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Biographies

The Absent Mother: Masculine Identity and Marginalized Women in the Short Narratives of Richard Ford

by Amanda Bourne

In his article titled "The Marginalized People in the Novels of Richard Ford," literary critic Huey Guagliardo asserts that "everyone is marginal(ized)" in Ford's works (3). However, marginalization is often contingent upon the voices present in the narrative and Ford's short stories in the *Rock Springs* collection are notable for their male narrators. Not only are the existing women unheard, but they are also unseen. Many of Ford's short stories take an ambiguous approach to the mother or wife figure, who is often physically absent from the plot. "Everyone" may be marginalized in Ford's works, however, the most marginalized are the women who are pushed out of the narrative before it even begins, or who are otherwise exploited by the text. By examining "Going to the Dogs," "Children," and "Great Falls," we find that these are texts where the absence of the wife or mother is highlighted by the narrator. Marginalizing these female characters allows Ford to develop a Western survival story that demonstrates an overarching concern for the masculine identity.

"Going to the Dogs" opens by declaring the absence of the narrator's wife who had "just gone out west with a groom from the local dog track" (Ford 99). The narrator, who is nicknamed "Curly," but calls himself "Lloyd," encounters two female hunters, invites them in for coffee, and ends up sleeping with one of them. They leave

soon afterwards, reinforcing the sense of aimlessness promoted by Lloyd at the beginning of the story. Similarly, in "Children," George's mother "was gone for good by then, though we didn't know that" (70). Claude and George take Sherman's underage mistress fishing for the day, and conclude the story by taking her to the bus stop, where she leaves without telling Sherman. "Great Falls" is different from the previous two short stories because the mother is not only a physical presence, but is also a major part of the plot. During the story, she leaves Jackie's father, and moves out of the house with Woody. When she meets with Jackie at the motel the next day, she says that she'd "like a less domestic life," and then fades into the margins of the narrator's life (47). Jackie later says that he has "seen his mother from time to time – in one place or another, with one man or another" (49). However, "Great Falls" is similar to the other stories because the mother/wife figure is still marginalized through her abandonment of the domestic life. Thus, even in the aimless, ambiguous narration found in all three stories, the mother or wife figure is still marginalized through her presence, or lack thereof. Huey Guagliardo in "The Marginal People in the Novels of Richard Ford," notes that "the more Ford's exiled and rootless characters pursue their own identities and struggle to gain independence and control of their lives, the more marginalized they become" (5). Although on one hand the presence of Ford's narrators allows them to struggle to gain this independence, they are also marginalized by their presence in an environment that forces them to deconstruct their masculine identities. The absence of the wife or mother figure seems to symbolize an escape from this same environment, which is defined in Ford's work as a place where man can prove his masculinity. This conception of setting resembles earlier depictions of the rugged West as a place where men could redefine themselves and gain wealth and/or land.

Ford's setting is an important component to his stories, and isolates his masculine characters against an unforgiving landscape. In multiple interviews, the author claims that his writing is not regional (often in the same breath, he claims that his writing is not masculine), however all three stories selected are vaguely set in the Montana west, where "it is an empty, lonely place if you are not a wheat farmer" (Seiler 62, 64; Ford 69). All three stories are centered around trying to escape this environment, with Florida often named as a safe haven, or some sort of utopian paradise in comparison to the stark Montana landscape. In these stories, Ford creates a new Western where the focus is on surviving the environment (environment meaning circumstances that are perceived as part of the physical landscape) in order to somehow define or redefine the narrator's masculinity. It is this connection with landscape and masculinity that transforms Ford's stories into Westerns, and the marginalization of female mother or wife figures only accentuates this fictional striving for self-made masculinity.

Ford's Western narratives most closely resemble what scholar Fredric Jameson calls the "transition plot," where "the hero begins within society… (and) ends up outside society, grinding his badge scornfully in the dust" (552). *High Noon*, referenced here by Jameson, is the classic example of this, but in Ford's stories, the battleground is the unforgiving Montana landscape, the protagonist is the narrator – who seeks to define his self-made manhood – and the antagonists are any obstacles that stop the narrator from achieving this ideal. These antagonists vary. In "Going to the Dogs," the female hunters prevent the unnamed narrator from leaving town. In "Great Falls," the mother who leaves her domestic life behind disrupts the father's self-made man aspirations. In "Children," as well as in the other two stories, the harsh Montana environment prevents the protagonists' fulfillment of masculinity. True to Jameson's "transition plot," all three stories focus on the

movement from one place to another as a way of somehow achieving masculinity. Although a variety of factors oppress the protagonist in some form or another in all three stories, the female character – absent or present – defines the success of the male protagonist's quest.

In his article titled "Rereading American Masculinities; Re-Visions of the American Myth of Self-Made Manhood in Richard Ford's Fiction," scholar Josep Armengol defines American masculinity as a notion tied to the ideals of the American Revolution. This Self-Made Man values independence and marketplace success – Armengol goes so far as to define it as a "model of masculinity that derives identity entirely from a man's activities in the public sphere, measured by accumulated wealth and social status, by geographic and social mobility" (64). This masculinity is what governs Ford's characters and their visions of success that they ultimately fail to achieve. Says Armengol, "Ford delves into the souls of alienated men haunted by feelings of displacement… And these feelings are usually shown to result from the oppression exerted by the late capitalist system upon the working-class man" (71). What Armengol implies here is key to understanding Ford's male narrators. The "late capitalist system," consists of these ideas of financial success that are no longer viable in a crumbling economy, with growing income disparity between the upper and lower classes. For instance, in "Great Falls," the narrator's father turns to crime in order to achieve financial success, selling illegal game on the black market, and celebrating his success in the local bar. Yet, masculinity in "Great Falls" is dependent upon the narrator's mother. When the story begins, this redefined masculinity thrives because domestic life is normal. However, the routine bar-outing is interrupted only when the family's domestic life becomes amiss. This distinction underscores the importance of a traditional family life to the Self-Made Man ideal of masculinity. By marginalizing the wife/mother role

in the narrative, Ford further deconstructs the unattainable Self-Made Man.

The goal of the male narrators in these stories is to somehow define their masculinity through their environment or actions. In "Going to the Dogs," Lloyd fails to redefine his masculinity because the actions he takes to escape his environment are thwarted by the female hunters who "invade" his home and as a result of his carelessness, steal his money and bus ticket. Although he tries to define his masculinity through sexual potency, this action results in his ultimate failure to attain some semblance of self-made manhood. Thus, in "Going to the Dogs," these women who claim to fit the escaped wife role are demonized as destroyers of masculinity in the same way that the traditional Western villain threatens the town's normalized peace. The narrator's masculinity is normalized only because it fits the expectations of American self-man manhood. In "Children," Ford characterizes coming of age with sexual encounters. Lucy, the girl in the story, is neither a mother nor a wife, but she also seeks to escape from her family and Canadian life. Her role in the story is marginal because she is simply transient. The narrator states that both he and Claude would be gone within the next year, and their experiences with Lucy only serve to make visible their sexual desires as newly-initiated young men. She has no permanence in their lives. Her transience only accentuates the fact that this is a coming of age story for the two males, who have a 'first' encounter with sexual desire. This propels them to their later departure from this isolated environment, but for Lucy, it only sends her – delicate and naive – to other sexual experiences. In this sense, Lucy resembles the wife in "Great Falls," who becomes transient, and even transparent, when she runs away with Woody, and ends up living the rest of her life with "one man or another" (Ford 49). Ford marginalizes women in the face of masculine coming-of-age by

characterizing them as transient and transparent, or dangerous – a threat to the ideals of the Self-Made Man.

Lucy's character is problematic because she has a voice in the story, as well as a physical presence, unlike the wife or mother figures in "Going to the Dogs" and "Great Falls." As previously stated, she is transient and is a means to masculinity for the two young men. However, her presence alone in the narrative would seem to refute the idea that she is marginalized. Yet, this is not the case because she, unlike the women in the other stories, is not an adult, and therefore is not (naturally) expected to be independent. Even if she isn't expected to be independent because of her age, her situation requires her to be independent. As a runaway, she must take the initiative of leaving, and having control over her own life. By giving her this role, it would be natural to assume that she is an independent entity. However, the storyline shows that she is not independent, but rather, passive. She is taken fishing by George and Claude, both Claude and Sherman sleep with her, and she is taken to the bus station at the end of the story. Although she initiates making out with George and taking off her dress, both actions are in the context of larger events that she has no control over. Indeed, the actions that she does have control over are mainly sexual, thus labeling her as 'easy,' or even promiscuous, with no control over the life-defining events that typically define the narrator's search for masculinity. She has little control over where she goes next because it is the boys who decide to take her to the bus station in Great Falls. In comparison, the entire story is overshadowed by George's statement that "in a year from the day I am going to tell about, in May, I would be long gone from there myself, and so would Claude" (69). Unlike the boys, who leave the isolation of the town in search of self-made manhood, Lucy's exit is controlled by Claude and George's decision to drive her to the bus stop, and so, what is a defining choice for the young men becomes a passive event for Lucy where others'

choices are inflicted upon her. Although Lucy is physically and vocally present in the narrative, she is passive, and has no independence because of the situation rendered upon her. In the context of the wife/mother figure in the other two short stories, Lucy is even more marginalized, and even exploited by the text (and characters) because she is a teenager who is expected to fulfill an adult's role. Thus, even when a female character is given presence in a text, she is further marginalized, or in the case of "Going to the Dogs," villainized.

Priscilla Leder, the author of "Men with Women: Gender Relations in Richard Ford's *Rock Springs*" notes that "women characters teach men about their vulnerability in different ways," although they "seem limited only insofar as they do not tell their own stories" (Guagliardo 99). However, telling "their own stories" is an important part of accurately representing the female voice. Although women in these short stories may be teaching men "about their vulnerability," the woman herself is left vulnerable because of the way masculinity is prioritized above all else by Ford's narrators. In texts where the wife or mother is absent, she is marginalized because her absence is colored by the male narrator's perception of it. In "Children," this absence is defined by George's statement that "it was not unusual that people left that part of Montana. She had never liked it, and neither my father nor me ever blamed her" (Ford 82). Although permissive, the mother's actions are only validated through the statement that they never "blamed her," indicating such actions can only be positive when they are approved by masculine authority. In "Going to the Dogs," the narrator "Lloyd"'s wife has left him because of his failed efforts to make money in Great Falls. His statements are ambivalent about his wife's actions, but physically he is forced to take over a traditionally female role in the home. Leder writes that "Lloyd seems feminized… dressed in a bathrobe and baking a coffeecake… vulnerable to the overtures of strangers" (115). Thus, because of his wife's

absence, Lloyd is emasculated, and his ambivalence is turned into a frustration because this absence encroaches upon his pursuit of self-made manhood. From his perspective, the events that follow his wife's departure leave him vulnerable, and thus, are negative in the scope of masculinity. In "Great Falls," the child narrator – Jackie – is also ambivalent about his mother's departure, however, her absence marginalizes her throughout the rest of his narrative. Jackie says that he's "seen his mother from time to time – in one place or another, with one man or another" (Ford 49). Although she is not entirely absent, because of her positionality in the text, her only defense is that she'd like a "less domestic life," which results in her characterization as the rebellious wife whose post-marriage relationships are transient, and therefore unmeaningful (47). Because Jackie is the one telling the story, we are unable to see the nuances of his parents' relationship, and thus, our perception of the mother is characterized by Jackie's memories and emotions. This narrative decision results in the marginalization of the wife/mother figure in all three stories.

This marginalization is driven by the environment of Ford's new Western. The isolation already present in wild Montana is only enhanced when the mother or wife figure leaves, resulting in male narrators who are forced to deconstruct their masculine identities because of an overpowering environment that leaves them vulnerable. Women are marginalized in this new Western because their absence forces men to show this vulnerability, and the male narrator perceives this as an insult to the ideal of self-made manhood. As a result of this freedom that threatens the male search for idealized masculinity, women (both absent and present, as best illustrated in "Children") must be marginalized in order for these male narrators to maintain some grasp on the elusive American Dream of manhood.

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The Patriarchal Idealization of Motherhood: A Force of Disempowerment and Empowerment

by Leora Lihach

Gender inequality has cross-culturally revolved around the patriarchal idealization of motherhood, which isolates women in the private sphere, denies them selfhood, assigns them all the work of caretaking, and sets impossible standards for mothering (O'Reilly 20). O'Reilly observes that as a medium for isolating, regulating, and judging women, "motherhood, as it is currently perceived and practiced in patriarchal societies, is disempowering" (17). Latin America consists of patriarchal societies, the dominant prescription of which historically "mandated the formation of patriarchal families based on formal, indissoluble marriage, endogamy, legitimate procreation, and careful control of female sexuality" (Milanich 450-1). The patriarchal idealization of motherhood is central to Latin America's family structure (Koepsel). This idealization inspires the labeling of some women as "bad mothers," which reinforces gender inequality in Ecuador. However, this idealization also gives women cultural esteem, which politically empowered Argentinean and Chilean women. As a status with twofold effects, the patriarchal idealization of

motherhood has served to disempower Latin American women *and* to undo this disempowerment.

In *Begging as a Path to Progress*, Swanson illustrates how the labeling of "bad mothers" reinforces gender inequality in Ecuador. Many people view child beggars as the products of bad mothering (Swanson 82). Ecuador's Code of Childhood and Adolescence lists begging as a form of child abuse, suggesting that the mothers of child beggars are abusive (93). Many people accuse these indigenous women as exploitative mothers who rent children as props for begging, but this accusation ignores the complexities of indigenous economies of caring (83). The labeling of these women as unfit mothers legitimizes the goal of "saving" child beggars and frames the exclusion of mothers from the public sphere as being in the children's best interests (82).

