborating with the Learning Commons Partners. She is the liaison to the English Department (Literature, Creative Writing, Film Studies) and the Culture and Language Bridge Program. Her teaching focuses on the development of both interdisciplinary and discipline-focused information literacy. Research interests include assessing the Library and Learning Common's impact on student learning, success, and persistence. Lynn served on *SUURJ*'s Faculty Advisory Board to help read, review, discuss, and vote on paper submissions.

Kristin Hultgren, PhD, is assistant professor of biology. She graduated with a B.A. in biology from Brown University, and received her PhD from University of California-Davis. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship with the Smithsonian Institution in Panama and Washington DC, and taught at Vassar College and Bard College in New York, before starting at Seattle University in 2012. Her research interests include evolutionary biology and diversity of marine crustaceans.