Because patriarchal ideology dominates the general view of child begging in Ecuador, this practice inaccurately frames mothers as unfit. While poverty is the factor driving children to beg, people instead blame bad parenting, especially mothering (Swanson 94). Additionally, criticisms of child begging lead to criticisms of communal mothering among extended relatives—a practice directly at odds with the patriarchal standards for idealized mothering. In 1999, Quito police forces seized over fifty child beggars to discourage begging (96). After releasing the women watching these children—many of them extended relatives—authorities kept the children detained, refusing to return them to anyone but biological parents (96-7). This police action used the practice of communal mothering unique to the indigenous women to threaten separation between them and the children. In this case, the status of motherhood has disempowered indigenous women who deviate from the patriarchal standards for idealized mothering.

Elsewhere in Latin America, motherhood has empowered women. Koepsel explains how Argentinean women acquired a forceful identity as the Madres de Plaza

de Mayo ("Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo"). In 1977, these women mobilized to protest the military regime's human rights violations (Koepsel 3). While patriarchal ideology confines women to motherhood in the private sphere, the Madres defied this confinement by entering the public sphere to protest the regime's disruption of motherhood (4). The Madres therefore undermined patriarchal ideology from within. Furthermore, they used the patriarchal idealization of motherhood to empower themselves. *Marianismo* ideology maintains that feminine spiritual superiority and self-sacrifice make the ideal mother (4). By appealing to the cultural esteem that *Marianismo* designates mothers, the Madres effectively advanced political demands (4). These women took motherhood beyond the domestic role and created a public space of representation for mothers, where they received international support and recognition (9-10). Koepsel observes, "They have defied the stereotypical limitations of women and motherhood" (11).

Chilean women did the same in their mobilization against Pinochet's military regime (1973-1990) (Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet). These women also mobilized as mothers to protest human rights violations and consequently, reconstructed motherhood as a forceful, public role (Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet). Motherhood became such a powerful status, that Michelle Bachelet's promotion of maternal leadership won her the presidency in 2006 (Thomas). Because Chileans had long valued masculinist leadership, the campaign revolved around debates over whether Bachelet was capable of presidential leadership (Thomas 64). Bachelet and her competitors "engaged in a process of 'regendering' beliefs about political power and leadership" (Thomas 64).

Bachelet's success was not only a presidential victory, but a cultural one for all Chilean women: the recognition of women's leadership potential. Because gender inequality is largely cultural, someone from within a culture calling for change can create the most impact.

Bachelet advanced gender equality by calling from within her culture for an understanding of leadership that valorizes women's experiences (Thomas 77). Bachelet argued that she offered a new style of leadership: "*liderazgo femenino*" (feminine leadership), synonymous with "maternal leadership" (65). Thomas includes a quote by Bachelet about maternal leadership: "It's not a thing about being hard or soft. Women can be firm, but they can also be caring, nurturing" (75). Bachelet's supporters felt that she was more understanding and in-touch than male political elites (75). Her presidential victory demonstrates that Chilean women have gained respect as maternal leaders—leaders who are nurturing, understanding, and in-touch. Once linked to leadership, the status of motherhood empowered women. Regarding her election, Bachelet explains, "Some people said it's because people need on one hand, authority, but also need somebody to protect them. So some people said, 'You are the big mother of everybody'" (*Women, Power and Politics*).

The patriarchal idealization of motherhood has demonstrated twofold effects in Latin America: the force to disempower women and to undo this disempowerment. The labeling of "bad mothers" in Ecuador is one way this idealization perpetuates gender inequality. However, Latin American women have engaged in maternal empowerment "to reclaim the power denied to mothers in patriarchal motherhood" (O'Reilly 21). Women can embrace the strengths and cultural esteem associated with motherhood to combat patriarchal oppression. In patriarchal societies, O'Reilly explains, "Mothers acquired moral superiority and cultural prestige […] in and through their identity as Mother" (22). Women can use their forceful status as mothers to lobby for social and political change. And in doing so, women can reconstruct motherhood as a forceful, public role. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the Chilean women who similarly mobilized as mothers, and Michelle Bachelet all demonstrated the effectiveness of maternal

activism. The agency of these women within their cultures is necessary to change the deeply rooted beliefs and traditions that disempower women. As Eva Mendes said so well, "Women are not the problem, they're the solution" (*Half the Sky*).

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The Adolescent Quest for Freedom from Patriarchy Through Writing

by Charmanique Goings

Sandra Cisneros highlights the patriarchal problems of Hispanic culture in *The House on Mango Street,* through the life and observational writing of her protagonist, Esperanza. Esperanza is an adolescent female who struggles to identify with the patriarchal values of the Hispanic community in which she lives. Cisneros chose to tell the story from an adolescent perspective because children are able to use experience to shape their identity. By finding her own identity, Esperanza is afforded the opportunity to free not only herself but other women as well from the constraints of a patriarchal culture, showing her resistance through her writing.

Esperanza observes and writes about the problems of oppression, abuse, and victimization that she witnesses throughout her life as a result of the patriarchal values present in her community. She uses these experiences to fuel her writing, which in turn helps her to find her own identity. Maria Karafilis, author of a scholarly article which analyzes *The House on Mango Street,* agrees with this idea by stating, "Esperanza, however, learns from these experiences, learns from the lives of her fellow Chicanas,

and is able to avoid this fate in her own maturation" (66). Since Esperanza is an adolescent, she is unable to remove herself completely from the culture; she instead resists the patriarchal values and in turn resists victimization. She uses these experiences as a way to understand that she must resist the culture in order to free herself from patriarchal constraints when she becomes an adult. The text suggests that Esperanza vows to tell her story, the story of her life, her experiences, her search for identity and maturation. Esperanza says, "I am going to tell you a story about a girl who didn't want to belong" (Cisneros 109). Esperanza is a girl who does not want to belong, because she knows something is wrong.

Esperanza declares that she does not want to conform and as a result she struggles with finding her identity. Esperanza struggles with her identity in the text because of her inability to relate and her unwillingness to accept the problems of the Hispanic patriarchal community that she lives in. Esperanza cannot self-identity due to the fact that she does not resonate with the traditions of her culture. As a result of this, she is alienated. Maria Elena de Valdés agrees with this by stating, "The sense of alienation is compounded because ethnically she is a Mexican, although culturally a Mexican American; she is a young girl surrounded by examples of abused, defeated, worn-out women, but the woman she wants to be must be free" (Valdés). The multiple examples of defeated women and their abuse are the reason why Esperanza so desperately feels the need to be free. While feeling alone and alienated, she thinks about the fact that she does not have anyone in the text that she relates to, and Esperanza dreams of the day when she will meet someone that she can relate to. Esperanza expresses, "Until then I am a red balloon, a balloon tied to an anchor" (Cisneros 9). She also dreams of changing her name, "a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees" (10). Esperanza feels alone, and this quote suggests that she wants the opportunity to be more like

herself, the person that no one else sees because it is atypical of the culture to which she belongs. She knows she is different than the other females in the text, and she insists that because of this, no one understands her. It is important to note that the reason she does not have any friends is not because she does not want to make friends with anyone, but because she struggles to relate to them. Esperanza refuses to become a victim of oppression, abuse, and victimization like the women portrayed in the text.

Most of the men in the novel are portrayed as manipulative, oppressive, or abusive. The women are contrastingly portrayed as victims; they are physically and mentally abused. The abuse is not limited to physical abuse, but emotional abuse as well. Emotional abuse should not be taken lightly; there may be no physical signs of abuse, but the effects are equally devastating. The text highlights an instance of emotional abuse when Esperanza describes a woman named Minerva. Minerva "has many troubles, but the big one is her husband who left and keeps leaving" (84). Minverva's mother also dealt with the same types of problems that she is currently dealing with. According to the text, "Her mother raised her kids alone, and it looks like her daughters will go that way too" (84). Minerva tries to end the emotional abuse by ridding herself of her husband, however she fails. "One day she lets him know enough is enough" (85), according to the text, but then he says sorry, so, "she opens the door again. Same story" (85). This illustrates the idea of the cycle of abuse. The abuse has shifted from not only emotional abuse, but extends to physical abuse as well. The text illustrates this by explaining, "The next week she comes over black and blue and asks what can she do" (85). Minerva wants to free herself, but she struggles. Feeling hopeless, she declares that there is nothing she can do.

Minerva is an abuse victim of patriarchal Hispanic culture. The text suggests that the abuse of women is not exclusive to wives, but little girls, daughters too. This idea is

illustrated in the text when Esperanza observes the life of a girl by the name of Sally. Sally is a victim who makes up excuses regarding her abusive father because she is afraid to tell the truth. Esperanza writes that Sally says, "He never hits me hard" (92). In this quote, Sally admits to being hit by her father, but she defends him. The mothers in the text do not take the right course of action. Instead of stopping the abuse, the mothers attempt to ease the pain afterward and cover up the evidence. For instance, Sally's mother: the text states, "her mama rubs lard on all the places where it hurts" (92). The women are afraid to stand up to men, they are afraid to stand up for themselves and their children. The text suggests that the abuse of women is a disconcerting problem within Hispanic culture. The women feel like hopeless victims because they are not valued or respected.

Cisneros allows Esperanza to write about her experiences; this is the first step to her declaration of her freedom. However, in response to the experiences she writes about, she does not respond in a negative way. Instead Esperanza uses those experiences to fuel her maturation. She will not allow herself to be subjected to those same experiences of abuse. Valdés agrees as she explains, "When she reflects on social hostility or the brutality of wife-beating, it is not with violence or rancor, but with a firm determination to describe and to escape the vicious circle of abused women" (Valdés). Esperanza's response to the way women in the text are treated is evident in the way that she behaves, especially in response to attention she receives from boys.

Esperanza shows very little interest in boys, unlike the other girls in the novel that she observes. Many of them are obsessed with how they look, and they yearn for the attention of boys. One of the young girls in the text says, "What matters is for the boys to see us and for us to see them" (Cisneros 27). It appears as if the aspirations of the women in the novel is limited to marriage, because to them marriage equates to security and stability; it means they will

be taken care of. Esperanza describes the same girl from the previous quote: the text states she is dancing under the streetlight, "waiting for a car to stop, a star to fall, someone to change her life" (27). This young girl is waiting around, hoping that a man will come sweep her up off of her feet. The girl behaves this way because this is how she has been taught to think of men through observing her patriarchal culture. Esperanza describes an older lady by the name of Ruthie, stating, "There were many things Ruthie could have been if she wanted to" (68). Ruthie gave up on her dreams for the sake of marriage, the text explains: "She got married instead and moved away to a pretty house outside the city" (69). This is one of the problems of Hispanic culture according to the text, one that Esperanza effectively resists. Esperanza effectively resists the patriarchal culture by behaving in a way that is atypical in comparison to the women in her community, especially in the way that she moves in a direction that suggests independence.

In a patriarchal society it is believed that the primary responsibility for women is take care of the home and raise children. This causes women to be financially dependent on men. In response to this, Esperanza recognizes the necessity in getting a job at a young age. Esperanza gets a job at a young age, she takes initiative and begins to take care of herself. The text suggests that it was not easy for her to find a job. She says, "It wasn't as if I didn't want to work. I did. I had even gone to the social security office the month before to get my social security number" (53). Esperanza displays the eagerness of wanting to get a job. Many of the women that she observes are largely dependent on men. The women in the text are at the mercy of men financially, but in getting a job Esperanza takes a large step in the direction of independence.

Esperanza's steps toward independence are a direct result of her experiences. As she writes about what she observes in her community, she finds her identity. Her experiences allow her to grow. Christina Rose Dubb

reinforces this idea by stating, "The novel seems to chronicle a few years of Esperanza's life in her Chicano neighborhood, as she moves from the naivety of childhood to the shocking understanding of the injustices of sexual inequality, violence, and socioeconomic disparities" (220). Esperanza is no longer a lost and naïve little girl, instead she is maturing and realizing the seriousness of the problems she is surrounded by. As an adolescent, Esperanza is able to grow into her realization. She is able to use her writing as an escape. As an adolescent, this gives her the power to free herself and shape her own identity.

Cisneros chose to write her protagonist as an adolescent female because of the power and promise that comes from being a child. As a child, Esperanza is able to mature because of her observations and interactions within the Hispanic community that she belongs to. According to Karafilis, "Esperanza learns of herself and her culture in great part through her connections with other people" (66). Esperanza can resist the patriarchal community, and she can escape the victimization that is typical within the community that she writes about. Esperanza can experience freedom through her writing. Her personal freedom will allow her to free others. Her experiences through observation and writing will allow her to mature into an adult equipped with experience and knowledge that will allow her to create a change.

After observing the Hispanic community that she grows up in, Esperanza comes to the conclusion that she will not follow in the footsteps of the women in the community. Esperanza refuses to conform. She explains "I am one who leaves the table like a man, without putting back the chair or picking up the plate" (Cisneros 89). Esperanza will not confine herself to patriarchal values such as taking care of the home like many of the women portrayed in the text. Esperanza declares "I have decided not to grow up tame like the others who lay their necks on the threshold waiting for the ball and chain" (88). The most

important word in that quote is *wait*; the text suggests that they wait "for the ball and chain." They wait because that is what they believe they have to do. They believe that they need a man to take care of them. However, Esperanza through her observation and maturation knows that she does not have to wait for anyone. The reference to "ball and chain" further illustrates the seriousness of the situation; this imagery symbolizes that Hispanic women in the text are prisoners to men. They are victims of abuse and oppression; they are tamed by the patriarchal culture.

Towards the end of the novel Esperanza notices her strength. She knows that she now has the power to do anything she wants. She knows what her maturation through observation and writing has prepared her for. In the text she declares, "One day I will pack my bags of book and paper. One day I will say goodbye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever" (110). Esperanza knows that she is free, she knows what she must do with her books and paper. She knows that through writing she can free others, just as she has freed herself. The text states, "They will not know I have gone away to come back. For the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot get out" (110). Her community may not understand right away the reasons for which she leaves; however, it is important to note that Esperanza is fully mature and realizes the power she has. More importantly, Cisneros understood the power in creating an adolescent protagonist to tell her story.

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Individuality and the Hero's Journey: Gender

by Katherine Maloney

Since Joseph Campbell first described the Hero's Journey, it has been applied to many different stories, particularly science fiction and fantasy tales. This Monomyth is essentially an outline of how a hero's story will go, going through several stages. Typically the hero has something that makes them unique and different from the people around them, which they learn to use throughout their journey. This allows the leading hero to realize that their individuality is a blessing. However many stories provide some sort of deviation to Campbell's classic monomyth. A common variance on his standard model is the presence of a female protagonist or heroine. For instance, Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* with Meg, and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* with Hermione both describe tales that fit Campbell's monomyth. Both Meg and Hermione are very different from their peers, as both girls are incredibly intelligent, though their cleverness leads them to experience uneasy feelings of self-consciousness. Nevertheless, both learn to utilize their intellectual dexterity to complete their quests and help save the day. As a result, these triumphant female characters serve as examples for the young adults reading

these stories, particularly girls, proving that girls can "save the day" and be proud of their unique qualities. Through being a female heroine on the Hero's Journey, both Meg and Hermione learn to accept and appreciate their individuality and talents, as well as provide a positive role model for young adults readers.

A Wrinkle in Time follows Meg, a young misfit girl, on her search to find her father, a tale that closely resembles Campbell's typical heroic journey. At the beginning of the story, Meg is an outsider at school and even gets in fights with her classmates (L'Engle 8) and her only friend is her young brother Charles Wallace. Meg faces sincere insecurity concerning her abilities, as they make her different. In addition, she feels lonely, not only because of her lack of peer friends, but also because of the absence of her father for a year. As a result, Meg expresses her severe severe self-consciousness at the beginning of the novel, stating: "I *hate* being an oddball," and "I hate myself" (L'Engle 17, 60). However, everything changes when Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which show up one night and Meg begins her adventure with Calvin and Charles Wallace (L'Engle 62-63) which marks the "departure" of their journey (Campbell 45-88).

By following Campbell's Hero's journey, the three witches serve as "supernatural aids" (Campbell 63-70). With their help, Meg then "tesseracts," a way to travel through time and space, all around the universe in search for her father. Through the "trials" phase (Campbell 89-99) of the journey Meg, Calvin, and Charles Wallace travel to a few different worlds where the three witches or stars teach the children about tesseracts and the Dark Thing. This represents evil in the novel, and how this evil is all over the universe, slowly taking over planets. Then the children must go on to Camazotz, where their helpers leave them. As a result, the kids must learn to be on their own and, in a way, grow up. This also marks the approach to ordeal if we are following Campbell's journey. Camazotz is the planet where

Meg's father is trapped, under the control of a giant brain called IT, which is the incarnation of the Dark Thing. In their search for their father, Charles Wallace falls victim to IT (L'Engle 146). However Meg and Calvin continue on, and when Meg finally sees her father she is overcome with a need to get to him (L'Engle 158-165).

After finding her father, Meg and Calvin must move on, without Charles Wallace, who is still under the control of IT. Upon finally encountering IT, Meg learns that the brain believes that it has created a perfect world, where everyone is equal since IT has control over everyone's minds, but Meg states that being alike and equal are not the same thing (L'Engle 177). This is where the theme of freedom really comes into play. Camazotz can be thought of as a dystopia, where everything runs very smoothly, but no one is free. Consequently, Meg realizes how important independence is—ultimately allowing her to learn how important her individuality is and to value it. Carrie Hintz claims in her research that utopian (and even dystopian) young adult novels emphasize the development of the hero or heroine and independence is typically a factor (Hintz 256). L'Engle shows this in the way Meg reacts to Camazotz and IT. In this moment Meg also begins to appreciate her individuality. She remembers that Mrs. Whatsit had given her the faults of "Anger, impatience, [and] stubbornness" before leaving the children on the planet (L'Engle 176). Before Meg was discouraged by these faults, and they often got her into trouble, but now in this distant dystopia she realizes they are the only things that will save her from IT.

These faults, however, cannot save her for long and they cannot save Charles Wallace. Therefore Mr. Murry quickly tesseres himself, Meg, and Calvin off of Camazotz, but he is unable to bring Charles Wallace (L'Engle 179-180). When Meg awakens she is furious with her father for leaving Charles Wallace behind and she realizes that saving her father did not end her journey. L'Engle writes, "She had

found her father and he had not made everything all right… If the long search for her father was ended, and he wasn't able to overcome all their difficulties, there was nothing to guarantee that it would all come out right in the end" (L'Engle 189-190). This is a pivotal point in Meg's journey because she learns that even her parents are not perfect. This is an important thing for children and young adults to learn, and is often found in coming of age stories such as this one.

This moment could also be seen as a young adult version of Campbell's "atonement with the Father" step of the hero's journey (Campbell 116-137). In this step the hero must resolve or reconcile a relationship with a father figure. For Meg, she has been searching for her father, thinking that their reunion would mark the end of her journey. Although, when it does not, she must come to terms with his imperfections and continue to love him in spite of everything. Meg accomplishes this after Aunt Beast heals her from the injuries she received from IT and her father's amateur tesseract skills, and she goes into a meeting with several other aliens from the planet, Calvin, and her father to decide on a plan of action (L'Engle 207). At first, she is still angry and blaming her father and she is acting out like a child having a temper tantrum, which continues when Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which show up because they tell Meg that neither the three of them nor her father can save Charles (L'Engle 213-215). This leads Meg to realize she is the only one that can save Charles Wallace.

With this realization, Meg sets out for Camazotz alone. Upon arriving at Camazotz Mrs. Which tells Meg that she has something IT doesn't have, but does not tell her what this is, as her last words of wisdom for Meg (L'Engle 223). When Meg finally reaches IT she realizes what she has: love (L'Engle 228). This marks the "apotheosis" step of the journey—where the hero finally reaches greater understanding and is ready for the hardest part of their voyage (Campbell 138-158). Accordingly, Meg uses her love

for Charles to set him free from IT, by using the power of her love to break IT's grip on Charles' mind and the two are quickly tessered back to earth (L'Engle 229-230). This triumph serves as the "ultimate boon," where the goal of the journey is completed and the last trial is finished, as well as the "magic flight," where the hero returns back home (Campbell 159-178 182-19). Thus, Meg's journey is finally complete, as she is reunited with Charles, her father, and the rest of her family at last, and all of them are home safe and sound.

In the fulfillment of her quest, Meg is transformed into a changed person. She has learned to use her unique talents and gifts, including even her "faults," at times, and to be proud of them. However, most importantly, Meg learned that love is more powerful than evil. It is critical to note that the idea of love being what saves the day varies significantly from the typical hero's journey—where more masculine traits are used. Even further, Meg uses her willfulness and love to save herself, her father, and her brother. These are more feminine traits, which David Emerson states must be emphasized in a "truly feminine version of the Hero's Journey" (Emerson 131). Emerson also notes that the treasure the heroine gets at the end of the journey is herself (131). While Meg does receive the gift of being reunited with her family, it is evident that she has also gained self-confidence. Meg realizes how to appreciate both her individuality and her capacity for love.

Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* also shows a female heroine using traditional female characteristics to help save the day. Although Hermione is not the main character in this hero's journey, she does contribute considerably to the success of Harry. Hermione does so by using her intelligence, rather than brute strength, to assist Harry. Like Meg, Hermione does not really have friends at the beginning of the story due to her intelligence. However, this changes throughout the story and she, Ron, and Harry become very good friends and her intelligence

helps all three out of danger and on their journey. For example, she helps save herself, and her two companions from the Devil's snare when they-journey to get to the Sorcerer's Stone (Rowling 444-456). In the end, Hermione is rewarded for her intelligence and courage.

It is also important to note that in Rowling's story, and L'Engle's, there is no "woman as the temptress" stage (Campbell 111-115). This is one major difference in Hero's Journey tales that feature a female heroine as a main character. Another stereotype that is often broken in Hero's Journey stories that feature a heroine is that of the damsel in distress, which Lynn Moss Sanders discusses in her article. Sanders discusses how female heroines show that they can take care of themselves and do not need a traditional male hero to save them (Sanders 42). Meg shows this when she travels to Camazotz alone, even though Calvin wishes to go with her. Calvin pleads with the three witches saying, "Why did you bring me along at all? To take care of Meg! You said so yourself!" (L'Engle 217). Nonetheless, Meg travels by herself and saves the day without the help of a male character. Hermione, at the beginning of the story, seems to follow the damsel in distress stereotype nicely. The best example of this is the troll scene where Ron and Harry save Hermione from the troll on Halloween (Rowling 279-282). However, almost immediately, Hermione saves the two boys in a less traditional way. When the professors find the three of them with the troll they believe the boys set out on purpose to fight the troll. Hermione immediately takes all the blame for the incident, saving the boys from being trouble (Rowling 283-284). This shows how Hermione can also help save the boys at times.

In the end both of these female characters (Meg and Hermione) are able to use their traditional female characteristics, such as love and intelligence, to help save the day. Both of these characters "provide different positive role models for young women…" as Sanders puts it

(Sanders 42). Edwards also claims that the emotional and mental struggles that these female heroines go through are extremely relevant to the real world, more so than traditional male hero struggles (Edwards 131). Both of these heroines are powerful examples for young adult readers that read about their fantasy journeys.

Through L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* and Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, the reader is given an example of a female heroine on a version of Campbell's traditional Hero's Journey. While both of these girls start out as insecure, different, and lonely after their journey both realize how useful their skills and strengths are and learn to accept their individuality. Meg and Hermione both are positive role models for the teens reading these stories, teaching them that girls can be powerful as well as boys and to be proud of oneself.

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Avatar Aang: The Spiritual Hero

by Althea Matteson

Avatar Aang is a spiritual hero that accomplishes his noble duties through the application of Buddhist culture. The television series applies many concepts of Buddhist doctrine through Aang being a vegetarian monk who has a strict moral code. Avatar Aang is depicted as a spiritual hero because he helps spread hope to other citizens, experiences a sense of enlightenment through meditation, and only harms his opponents as a last resort. Additionally, his Buddhist influences stimulate Aang's connection to the natural and spiritual world. Aang is humanized in his ability to be severely harmed by other people. He is portrayed as a divine being because he has the ability to bend or manipulate the elements of air, water, earth, and fire to undertake enemy forces. His cultural practices are what allow him to be successful during his final battle with Firelord Ozai. As a result of this important battle, he is able to fulfill his purpose of bringing balance to the world and develops into a realized Avatar.

Aang's voyage is a coming of age story that takes place in a mythic and spiritual world, in which a percentage of the population have the ability to bend the elements of their land. Only the Avatar has the ability to bend the four

elements. For centuries, the Avatar upheld his or her duties in delivering balance by being re-embodied through the cycle of the four nations. Throughout the television series, the Fire Nation seeks control over all of the nations, but has to destroy the Avatar in order to be all-powerful. In a novelization of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, the author describes Aang's great power in disclosing that, "only the Avatar, master of all four elements and the bridge to the spirit world, could stop the ruthless firebenders" (Teitelbaum 4). Under the belief that they have destroyed the Avatar, the Fire Nation begins to slowly overthrow the other nations. For one hundred years, Aang and his flying bison are trapped in a circular-shaped portion of ice. Aang is the last airbender. His venture begins when Water Tribe members, Katara and her brother, Sokka, discover Aang trapped within the ice. Throughout his expedition, Aang must master bending all four elements and stop the Fire Nation from ruling all nations of the world.

The creators of the series, Bryan Konietzko and Michael DiMartino, are two American writers that wanted to design a plot that contained Buddhist philosophy, which appealed to an audience in their formative years. Aang becomes an important character to teenagers by encouraging them to make light of negative situations and to not use physical violence when facing an opponent. In a contextual analysis of the creation of the plot, an enthusiast of the series stated, "the style and content of Avatar is heavily influenced by Asian cultures" (Calhoun). The construction of visual representations such as clothing, architecture, and use of martial arts are centralized by Asian inspiration. The use of the humorous word choices, bright colors and designs, make the series more appealing to the youth. In an in interview, Michael, one of the creators of the television series, stated, "Even though we had more serious episodes or moments, we always tried to temper them with lighter moments" (London and Hamessley).

As part of his transcendent journey, Aang stops in various villages to spread hope to the troubled people affected by his hundred-year absence. Providing optimism is a valuable attribute Aang possesses as a spiritual hero because it can increase someone's morale, thus motivating that person to hold a strong position against unjust actions. The Avatar's disappearance created an opportunity for the Fire Nation to use excessive force and overthrow small villages. Without the Avatar's protection, these villages were easily conquered and quickly lost their courage to fight back. Initially, in season one, episode six, Aang travels to these communities to restore their courage to fight back the Fire Nation and reclaim their territory. In an Earth Kingdom village, he finds that the earth benders could not use their special power and were not able to fight back because they lost hope for the Avatar's return. Aang provides words of encouragement in telling the people of their significant history and importance. Aang says to the Earth Kingdom villagers, "You are powerful, amazing people. You don't need to live like this. The ground is an extension of who you are" (Teitelbaum 43). The individuals of the Earth Kingdom village are thrilled by his presence and begin to regain their confidence. Hopefulness and faith is what Aang needed to provide to the burdened people to encourage a change within them. He begins to offer hope and inspire the villagers to take back their land. Aang's presence renewed the fighting spirit they once had.

In the Buddhist culture, Buddha began his journey towards enlightenment by spreading his religious teachings to various cities of the world. Through his teachings, he became more renowned because those he reached out to gained a spiritual understanding of the world. "The Buddha is often depicted holding audiences in the course of which he gives teachings, answers questions, and engages in debate with people from all walks of life" (Keown 27). Aang's initial journey is inspired by Buddha's journey to spread knowledge and restore faith to various people. Aang

restores hope and confidence of the oppressed individuals. At this point, Aang has not completely brought balance to the world. However, initial changes begin in having the troubled people believe that they are no longer inferior, but equal to the people of the Fire Nation.

Through meditation, Aang inherits a sense of enlightenment, which contributes to his ability to find a solution for defeating his adversaries. Meditation further connects him to his spirituality in traveling to another world. During meditation, he is in an altered state of consciousness and is able to both receive a great amount of strength and seek advice from previous Avatars. In comparison to Buddha, while he was meditating, "he acquired the power to look back through his previous existences, recalling them in full detail" (Keown 24). In Buddhism, meditation can cause a person to go into a stage of enlightenment. "The importance of meditation in Buddhism can be appreciated by recalling that it was while meditating that the Buddha gained enlightenment" (Keown 84). In the television series, the stage of enlightenment is displayed when Aang goes into the Avatar state. While in the Avatar state, he is granted all of the knowledge and abilities of previous Avatars. It is this unique capability that allows him to receive help from the spiritual world in search of a solution to complex problems. This distinctive skill is what separates him from the rest of society in seeking guidance from wiser beings. He applies his newly gathered intelligence in providing aid to society.

Even though Aang is perceived as having a great power, he is humanized in possessing human qualities of being able to be injured by his opponents. Throughout the series, he still possesses human attributes, one of which is the ability to be harmed by others. The Avatar is depicted as more divine than the rest of the population by the capability to bend all four elements. This significant skill is used to bring balance to the world and maintain order. Aang is anthropomorphized in his ability to be slain while

in the Avatar State. Even though he can be mortally wounded whether he is in the Avatar State or not, if slaughtered while in the Avatar State, the reincarnation cycle will cease. The Avatar will no longer be born to the other nations. The ability to perish is a significant trait that Aang has in common with every human. Additionally, he requires the help of his friends to keep himself from danger. Aang appears as less than heroic during his duel with the Fire Nation Princess Azula. In "The Awakening," Azula is successful in her attempt to take over the most prominent Earth Nation territory, the city of Ba Sing Se. Aang takes on Azula and her brother, Zuko, in hopes of stopping the coup against the Earth Kingdom. Aang and Azula begin an intense battle in order for him to stop her evil plan. Before Aang can completely enter the Avatar state, Azula strikes him with her fire bending. Before he could complete his transformation into the Avatar State, he is struck with a bolt of lightning through his back and is severely injured. Azula was hoping to end the cycle of the Avatar by killing Aang while he was in the Avatar State. Iroh provides a distraction for Azula, allowing Katara to aid Aang to safety. Suffering from this detrimental wound makes it necessary for a period of convalescence.

In Aang's perspective, hiding is viewed as a sign of both weakness and shamefulness. After Aang awakens from his long rest, he and his friends come in contact with a Fire Nation ship. Instead of helping with the small fight, he must sit back and watch since he is not completely recovered from his recent battle. While recuperating from his problematic battle with Azula, he shows his anger in not being able to fight in saying, "I hate not being able to do anything" ("The Awakening"). He expresses his feelings aggressively to reveal his frustration with not being able to help his friends face the Fire Nation. In this moment, he is vulnerable to any further attack and must recover to prepare for his final battle with the Firelord. Usually, Aang instinctively performs heroic duties for the good of the

people. His selfless acts were proven to be helpful in preventing the Fire Nation from taking over particular cities. He feels useless in helping out his friends fight against the enemy. This moment does not depict Aang as a powerful superhero simply due to the fact that he is not yet a fully realized Avatar and has not reached his full potential. Even though Aang is not able to help his friends out in that moment, he displays other acts of spiritual and moral courage in defeating the Fire Nation. His acts of spiritual and moral courage involve his struggle with the decision to not cause physical harm to Firelord Ozai.

Through upholding his personal beliefs, Aang's strong perspective of not inflicting harm on the Firelord allows him to find an alternative method to bringing balance to the world and being successful in his final battle. He is faced with a difficult decision by being forced to take away another individual's life. Literature on Buddhism asserts, "The cornerstone of Buddhist ethics is its belief in the inviolability of life" (Keown 100). Refraining from taking another life is a Buddhist virtue that allows them to show compassion for other living beings. Aang struggles with finding a way to fight against the Firelord without causing physical violence. The novel explains, "The monks who raised him had taught Aang that all life was precious and that the great power he commanded should only be used defensively" (Teitelbaum 104). Katara, Sokka, and Zuko, his new ally, tell Aang that there is no other way to defeat the Firelord and that the only way to be successful in this final battle is to kill him. Even through meditation, his past lives encourage him to do the same.

Towards the end of the series, Aang separates himself from his friends to seek a solution to defeating the Firelord. Aang's disappearance places him in contact with a giant lion sea turtle that offers spiritual advice in regards to bending the elements. His time with the giant lion sea turtle is proven to be helpful because he applies it during the final battle with Firelord Ozai. During this battle, there are a

couple of occasions in which Aang is the dominating figure. However, he does not take advantage of the opportunities. For Aang, Buddhist principles take priority over having physical supremacy. He would rather defeat his opponent in a nonviolent way. When he has the chance to get close enough to the Firelord, Aang places his hand on Ozai's forehead and reaches into his spirit. Aang removes the energy within his opponent and takes away his fire bending abilities, eternally. In that moment, Aang says to the Firelord, "I took away your fire bending. You can't use it to hurt or threaten anyone else ever again" ("Sozin's Comet Part 4: Avatar Aang). To the Avatar, physical violence is used only as a last resort and only if necessary. This view of use of substantial aggression only when needed is a widespread practice in the Buddhist doctrine. Removing Ozai's ability to fire bend was a beneficial substitute because Aang continued to follow through in his belief to not impose bodily harm on others.

There are various events in which Aang is shown as a spiritual hero. His previous adventures and cultural practices are what make him a fully realized Avatar. Aang's belief of nonviolence can be viewed as its own strength through his ability to defeat the most feared and powerful person in the world by keeping him alive. The use of spirituality through Buddhism is a proven power for the Avatar because, in addition to being physically powerful, he must have a spiritual connection within himself in order to become a master in his abilities. His spiritual hero qualities are similar to that of Buddha because he restores hope, uses meditation as a way towards enlightenment, and he is a monk that practices nonviolence. His Buddhist qualities are important because his spiritual beliefs are what caused him to seek an alternative method to defeating his adversary and bringing balance to the world.

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The Queen of the Bees

by Jabriel Hasan

"I feel her in unexpected moments, her Assumption into heaven happening in places inside me. She will suddenly rise, and when she does, she does not go up, up into the sky, but further and further inside of me" (Kidd 302). Lily Owens's lines at the conclusion of Sue Monk Kidd's *The Secret Life of Bees* capture the essence of the main character's inner search for a mother through her projection of the Virgin Mary as the great, spiritual heroine. In basing the novel's theme on the life of bees, Kidd exposes the reader, through Lily Owens's journey for inner peace, to a natural, revolutionary world subject to the survival and success of its most powerful, feminine element, the Queen. The structure of beehives in the natural world substantiates the powerful idea of the natural need for a Queen—a concept contrary to patriarchal society, yet incorporated into—and sometimes even the basis of—ancient faiths.

It is this ancient, spiritual quest for the mother that directs *The Secret Life of Bees*. It is the mother Lily Owens lost in her biological mother's accidental death; the mother who she then finds in her housekeeper, Rosaleen; in August, the barren, virgin mother figure; and from August, to the purest essence of a Mother: the Blessed Mother, the

Mother of God, the Virgin Mary. Kidd does not use the conventional Eurocentric archetype of the Madonna to capture this essence. The author builds the story around the figure of the Black Madonna, a medieval, Roman Catholic depiction of the Virgin Mary, often enthroned as a Queen, with dark brown skin. Through the Black Madonna, we are able to view Mary through the lens of feminist social critique. We see Mary, not a glorified servant of an invasive, male deity, but rather a woman who is the Queen of the spiritual force in creation, the mother of all creation, the sacred and Divine Feminine. In *The Secret Life of Bees,* the Black Madonna archetype becomes the superhero of the novel and of all creation.

Kidd's choice to unify the characters around the Black Madonna instead of the numerous Eurocentric depictions of the Virgin Mary is not coincidental. The Black Madonna's role in *The Secret Life of Bees* captures the essence of this archetype, which is its power to defy social constructs. "I traveled to Europe to see some of the Black Madonnas," Kidd wrote, "…and found them to be images of startling strength and authority. The stories reveal rebellious, even defiant sides" (Kidd 9). Since the time of their emergence in Medieval Europe, the color of Black Madonnas has intrigued the masses. Some argue that their color, particularly of early icons like the Virgin of Czestochowa, is an unintentional byproduct of heavy smoke from votive candles and incense burning through the centuries. They would argue that their aesthetic metamorphosis enhances the icon's mystery, but means nothing about the artist's intended message. Yet, this does not explain the intentional use of dark paint or wood in later depictions. Historical and theological contexts substantiate explanations of blackness. "I am black but beautiful," verse five of chapter 1 of Song of Solomon, states. This line, attributed to the Queen of Sheba, is rooted in defiance: the ability to defy socially constructed preconceptions of color connotation. "I am black but

beautiful was useful as an interpretive aid to bridge over the grave dissonance felt between blackness/sinfulness and beauty/virtue, as in the iconography of black skin religious art" (Scheer). While carrying the negative connotation of sinfulness, the color black is also connected to earth's rich fertility, as with black soil. Artists' use of rare woods, like ebony, to craft the Black Madonnas greater emphasized the Madonnas' sacred unity with Earth's life-giving power (Scheer). This connects the Virgin Mary, expressed through the Black Madonna, with ancient goddesses associated with the concept of Mother Earth, and essentially the idea of the defiant, Divine Feminine. She bears sacred, sustaining life to us, while transcending our racialized constructs of beauty and virtue.

The Gnostic Gospels, as well as Biblical accounts of Mary, illustrate the capacity of holy, feminine power to transcend social constructs, supporting the idea that defiance is the Black Madonna's essence. The Gnostic Gospel, "The Thunder, The Perfect Mind," presented early Christians with a divine, feminine power discussing her superiority over human conceptions and prejudices: "For I am the first and the last. I am the honored one and the scorned one. I am the whore and the holy one. I am the wife and the virgin" (Robinson). Some of the lines could almost be read as references to the Virgin Mary: "I am the ruler of my offspring. But he is the one who begot me… And he is my offspring in due time, and my power is from him" (Robinson). Her power is from God, yet God emerged from Mary, so she, in a sense, rules with the Divine. These notions relate to the ancient concept of the Theotokos, of Mary being enthroned with God as the bearer of God, the bearer of salvation.

The book of Luke also depicts Mary in a revolutionary way that shows her defiance of social construct for the sake of bearing the Divine to the world. The Magnificat, or The Song of Mary, when understood in the context of Mary's predicament as an unwed mother in

the ancient Middle East, is grippingly radical, making Mary a heroine of hope for the oppressed and for all women: "For [God] hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. For he that is mighty hath magnified me…all generations shall call me blessed..He hath put down the mighty from their seat and exalted the humble and meek…and the rich he hath sent empty away." God became incarnate in a woman who would have been grouped in the same category as prostitutes. What is perceived as black (sinful), is actually beautiful (virtuous). She is black, but she is the Madonna. The story of Mary is the ultimate rejection of, thus superiority over human, social constructs. Kidd magnifies this interpretation of Mary and feminine power in *The Secret Life of Bees* using this archetype.

"The people called her Our Lady of Chains. They called her that not because she wore chains...they called her our Lady of Chains because she broke them." Our Lady of Chains is, literally, the Black Madonna's representation in *The Secret Life of Bees*. She started as the masthead of an old ship that washed up along the banks near a plantation during the time of slavery, but became the hope of the slaves. The master, wanting to take this beacon away from his subservients, chained the figure up nearly fifty times. Nevertheless, Our Lady of Chains, with her fist jutting out into the air, miraculously escaped every time she was chained (Kidd 109-110). The statue becomes a symbol of freedom to the enslaved: "Our Lady filled their hearts with fearlessness and whispered to them plans of escape. The bold ones fled...and those who didn't lived with a raised fist in their hearts. And if ever it grew weak, they would only have to touch her heart again" (110). The Black Madonna personifies freedom to the enslaved. While common Catholic characterizations and depictions of Mary are Our Lady of Sorrows, the Virgin of Tenderness, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, characterizing her as Our Lady of Chains is radical and revolutionary. Even more radical, Our Lady of Chains does carry racial significance in *The Secret*

Life of Bees. The main character, August, noted "...when they looked at her, it occurred to them for the first time in their lives that what's divine could come in dark skin...everybody needs a God who looks like them" (141). Similar to the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the significance of the Virgin Mary's appearance is not simply because she was the Virgin Mary. Her appearance in the likeness of the people symbolizes her solidarity with the people to whom she appeared: "Black Madonnas...have been the rallying cries for oppressed peoples struggling against persecution" (Kidd 9). The Black Madonna embodies our ability to defy social constructs. Building on the concept of the divine, sacred feminine, Our Lady of Chains represents the feminine power to bear freedom and salvation through the giving of life, a spiritual force that cannot be chained.

The idea that woman cannot be chained because her divinity alludes to the concept of the Black Madonna as a heroic representation of the autonomous woman. It must be noted that Our Lady of Chains stands alone in *The Secret Life of Bees*. While the fact that she is the mother of Jesus is acknowledged in the novel (as in countless depictions throughout art history) she is described as standing alone without baby Jesus. Her divine feminine power elevates her to being worthy of her own icon in history and for the women in *The Secret Life of Bees*.

The Catholic Church officially interprets Mary as "the embodiment of all women, because she is both the mother and the maiden. By creating the impossible, it suggests to the real-life woman that there's always something wrong with her, because she doesn't embody the ideal" (Shadle). Interpreting the Virgin Mary in Sjoo's feminist line of thought supports the notion of the Black Madonna as a representation of feminine power through autonomy, by existing in and of herself, regardless of chastity. In this light, August becomes the embodiment of the living Black Madonna in the book. She is a powerful maternal figure unbetrothed to a man. Kidd does not

specify her chastity or lack thereof, but rather emphasizes her autonomy and defiance against social institutions: "It's not that I am against marrying, Lily. I'm just against how it's set up," August says (146). She goes on to list a slew of ways she would be expected to become her husband's subservient if she were married. It is the social institution that she cannot accept. She cannot deny herself the power she would lose having to cater to her husband for life. August embodies the original concept of the Virgin, characterized historically by Queen Elizabeth I, that woman is autonomous and most powerful when she does not officially, explicitly submit herself to man through patriarchy's construction of marriage. August characterizes the Black Madonna as autonomous in power, as well as a mother figure to Lily: "I am control and the uncontrollable" (Robinson). The Black Madonna stands alone as a heroine in *The Secret Life of Bees*.

"I live in a hive of darkness, and you are my mother, I told her. You are the mother of thousands (Kidd 164)." Lily's line to Our Lady of Chains is pivotal in her search for a mother, a mother she is finding–like the other women in the book–in the Black Madonna. These lines symbolize the first stages of her acceptance of the Virgin Mary, symbolized through the Black Madonna, into her spiritual being. The idea of the Black Madonna being "the mother of thousands" also symbolizes the Virgin Mary's correlation to the Queen Bee, who is also the mother of thousands (164). Like the Queen Bee, the Black Madonna, standing alone, is not simply an expression of motherhood, but a symbolic expression of unity under the leadership of a feminine force. The Queen Bee mates, though is never subject to any of the male bees in the hive, and she continues to be the mother, unifying force, throughout the colony. In the book, the Black Madonna literally becomes the divine beekeeper in the Boatwright sisters' Assumption Day ritual. They place the statue of our Lady of Chains into the bee colony house in hopes that, through her divine

power, she will ensure a good harvest for the Sisters. Kidd noted from her travels, "I will never forget coming upon Medieval references, which associated the Virgin Mary to the Queen Bee." In understanding this correlation, Lily enters deeper into the Boatwright sisters' metaphysical world. The idea of the Virgin Mary being the Holy Mother is not an inherent function of our Lady of Chains or the Black Madonna as a general archetype. The Holy Mother concept relates back to early Christian perceptions of Mary as the Theotokos--the Mother of God.

The Theotokos, or Mother of God, defines Mary's official place in the three liturgical traditions of Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism. "Any development of a Mariology whose fundamental principle is not the divine motherhood would violate the direction sanctioned by all tradition" (Semmelroth 16). In occupying the complex role of Mother of God, Mary becomes both a source of sacred, feminine power through God, the Father, yet the Son, emerges through her: "I am the wife and the virgin...I am the ruler of my offspring. But he is the one who begot me…And he is my offspring in due time, and my power is from him" (Robinson). The Boatwright sisters de-emphasize the masculine nature of God altogether, experiencing God's most powerful expression in Our Lady of Chains, the Black Madonna's likeness. Lily had originally questioned the importance of the Queen Bee to the sisters, saying "That's all she does, lay eggs?", to which August responded, "Egg laying is the main thing...she's the mother of every bee in the hive, and they all depend on her to keep it going. I don't care what their job is–they know the queen is the mother. She's the mother of thousands" (149). Without the Queen, the colony basically dies (287). Again, it is this idea that all power is unified in her essence, that she, alas, is the bearer of life for God, the bees, and the Boatwright Sisters.

With both God, the Father and God, the Son becoming a part of her colony, the Virgin Mary, expressed

through the Black Madonna, becomes the essential expression of the Feminine Godhead in *The Secret Life of Bees*. In this light, the Virgin Mary also encompasses this expression in the Church. Mary becomes larger than her biblical reality. "The fact that we know few details about concerning Mary's life is no proof to the contrary. It is Mary's attitude that establishes her...and her attitude follows from her being rooted in God" (Semmelroth 32). Mary rises to an archetypal symbol greater than what can be literally translated from biblical text, greater than merely a masthead from a ship. August's explanation to Lily explains this: "You know, [Our Lady of Chains] is really just the figurehead off an old ship, but the people needed comfort and rescue, so when they looked at it, they saw Mary, and the spirit of Mary took it over. Really, her spirit is everywhere" (Kidd 141). The Virgin Mary, through the Black Madonna, became their freedom. May released herself into Earth through death, freeing June to love fully; freeing August to be the figure both Lily and Lily's mother needed in their lives, and this all linked back to Our Lady, Our Lady's colony of freedom. "What is bound will be unbound. What is cast down will be lifted up. This is the promise of Our Lady" (228)." Theologians echo much of this symbolism. Dr. Shadle, Professor of Theology at Marymount University, notes: "The most important symbolic meaning for Mary is that she is a symbol for the Church...Mary is the embodiment of what the Church is supposed to be" (Shadle). Mary becomes a powerful spiritual force defining the purity of love, the purity of the sacred heart painted on Our Lady of Chains. The Catholic faith makes most explicit that we reach the divine through her. "In the medieval imagination, God was almost inapproachable because he is so fearful, whereas, it is precisely because she is a woman that she is so much more approachable" (Shadle). Devotionals, like the rosary and the Sacred Heart of Mary, allude to this connection between God and Mary without neglecting God, the Father. Yet, the essence of Our Lady

of Chains persists: we reach the Divine through her. For the Boatwright sisters, she becomes the Divine.

The Black Madonna becomes the essential experience of the Sacred, Divine Feminine. The women of *The Secret Life of Bees* reach the sacredness of Divine love, power, and freedom through the Black Madonna. She defies all; she bears all. She holds power over the centripetal force, binding all together–as the perfect Mother would. "And whatever it is that keeps widening your heart, that's Mary too, not only the power inside of you, but the love. And when you get down to it, Lily, that's the only purpose grand enough for human life. Not just to love–but to persist in love" (Kidd 289). The Black Madonna becomes the unleashed expression of Mary's ancient place in the Church. The Church becomes her bee colony, and she is its sustenance.

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History: A Sense of Place in Creative Nonfiction

by Amanda Bourne

Before we renovated the dining room, there was a picture on the wall where the wardrobe now stands. An ordinary picture, perhaps, for an old house. Wooden frame curved at the top, square at the bottom. A man in a grey white beard sits sternly, with a young boy at his feet, both looking at the camera. Who knows how old it is. The sepia negative looks more like a painting than a picture, but I know better. There's something about the eyes that glisten with life: perhaps that's why it scared me as a child. The old man, sitting, glaring out of the frame, watching me. The shy smile on the young boy's face is all the more unnerving in light of the glare.

The young boy was my grandfather.

They're sitting in a wooden house. A stack of firewood is on the right. Both probably went up like a torch during the house fire, just like the previous house at the site had burned when set ablaze by the British in 1812. But we still excavated the site before my aunt built her house on top. We found a few remainders – the pipe the old man in the picture might have smoked, bricks from a chimney that turned the firewood to smoke and ashes.

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Ashes. Entire forests in the west succumb to fire and become skeletons of ash, fostering new growth. New growth – this is how my father explained controlled burnings to me – burning with a purpose. This burning replenishes the nutrients in the volatile Midwestern plains. But on the East Coast, fires tend to be accidental – our sandy loam soil doesn't require the heavy nutrients of ash, so the dark streaky outlines that betray its presence often indicate some sort of story, some sort of history. But why do we remember some histories, and not others? If archeologists halfway around the world excavate every sign of human existence, why do we leave entire sites untouched? Are we that afraid of the ghosts under our earth?

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There's a little clearing along the old oxen road that runs through our property, and if you didn't know, you'd just walk along, distracted by the glistening grey water of the nearby creek.

But I know that when I walk in that clearing, I'm walking on bones that once were living, breathing beings. Of who or what, I do not know. That much has been lost to collective memory. Old maps called it Fox Run Cemetery.

What I do know is that there are no headstones, and thus, no markers of who or how many are buried there. But that also means that the graveyard is from the colonial era – wooden headstones rot away, and tobacco farmers in a distant colony have little money for long-lasting memorials to themselves.

Yet, no headstones means that every step I take could be atop of the deep rich soil left by decaying matter – wooden coffins only last for so long, and so unlike our stone boxes and coffins guaranteed to last five decades, the elements must have quickly seeped through, leaving only unusually rich soil, much like the ashy soil from controlled burnings.

But our ashes are bones and blood and were once living, moving beings.

*****

My father found a coffin nail when digging a hole for a fence post. He told me about it on the hillside behind my grandmother's house, pausing as we watched the sun sink slowly behind the horizon. Where? He nods towards the black cedar shadows on the horizon, but all he says is that he moved the fence that he'd been working on.

"I stopped digging" he tells me, solemnly, looking out into the dusk.

*****

Are we selective about "our" dead? The other graveyard on the map, this one is the one we tell visitors about. They giggle nervously, or remark on the family history as they pass through the clearing, and then the oddity of walking on an unmarked graveyard becomes a part of their experience at the farm, nothing more. And while this is part of my experience as well, it is a part of daily life in a way that sometimes I'd like to forget. I tramp across it to seek out cows from the meadow, or quietly slip through it at dusk when headed home across the fields. As a superstitious teenager, I utter a prayer and hope that my eyes are playing tricks on me when I am alone and a mile's walk from home. Perhaps living with them, and publicly confessing them makes them more real. Am I more afraid of the ghosts that I admit to, rather than the ghosts shrouded in silence and mystery? I wonder if we are more selective because, once we talk about them, we must then own them as a part of ourselves and our past. I am afraid of walking through the graveyard at dusk because I admit that they are there. This terrifies me. Perhaps, this is why my father keeps the second graveyard a secret – after all, we must live with these ghosts.

*****

I open a new tab on my laptop and search *ancestors bones*. Alongside the many articles on ancient, now-disputed

burial grounds, I discover the Malagasy people in Madagascar, who exhume their dead every few years (Holloway). They clean them, dress them, and dance with them for two days before committing them again to the ancestral crypt. They remember them until their bodies are completely decomposed and join the spirit world.

Native Hawaiians believe that the *iwi*, or bones, of a person hold their spirit, even after death. Disturbing or desecrating these bones harms both the spirit and descendants, which is why burial sites are watched over by those who claim the dead as ancestors (Native). Some bones are so important (those of rulers or chieftains) that they are buried in secret and the locations are never disclosed. Let the dead rest in peace, and the community will prosper.

*****

I wonder sometimes if it is right to silence the dead – to say nothing of that second graveyard or of the forgotten people who might be there. For how long do we remember our dead? Or, in the case of stoneless graveyards – who are they? Are "our" dead the ones in graveyards with headstones that we publicly claim in history books? What about the silent ones – do we keep them hidden, or do we bring them to light – talk about them, find out who they were, and validate them in our historical narrative? The tricky thing about the dead is that once we talk about them, we have to own them. Or own up to them. We find graveyards of enslaved Africans in our earth – mutilated and broken – these are not just bones. They are our past, because slavery was a very real part of Colonial America. When I walk across the graveyards on the farm, I know that these bones may not have been considered humans – just bodies. Just labor. Just money.

I know that every time I walk across these graveyards, I must remember that this past is more present than I'd like to admit – that there's another girl in the county, an African American girl, with my name, or that the

first Bourne immigrant to Maryland was a ship-owner, whose cargo may have lived and died on the Atlantic journey. This is the past that we face when we own up to our dead.

How do you describe living a life that is so profoundly intertwined with history? Intertwined, and still culpable, as it were, *for* history, and for the past that you can't change. A subjective oral history, written by my ancestors – the smiling boy in the eerie negative on the wall. His father, or perhaps his father before him – someone knew the story of those silent graveyards. But even the remembered stories… histories… fade from the memories of the living.

Until they're just ghosts – hanging on the wall. Flitting in a clearing.

A coffin nail in a long-forgotten graveyard.

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Gender Identity: Masculinity Versus Femininity in Female Characters

by Oluremi Akin-Olugbade

The advocating of equal opportunities and treatment for men and women in the labor force is a cause many have continuously fought for over the past decades. The literature society has also played a significant part in this fight for equal opportunities. Female authors Sara Paretsky and Beverly Jenkins have taken feminist stands by creating strong independent female characters that serve as examples of the ability women possess to be successful and influential in male dominated fields. These female characters are placed in professions where their ability to succeed is being questioned based on their gender. In order to tackle these obstacles, authors like Paretsky in her masculine hard-boiled detective genre and Jenkins in her more feminine romance genre have created characters possessing the "intense masculinity" (Reddy 3), common to their career paths. They do this whilst still holding onto some of the femininity of their characters, which in most cases is perceived as a threat to female success. As a criminal detective writer, Sara Paretsky makes the choice of creating a female character in a masculine world, in which she must compromise between her newly acquired

masculinity and natural femininity. On the other end, Beverly Jenkins is already set in a familiar genre being a romance writer; however, she creates a character who assumes a male-dominated career in a male-dominated world who wrestles with what she is told to do as a woman and what she believes she deserves as a person.

Jenkins and Paretsky create strength and resilience in their characters that they believe the modern woman must possess to excel in a male-dominated world. Both authors present strong female characters engaged in worlds where they must make compromises between their commitments to their jobs and engaging in interactions where the traditionally feminine elements of emotion and love determine their actions and choices. However, by establishing this situation of compromise between masculinity and femininity, Paretsky and Jenkins create a gap where the denial of one part for the other becomes detrimental to the entire individual.

Sara Paretsky is one of many authors who have adopted the hardboiled detective genre as an avenue to express their grievances on the issue of gender discrimination in male-dominated professions. With V.I. Warshawski, Paretsky creates a woman exhibiting the same ability as a man in the same field, in both the professional and personal realm. However, V.I. still appears to be an imitation of her male counterparts, "the hard-boiled male detective, who is emotionally and financially independent, a loner, divorced without a family" (Johnson 97). While portraying this male model, Paretsky still retains some traits of femininity in V.I., which together with her masculinity, creates some contradiction in her ideals of anti-commitment and independence, also at times putting her in the face of greater danger.

In *Indemnity Only*, V.I. begins her case looking to uncover the disappearance of Anita McGraw, but ends up uncovering the murder of Peter Thayer, Anita's boyfriend in an insurance fraud scheme. A common problem V.I.

encounters in her line of work, which was no different in this case, is the questioning of her ability to do her job as a woman. We share this experience with V.I. when her client Mr. Thayer (Andrew McGraw) doubts her ability to find his daughter being that she is doing a job not meant "for a girl to take on alone" (Paretsky 16). V.I., immediately trying to hold down all anger, defends herself saying she is "a woman […] and I can look out for myself" (16). Not only does her credibility get questioned, but she also faces the risk of being physically assaulted for snooping around in men's business. V.I. becomes a job for Earl Smeissen, notorious Chicago hit man, when Yardley Masters, the insurance broker leading the fraudulent scam, hires him to take Warshawski out and get her to stop investigating into the case. Earl seems to be more offended with V.I.'s snooping, especially because he sees her as a "goddamn broad" who he promises to mark so good if she doesn't stay out of the case (67, 68).

With all this "masculine" activity going on, Paretsky tries to create some feminine balance in V.I. by involving her in a romantic relationship with Ralph, Yardley's assistant at Ajax Insurance. However, V.I. refuses to commit to him because she sees the commitment of a relationship as a distraction to her work (212), but still wishes she "was doing the middle-class family thing," which she has come to believe is only a "myth" and not suitable to the life she has chosen (157).

Romance author Beverly Jenkins has also used her work as a medium to advocate for gender equality of the sexes. Setting her characters in historical periods of racial and gender segregation, Jenkins creates independent female characters that stand up for themselves in male-dominated worlds while still allowing themselves the luxury of love and affection from the opposite sex. Jenkins gives her female characters significant roles, which pose as "threats to black male positions in the community" (Carden, Paniccia and Strehle 188). Naturally, to succeed at such roles women

must be brave and strong, ready to face obstacles head on whilst retaining their femininity to prove that they can be successful both in their professional and private lives. However, in *Something Like Love* Jenkins leaves her readers questioning if she really does believe that women can remain feminine in male roles, and if she does, does she do a good job of representing that idea in Olivia?

In *Something Like Love*, Beverly Jenkins creates the story Of Olivia Sterling, a young black woman who owns a seamstress shop in 19th Century Chicago. As a result of being a young black woman, Olivia has to run away from home to escape the role of a submissive dependent wife, which her family and society expect her to assume. Her flight from Chicago to a small all-black town called Henry Adams leads her into the arms of Neil July a well know train robber. Soon enough Olivia's father discovers where she is, and threatens to come and retrieve her to go on with her marriage to Horatio Butler. In order to stop this from happening and retain her independence and rights, Olivia arranges a marriage of convenience with Neil and is able to convince her father that Neil and her independent life is what she wants and deserves as a woman.

Following the death of the Henry Adams mayor, Olivia becomes a town favorite and is elected as the town's new leader. This time she is faced with two barriers, Armstead Malloy and Neil July's role in society. Malloy, who ran against her for mayor, occasionally belittles her independence and ambition saying to her women should only aspire to things like "committee work, […] or running a seamstress shop, […] politics is men's work" (Jenkins 126). On the other hand, Neil's role as an outlaw compromises Olivia's political office and leaves her with the choice of going after love or choosing her career. Olivia picks love and is stripped of her duties as Mayor, allowing her feminine nature to overcome the situation.

Paretsky and Jenkins do a great job creating these strong independent women who have found a means of

surviving and succeeding in male-dominated roles whilst being criticized and discriminated against for their gender. However, they take different routes, which determine how these women handle their "male positions" in their worlds. These routes however seem to be the extremes of this pole of gender identity, which leaves these women almost at a disadvantage of imbalance in their personalities and careers.

V.I. belongs to the extreme pole of masculinity. With V.I., Paretsky creates her character by "combining the hard-boiled detective novel with feminist fiction" (Johnson 98). In *Indemnity Only*, we see V.I. emulate more of the alpha male detective perspective than embrace her feminine perspective when her qualifications are challenged. In conversations where she feels as though others are questioning her for not being the typical woman and having the orthodox female life, she admits that she gets angry and "bites their heads off" (Paretsky 157). Her anger is evident in her response, as Ralph has to ask her to "take it easy" when she reacts to him asking if she missed the family life (155). A reason for this aggression could well be the fact that V.I. is in a world where certain things are expected of her and this extreme masculine personality she has on conflicts with that norm. This personality expects her to be focused on her career and not things like family life. However, her feminine side still desires " three kids getting under her feet" and the soaps (155, 157). Both personalities then rub against each other and create this friction in V.I. that causes her to lash out when she feels threatened.

Olivia, on the other hand, exists on the opposite pole of femininity, where she appears to be a strong woman taking on male roles and defying society's expectations of her whilst still holding on very strongly to her femininity. However, this combination fails to pose her as the brave assertive woman we would expect. When Olivia is faced with defending her right to be her own woman, she chooses to run away or hide under the institution of marriage rather than be the strong woman Jenkins portrays her to be and

stand up to her father. Olivia herself admits that she "would have married the town drunk" if it would ensure she did not have to marry Horatio Butler (326). Being the brave woman Jenkins portrays her to be, one would think she would be brave enough to explain her grievances to her father in the first place rather than run away and arrange a marriage just so she will not have to deal with her problems head on. These women fail to respond to the challenges, which prove the consequences of an imbalance in gender identity.

The imbalance in the gender identity of female characters is also seen in situations where they have to choose between career lives or love and family. Warshawski's femininity creates "an occasion for parody" (Paradis 86), when she constantly says she is focused on her job and cannot be distracted with the thought of her partner "stewing" (Paretsky 158) because she is not back home. However, her feminine edge at the same time dreams about having the family life with a husband and children. The conflict in her gender identity creates a scenario of self-denial that makes her appear to be unsure of herself and what it is she really wants out of life. V.I. gives mixed signals saying she is satisfied with her career and satisfied with her life whilst at the same feeling that maybe she is not doing the best thing with her life (Paretsky 157).

A balance in her personality where she is both focused on her career whilst still enjoying the community of family which she longs for is an idea Paretsky portrays as a "myth" (157), but in the real world is actually possible. Paretsky's technique creates room for questioning with regards to her inclination to feminist ideas. This imbalance Paretsky creates is a great resemblance to Raymond Chandler's, Phillip Marlowe, who lives under this "self-imposed isolation," which is believed to help him investigate effectively without any form of attachment that could alter his credibility or full attention on a case (Paradis 88). Does Paretsky mean to say women must act just as men

in order to be successful in their careers, especially in male-dominated professions?

Paretsky puts V.I. on the career extreme of the career versus family argument whilst Jenkins places Olivia on the love/family extreme. Jenkins choosing to create a storyline where Olivia has to lose her job as a result of her relationship with Neil is evidence of an imbalance in the gender identity of Olivia. The idea of a woman having to sacrifice a career life for marriage or family appears to be a recurring theme in Jenkins's *Something Like Love*. Olivia and Cara Lee Jefferson are two women in Jenkins's story who have to sacrifice their careers to fulfill their feminine desires for love and affection. This theme puts forth the idea that for a woman to have a private life she must sacrifice her professional life, which again is not always the case. These two extremes that Paretsky and Jenkins establish give way to a great imbalance in identity where women are either acting against their desires for love and family or a career.

Sometimes these strong women do get into relationships. They could be purely physical, or both physical and emotional, and it happens to be with the wrong person. These relationships, like other bad relationships, leave them wounded, but because of the masculine personalities they believe they should have, they do not allow themselves to grieve and recover from the heartbreak. These repressions of their emotions eventually rub against each other and start to manifest in unexpected places (Johnson 195). This of course could be detrimental to the very career they are so determined to sustain.

Warshawski's almost disregard for her femininity seems to cause a lot of rift between her personal and private lives, especially in her ability to show emotion towards others, including herself at times. In matters of love and relationship, Warshawski claims to be gun-shy. After a failed marriage, V.I. sees romantic relationships as more of a physical activity needing no emotion or attachment rather than a partnership with someone else

whom she can share her life with. To V.I. and many other female hard-boiled detectives, relationships beyond the physical are "always possible threats to their hard-worn autonomy and independence" (Reddy 8). This is the route we see her take with Ralph who promises her he does not need her to change and is attracted to her for who she is. In her last encounter with Ralph where they break up, we are unable to see how she truly feels about Ralph because she hides behind her masculine mask and makes excuses saying "it just wouldn't work" and moving on (Paretsky 233). As hurt as we can see she is, V.I. denies herself this luxury that she so much desires, all to prove her point that she does not need a man.

It is no question that in the detective business violence is a rather recurring theme, and we see it evidently in Sara Paretsky's *Indemnity Only*. In an interview with Cheryl Lavin from the *Chicago Tribune*, Paretsky says that women face violence in detective stories as a result of men lashing out because they feel threatened by these women who are playing active roles in their world (Lavin), which is very much the case between V.I. and Earl. It is safe to say that V.I. was excessively abused just because she emulates the idea of a tough masculine-type detective who can withstand any pain. Yes she may be able to withstand the pain, but being smart-mouthed and provoking her assaulters only put her in a worse off situation with men who already felt threatened and insulted by her gender.

Women all over the world are venturing into male-dominated worlds, and some are having the toughest times of their lives. To overcome these tough times some act exactly like their male counterparts, seeing their femininity as a point of weakness that could be used against them. In other cases, these women embrace their femininity so fully they are willing to give up careers they worked hard at to go after that emotion largely accustomed to women. The lack of a balance between these two extremes of masculinity and femininity in women like V.I. and Olivia creates gaps

that are sometimes detrimental to their personal and private lives. Female authors who represent this theme in their novels put forth the idea that a balance in gender identity is almost impossible. The idea that in situations of love and career that something always has to give almost limits the ability of a woman to be multi-tasking and successful at it. Olivia and V.I.'s inability to respond to challenges effectively is something that could be avoided if they fully accepted who they are and the things they desire whilst still standing strong in their unorthodox gender roles. Doing so sends a message to other women like them who find it difficult to be who they are as women and still be respected in their work places. In a world that is evolving every day and gender discrimination is becoming less prominent, women should begin to embrace their femininity rather than see it as a disadvantage, as their femininity is what makes them unique and successful at challenges they encounter.

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Sites of Power Negotiation in *Jane Eyre*

by Charlotte Knopf

Throughout literature and history, there are stories known of powerful women. Some have reached their power through marrying an influential man. Others have had the money to sustain their influence. In all of literature's works, there is one book that takes sources of power to a new level. The novel *Jane Eyre* was written by Charlotte Brontë and published in 1874. The story is centered on the life of an orphaned girl. Jane Eyre seems to be powerless due to her social rank, lack of fortune, and being a female. However, Jane's life story shapes her and at a young age, she has already reached a sense of intellectual maturity that is quite impressive. Jane has different sites of power negotiation that form the base for the power she exerts in the novel. She derives it from three sources – body, language, and sense.

The first component of body that will be looked at is how her physicality gives Jane power. In Jane's upbringing, she struggled with her cousin John Reed who never missed a chance of reminding her about her inferior status. In the opening scene of the book, John is bullying her. However, for a moment Jane seems to be superior: "I knew he would soon strike, and while dreading the blow, I

mused on the disgusting and ugly appearance of him who would presently deal it" (8). John then hits her and comments on "the look you had in your eyes two minutes since" (8). Even though Jane is not the physically stronger person, her amusement of John is known to the reader. John also sees the defiance in Jane's eyes. In Peter J. Bellis's words, Jane "asserts her visual independence" (641). The incident with John is probably the earliest occasion the reader becomes introduced to a source of power from Jane. In this scene, it is body combined with wit that gives Jane at least a little power. Moments after, John strikes her again; Jane's reaction is different. When she feels the blood trickling down on her forehead "[the] sensations for the time predominated over fear, and I received him in frantic sort" (9). She retaliates and physically defeats him. Here, Jane demonstrates physical violence that makes her equal to John in physicality. Physicality gives Jane a certain kind of power, especially over John, who then resorts to only calling her names.

Furthermore, Jane's physical violence is countered with physicality on Bessie's and Miss Abbot's behalf. After her fight with John, "two pairs of hands arrested [her] instantly" (9). The dominance exercised by the two ladies shows Jane's inferior role in the household. When she is brought to the red room, she tells Miss Abbot to not tie her down to the chair and that she will not move (9). Jane describes how she "attache[s] [herself] to [her] seat by [her] hands" (10). Jane's behavior allows her to exercise a little bit of power over the two women who then decide to not tie her to the chair. After the two leave, Jane is alone in the room. Her reflection on the circumstances she lives in is foreshadowing her behavior in the future. When she talks about "the reproach of [her] dependence" (10), the reader understands how much she hates being powerless. Later on, she asks herself why she is the one "always suffering, always browbeaten, always accused" (11). The fact that she is questioning the circumstances and then states that her

reason says they are "Unjust! – unjust!" (12) illustrates her further need for power. Jane recognizes the unfairness that is dictating her life. Therefore, early on in the story, her will to achieve control over her circumstances is established.

As Jane matures through the story, so does her connection with her body. She uses the control she has over what she wears and how she adorns her body to exercise power. A subject that is related to this specific control over body is Jane's and Rochester's conversation about the jewels he is having sent to them. They have gotten engaged and Rochester is saying how soon she will be called Jane Rochester. The thought of a name change is called "strange" by Jane, (220) who compares her situation to a day-dream, to which Rochester responds he will realize it. Then he starts talking about the jewels that his banker will send to him for Jane. Here, Jane strongly states that she doesn't want them, because jewels for Jane Eyre (she doesn't use Jane Rochester) seem unnatural. Rochester's description of how he will put the "diamond chain around [her] neck" and "clasp the bracelet around these fine wrists" (220) sounds like imprisonment. In response to that, Jane's resistance grows even stronger. She alone wants to keep the power over her body. Denying the jewels is denying Rochester control over her. He wants to turn her into a beauty by giving her jewels, dressing her in fine clothes, travelling with her, and making other people acknowledge her beauty. In this scene, it is also Jane's awareness of her body that keeps her down to earth. She doesn't fantasize with Rochester, but asks him to not compliment her on something not real. She even says "I don't call you handsome, sir, though I love you most dearly: far too dearly to flatter you. Don't flatter me" (221). Here, it is argued that she states that she loves him more than he her, because she clearly implies that if you love someone very dearly, you won't flatter them like Rochester is doing. This scene shows how Jane's awareness of her body keeps her powerful

because it demonstrates some healthy skepticism towards the marriage.

The conversation that takes place between Jane and Rochester after the failed marriage ceremony shows how Jane exercises sexual power over Rochester in terms of body. Rochester comes towards Jane making an attempt to kiss her. Jane "remember[s] that caresses were now forbidden" (255), so she turns away her head and also actively turns away Rochester's face. The reader knows Jane's inner feelings about the situation; it seems like she would want nothing more than to kiss Rochester, since at this point she has already forgiven him for not telling her about Bertha. Nevertheless, Jane is suppressing her instinct of showing physical passion to Rochester. Firstly, because in this moment it is simply not appropriate anymore. Secondly, it gives her power that she exercises over Rochester who then bursts out more emotion to demonstrate his suffering.

Even though Jane is denying him affectionate touch to her body, she still physically stays with him. When he asks her to listen to him so he can explain, she replies that she will listen hours if he needs her to (260). At this point, she has already subconsciously made her decision to leave Thornfield; however, because of Rochester she takes the time to listen to his story. Here, she isn't aware of the effect her presence has on Rochester. He is already begging her to stay by telling her his story, hoping that it will change her mind. Her presence tortures him because he is aware she will leave. Consequentially, in this situation it is not just the fact that Jane is denying Rochester her body but showing him what he can't have that makes her powerful.

After Rochester tells Jane about the marriage with Bertha and his life after that, she is silent and when he asks her to promise to be his, she denies him the promise. Then, he attempts to exercise power over her body – first by embracing her, then by kissing her forehead and cheek (269). In this scene, she lets him, but she remains in control over his affectionate actions since she doesn't let his actions

change her mind. She doesn't let him influence her through physical touch, remaining in control of her body, which in return gives her power over Rochester.

In addition to the mentioned instances of power negotiation, an important aspect of considering her body as a power source is the age difference between Jane and Rochester. When they meet, he is twenty years older. In the relationship, that puts her in the role of a child, while giving Rochester a fatherly role, and therefore more power. In the course of the book, however, the relationship changes. As Ester Godfrey puts it so eloquently: "The dynamic quality of age difference shifts in power that coincide with the […] dramatic reversals of fortune" (865). At the beginning of their relationship, Rochester is clearly in the power position. With more time, Jane comes to the height of her womanliness and suddenly becomes an heiress, while Rochester ages, and loses his arm and sight due to Bertha burning down Thornfield. The power has shifted from Rochester to Jane. She also uses her newly acquired power to play with Rochester. When she is talking to him about St. John's proposal, she makes a remark about St. John's age, how St. John was "only twenty-nine, sir" (375). Then, Rochester asks if Jane would rather not sit on his knee anymore, to which she replies with "Why not, Mr. Rochester?" (375). Esther Godfrey notes that "throughout this conversation, [Jane] is aware the advantages and power that her body gives her over Rochester; that is clearly illustrated since Rochester attempts to degrade St. John and feels threatened" (867).

Another important and effective power source for Jane is her language. What she says and how she says it is the reason she is taken seriously. In this site of power negotiation, Jane also develops more qualities from childhood to adulthood. In her childhood, the most impressive scene is when she decides to speak up to Mrs. Reed who uses a tone to speak to Jane as "an opponent of adult age" rather than "a child" (30). The treatment of Jane

by her aunt shows how Jane is forced to grow up faster than a child normally would. Jane's answer to Mrs. Reed's question is strong and rational:

> I am glad that you are of no relation of mine: I will never call you aunt again as long as I live. I will never come to see you when I am grown up; and if any one asks me how I liked you, and how you treated me, I will say the very thought of you makes me sick, and that you treat me with miserable cruelty. (30)

Mrs. Reed responds by asking how Jane dare say this. In the first sentence of her explanation, Jane says "because it is the truth" (30). Her reaction is an outburst of emotions, and Jane's language allows her to make known how she feels. Even though it might seem like rage, it has characteristics of a calculated statement. The reader gets a hint early on that as a means of power, Jane will develop reason.

Another scene in which Jane uses her language as power is one of the evenings after she has been formally introduced to Rochester. That evening, he asks Jane to sit with him, and draw her chair a little closer to his so he can look at her without moving from his comfortable position. Even though she doesn't like his order, she obeys. She looks at him for a while, which causes him to ask if she thinks him handsome; she replies "no sir" (112). She tells the reader: "I should, if I deliberated, have replied to this question by something conventionally vague and polite; the answer somehow slipped from my tongue before I was aware" (112). Her reflection shows that even if she hadn't wanted to give this answer, it is honest. Her honesty through her words gives her great power. She further then elaborates when Rochester asks what she meant. She says that "beauty is of little consequence (112) and that tastes differ. This direct answer makes her very interesting to Rochester who compares the effect of her blunt answer to

"sticking a sly penknife under [his] ear" (112) instead of trying to smooth out the situation. Jane's spoken language makes her interesting to Rochester and he speaks to her as more of an equal because of her honesty. Her language exposes her knowledge, education, and sense in a powerful way that makes social rank less important.

Of course, one of most powerful ways to look at the language Jane uses is how she talks to the reader. When she has left Thornfield, she sleeps outside and has to beg for food. She finally finds a house that she walks towards, in hope that the people living there might be able to help her. Interestingly, she uses the word "inmates" (282) to describe the people living in the house. With the usage of the word, she suggests that the house is like a prison, maybe even how she saw Thornfield if she had stayed there. If "inmates" suggests 'imprisoned', then she illustrates herself as free. The comparison suddenly makes her equal to inhabitants of the house, even though they are of better social rank. She continues using the term "inmates" even after she stayed with them for a while. The ongoing use illustrates how Jane, even though she is physically weak and not well, still manages to create an equality between her and the Rivers siblings using language.

Another scene that is interesting to look at in terms of language is when Rochester plays the piano and the song to accompany the music is sung. The scene is described as very romantic with a lot of tenderness and passion. Instead of being swept off her feet, Jane decides that "a weapon of defense must be prepared" (233). Her choice of words shows how to Jane her feelings sometimes seem like a weakness. The word "weapon" connotes violence. Since she says "weapon of defense," she is comparing the situation with her being attacked by Rochester. She manages to confuse him and destroy the romance of the scene. It is not just language that makes her powerful here; it is interweaved with her sense and thought process, and even body. Rochester asks if he can kiss her

and she responds with no; Rochester then describes her as "hard little thing" (233) which shows how she exercised power over him and he is frustrated as a result of that. Here, Jane's inner thoughts are shown to the reader. She states Rochester should know the "bargain" (233) he made. Bargain relates to taking and giving, not a one-sided relationship. Applying the concept of the word to Jane's relationship with Rochester, she puts herself on the same level as he is. With this, Jane acts against the traditional concept of the inferior female gender role in society. She is aware of the power she has over him and even though she might not have a fortune and is of lower social rank, there is still bargaining in this relationship.

Jane's most important site of power negotiation is her rationality. She is able to look at events in a calm way; she doesn't let her feelings distract her. She doesn't generally repress her feelings, she chooses when she feels like it is appropriate for her to show them or not. There are many strong examples of her sense in the novel.

The significance of Jane's thought process is already demonstrated during her childhood. In the beginning of the book after her fight with John Reed, she is being brought to the red room by Bessie and Miss Abbot. The latter states how shocking it is that Jane hit her "young master" (9). Jane responds with "How is he my master? Am I a servant?" (9). Then, she is being told that she is even less than that. Even though her logic does not help her much, it is already shown how she ties words together and draws rational conclusions.

The strongest example is how Jane reflects on the unsuccessful marriage ceremony and her new knowledge about Bertha. She goes to her room and shuts herself in. Here, she specifies that she is not shutting herself in to cry or to mourn the situation (252), but to think about it. First, she says she feels weak and tired, but when she sits down to think about the situation, it seems like she is above it all – strong enough to handle it. She even explicitly says that she

feels like she has only been watching event after event happen that day, but "*now* [she] *thought*" (252). Then, she repeats the events for herself. Her almost emotionless and distant way of describing the situation is achieved by her talking about herself in the third person. For example, she states "Jane Eyre, who had been an ardent, expectant women – almost bride – was a cold solitary girl again: her life was pale, her prospects desolate" (252). The reader gets a hint at Jane's inner feelings when she describes the midsummer that has been overcome by a Christmas frost. Here, Jane's power through her words plays a role again. She doesn't just say "frost" but "Christmas frost." Since Christmas is something to look forward to, here she might even be indicating that the change in the situation is nothing that will cause her to show an unreasonable amount of sensibility but something she might even look forward to. After that, she then goes back to talking about herself in the "I" form. Rochester's behavior is also analyzed by her; the conclusion she makes is that his feelings were never sincere but only a "fitful passion" (253). Then, she even criticizes herself, arguing how blind she was and how weak she acted. A little later, she makes the decision to leave Thornfield. She does not let herself get carried away by her feelings. This scene shows how Jane's way of thinking allows her to view the situation rationally. She derives power from this ability – rationally acknowledging the circumstances and making a calculated decision. It lets her make the right decision, one that she won't regret because it was carefully thought through.

Once she starts talking to Rochester who is trying to convince her to stay with him, she describes feeling a sense of power that helped her in this difficult situation (258). Seconds later, she chooses to not repress her feelings anymore, but to let them show. She assumes that Rochester will be annoyed by her tears, which is one of the reasons she chooses to cry. He reacts in the way she predicts and tells her to stop. How Jane lets herself show her feelings in

this instance suggests that she is not just controlling and suppressing her feelings at all times, but only when she feels it is appropriate to show them.

Later on, another situation in which Jane's sense is clearly illustrated is when she finds out that she is to inherit a fortune. She does characterize it as a good thing to happen to someone, but immediately states that one cannot "jump, and spring, and shout hurrah!" (325) but has to consider the responsibilities that come with this inheritance. She is more thrilled to find out that she is related to the Rivers siblings later on in the same conversation with St. John. She claps her hand and exclaims "I am glad" (328). Her sense is her guide to what she values or not. Her reactions clearly show that the family she now has is more important to her than the money. Her values give her a certain amount of power because she will not let something material run her life. Her sense also protects her in multiple aspects. Instead of being overemotional and showing her vulnerability, Jane logically thinks about the issue to then reacts in a way that seems to suit the situation.

In the beginning of the novel, Jane Eyre has nothing – no family, no people she is loved by, fortune, or social rank. With the help of the power she derives from sense, she is able to seek an education and strive for a job as a governess. Her ability to express herself and her language make her loved by Rochester and give her power over him. In addition to language and reason, she uses her body as a source of power negotiation. Jane Eyre, the poor little girl, grows up to be a powerful woman who experiences all the joys of life she thought she wouldn't.

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This Thing Called Love

by Rebecca Stibrik

Love is a funny thing. While many have tried, no one can find a way to completely explain all of its workings and implications. Throughout literature, we see love portrayed in many different ways. In some cases, the element of surprise is used to make the romance more interesting. One such case is "A Sweatshop Romance" by Abraham Cahan, where we see the main character, Beile, change from loving one man to loving a completely different one. Likewise, in "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" by D.H. Lawrence, we follow Mabel, a lost young woman who falls in love in a very spontaneous manner. Throughout both of these stories, the authors successfully surprise their readers and leave us wondering: just who will end up with who?

When reading "A Sweatshop Romance," the surprise is in Beile's unforeseen shift of emotions. During the beginning of the story, it is quickly established that Beile and Heyman are in a relationship. Beile even goes so far as to mentally declare herself to be in love with him, thinking to herself that "She loved him. She liked his blooming face…she was fond of his company" (Cahan 5). Likewise, Heyman feels strongly for her and "the proposal lay on the

tip of his tongue" (Cahan 6). Upon reading all of this, we logically assume that Heyman and Beile are going to be together by the end of the story. After all, the author has laid all the clues for that conclusion. However, we later witness Beile get treated very rudely by her boss's wife when she is asked to run an errand, "paraded before the strangers as a domestic," and insulted (Cahan 7). During this incident, Heyman fails to speak up on her behalf, and this cowardice later costs him. David, who also likes Beile, comes to her defense instead (Cahan 8). As a result of this, we find out that Heyman stays away for a while as he is afraid of facing Beile after not helping her, even though he is "panting to see her"(Cahan 8). Meanwhile, David and Beile gradually get closer and even become engaged. With this, the author has completely changed the ending from what we were expecting.

In the beginning, the scene was set to have an ordinary love story, where a couple gets married and settles down. The author instead deals us out a surprise. He provides the characters with a simple test. One passes it, while the other does not. What one expects is that the man who has been with Beile and supposedly loves her would come to her aid. It is the tipping point for the rest of what happens. We expect Heyman to step up for Beile, not only because he is in a relationship with her, but also because he comes to her defense earlier when she's being poked at by their boss' son (Cahan 6). He appears to be the perfect person to defend her. Instead, he does nothing, except "[await] still more painful developments" while his "heart [shrinks] at the awkwardness of his situation" (Cahan 7). Worse than that, he continues to display cowardice by being afraid to even see Beile.

David, on the other hand, is initially portrayed to be rather meek, as he sits "silently plying his needle" (Cahan 2). He simply sits at his table, working and minding his own business until he rises to Beile's defense, saying "don't go, Beile!" (Cahan 7) and "don't mind her Beile, and never

worry" (Cahan 8). Unlike Heyman, he shows courage in his willingness to stand up for the girl he loves, in spite of the danger of losing his job. He appears to be a foil for Heyman in that the situation that brings out his strength is the very one that brings out Heyman's weakness. It is also unexpected that the characters remain in these new roles, rather than reverting back to their former roles. Beile and David stay together, and the man who looked as if he would be the hero and the winner instead loses the girl.

Like "A Sweatshop Romance," "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" also portrays a man coming to a woman's rescue, although in much more dire circumstances. Mabel is in a tragic place in her life. She sees herself losing everything. She has lost her parents, and now she is losing both her house and her status. As a result of this, Mabel reaches her breaking point. She cannot take it anymore and, in her despair, tries to drown herself. Her attempt is foiled, however, when the young Dr. Ferguson witnesses this from a higher vantage point and descends to save her (Lawrence 438). He quickly hauls her out of the water, and proceeds to take her to her house and begin caring for her (Lawrence 439). When she wakes up, she asks if he loves her, and both the reader and the doctor are surprised. The doctor even thinks that "he had never thought of loving her" (Lawrence 440). After pondering the situation, they both feel that they are in love with each other. This surprisingly quick exchange is precisely what makes this story so unexpected.

When this story began, most readers would never know that it was going to be a love story. Although it is sudden and unexpected, Mabel and the doctor fall in love. Prior to this, we see Mabel as a girl who has fallen on rough times, and who hasn't known love for many years. This is because her mother, the only one who she felt ever loved her, died a long time ago. Her father also died recently, and her brothers do not treat her well, often calling her names such as "bull-dog" (Lawrence 432) and "[talking] at her and around her" (Lawrence 433). After enduring such an

unfortunate life for so long, it is surprising that Mabel would even be open to the idea of romance. Yet, despite this, she is the one who first brings up the question of love between her and Dr. Ferguson (Lawrence 440). Even though she has just made an attempt to end her life, she appears to be ready to start a new one with the doctor.

In addition to the suddenness of the situation, the social differences between these two make their romance even more unexpected. While these two people have known each other, they have never had a connection. Mabel has always been rather haughty about her social status, until its recent decline. Dr. Ferguson, on the other hand, is your typical mild-mannered doctor. Because of this, they appear to be a rather unlikely couple, and yet they are infatuated so suddenly. Both are on somewhat heighted emotions after the experience of Mabel's drowning attempt, feeling "amazed, bewildered and afraid" (Lawrence 440) and crying "tears of consciousness" (Lawrence 442). They have gone through a difficult and emotional experience together, making them closer. They are also responding to Mabel's lack of affection. Mabel has felt unloved for much of her life, and feels the need for it. The doctor, in turn, feels compelled to fill the void and give her his love.

No two stories are ever exactly the same, even if they are love stories. In this case, both authors made the pairings in their stories unexpected. In "A Sweatshop Romance" it was the way a meek character stood up for the girl, and our surprise was who she was with at the end. In "The Horse Dealer's Daughter," it is the suddenness of the events that makes it surprising. Not only do these unexpected twists make their stories more interesting, but also somewhat more believable. After all, life is full of surprises. This just goes to show that in literature, as well as life, you can never quite predict the end.

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Asleep With Both Eyes Open

by Courtney Dorsey

For privacy reasons names and locations have been changed.
Though the painful memories are real. Stay with us, Mike; please.

This is not a love story, though I love him still. This is not one of those "the stars aligned for us" type of story. We are friends. I clear this up in the beginning because I am a girl and he's a boy. For some reason that means we are supposed to follow some romantic comedy trajectory where, after years of friendship, we fall in love. Like it just happens that way or something. Well, like I said, we are friends. A friendship that has lasted a little over 7 years now; a friendship that blossomed during nights of endless laughter, as well as elongated discussions that often turned into heated (but civil) arguments about books, movies, etc. We talked about the future, our childhoods, anything, everything, and we were always able to be ourselves. But now our friendship doesn't offer me any of those things. Now our friendship only brings me an immense amount of pain; pain that strikes me to my inner core, leaving me short of breath, short of answers, as I continually ask others, and myself how all of this happened to him.

I met Mike our first day on the job, tending bar at the new corporate restaurant, Billy's. Both of us had been bartending for different corporate restaurants when we were asked to transfer and help with the new opening. I was finishing up eating a cheeseburger before my night shift and Mike walked up to me, his hair still wet from his shower (it was 3pm) and said, "I have always had respect for skinny girls who can put down giant cheeseburgers. Well, not that I mind when fat people eat them. I guess I am saying it looks better to see you eating it. Crap…I don't know where I am going with this. You smell nice." That is usually how Mike's sentences ended. His intentions were good, but he often spoke from his heart without thinking first. This impulsive behavior is the driving force he continues to battle on a daily basis. First it was a little boozing, as bartenders do, then it was a little pot, which most bartenders do as well. But then, Mike headed down a distant road, a road of self-destruction on a path where his friends were unable to find him, unable to bring him back.

In the early years of bartending, our staff was full of young twenty something year olds. A bunch of bright-eyed, lost souls. The majority of us were without college degrees, excited to be earning a decent living, enjoying our newfound friendships. We stayed up too late, we drank too much, and we dated the wrong people. As bartenders, we were local celebrities, people began to recognize us all over town, and our tabs were often paid for by people we barely knew. Mike and I took to each other instantly, eventually getting an apartment together. Our personalities were compatible; the openness we were able to communicate with one another was a rarity, a rarity I have found in few other friendships. The shifts we worked together were referred to as the Mike and Courtney show. And a show it was.

Bartending at Billy's was insane. Billy's has both an indoor and an outdoor bar. Both bars are open year-round, constantly packed with big name CEOs, corporate men in

suits, corporate women in dress pants, cougars, young girls looking for free drinks, young men looking to go home with something with a pulse. Mike could handle this crowd better than any of us. Mike could be brutally honest with anybody, even a controlling powerhouse CEO. Mike would talk to him like he was just a normal dude, because I mean, well, he was, but the CEO was unfamiliar with people not kissing his ass. There Mike would be, making fun of the guy and the guy would be throwing Mike an extra 100-dollar tip, laughing, and giving Mike a huge hug at the end of the night. Mike would put people in their place, but his intention was never to put them down or make them feel badly about themselves. His intention was to allow all walks of life to have a place at our bar, regardless of their job title. He just knew how to validate people, how to assure them he was aware of who they were, but that he accepted their humanity, flaws and all.

Mike's flaws were many. He did not know how to say no to people. Except to girls throwing themselves at him. He had this need to please others, especially the people who were bad for him. So there these bar regulars were, having drinks after work, escaping the loneliness waiting for them at home, escaping their spouses and children. They'd snort blow to level out from too much drinking, they'd drink to level out from too much blow. They'd pass each other Xanax pills and welcome their co-workers to the newly divorced club, often saying, "It's not so bad, man. Take this pill and down some whiskey. All you can do is hope your wife re-marries soon; alimony is a real bitch." Mike would add, "Now that you are divorced you will have more time to come in here and hang out with me. Court is a lot more fun to look at than your ex-wife anyway, aren't you Court? I am the perfect wing man, I promise." I would smile and nod to humor them then Mike would walk over and apologize for involving me, explaining that he felt badly for the guy.

The regulars would pass us bartenders pills, cocaine, and occasionally ecstasy, inviting us to join their world, assuming we were just as messed up as they were. And believe me, at times we were. Constantly being subjected to good people making bad alcohol induced decisions caused a lot of us to get off work and drink too much in hopes to erase the memory of it all, attempting to silence the chaos in our heads after a 10-hour shift behind the bar. We self-medicated because we were young and stupid as we swore up and down we would never turn out like them.

This destructible bar life began to weigh heavily on all of us. The money we made began to hold less value. Many of the bartenders began to quit, taking more structured jobs. One went to rehab. Some of us, myself included, went back to college. With our early twenties now behind us, most of us were ready for a new focus, a focus beyond pouring drinks monotonously behind a bar.

Yet, Mike did not grow with us. Instead, Mike took the pills from the regulars, snorted their blow, and dropped their ecstasy. Mike found little trouble keeping friends with his new habits. There were and always will be people in the restaurant industry willing to get high. When the bar life is all you have it is easy to get sad. And man, did Mike get sad.

When you coast through life working behind a bar the world appears upside down. Mike would get to work when the rest of the world was leaving work. As he would fly down the street, he would see traffic piling up on the other side of the road. Mike was asleep while the rest of the world was awake; Mike was awake while the rest of the world was asleep.

While his family and friends would be at BBQs on the weekend, Mike was pouring drinks for the weekend crowd (the rookies) who tip less and bug you more. The job pays well, but it scrapes at your soul. Mike's creative side became nonexistent. Once the glamorous aspects of being a bartender wore off the only challenge he endured was

remaining patient. The patience and compassion he once had for people slowly drifted away as he heard himself snapping at people, but was too worn down to stop himself. He missed the sun; he used to wake up with the sun, now some days the sun existed only in his mind. The moon laughed at him and sometimes the moon failed to show its full self. The stars are all us bartenders have, those of us who are awake enough to remember to look up.

Just like that, Mike stopped looking up. Through the years we lived together our apartment was a mixture of grand central station and a nightclub. I would come home late from work and open our unlocked apartment door to find Mike and company piled up on our couch, strung out on something. I would wake up for my early morning classes only to find Mike on the couch, alone. His eyes dark and vacant, his lips dry, his hands shaking clenching the bowl of weed he was smoking. The TV flashing colors of people on the screen actively participating in society as Mike remained hunched over on the couch, aloof. Most of these mornings we did not speak. There was nothing to say. Our worlds were dissimilar; we shared the same roof, our bedrooms shared a wall, yet we no longer connected. As my day was just beginning, Mike's day was foggy and drawn. My day had an agenda, his day had expired, like spoiled milk forgotten in the back of the fridge; Mike was rotting in our apartment.

His friends took notice of his worsening habits and often we formed plans to help him. We had interventions, Mike was defensive, there was a lot of anger, and a lot of crying but it seemed to be productive. Mike would snap out of it. Then he'd slip back. So then we got our head bartender to set Mike straight. Mike respected John more than anybody. John had a decent head on his shoulders and a way with words. If anyone could get through to Mike it was John; sure enough he did.

Mike snapped out of it. He started going to the gym here and there. He would stay in some nights and read

a book or watch a movie with his brother (who also lived with us) and me. The old Mike was back. He even appeared happy at times. Mike began extending thoughtful gestures the way he used to, as he once again became aware of his surroundings. During this time when we watched movies together, he would turn and look at me to see if I was still paying attention, remembering my wandering mind and frustratingly short span of attention. Mike would give me this look and smile as he asked me how far back he needed to rewind, both of us cracking up laughing, Mike shaking his head in amazement at how easily I am distracted. I would begin to recall my last clear moment from the movie as Mike pointed the remote to the TV, both of us watching the pictures on the screen moving backward in time.

Yet, these moments were transient. Around Mike I often reacted like a wounded dog that had recently been attacked. Always hesitant to trust my surroundings, not willing to believe the current reality because it was clear that Mike might never be back for good.

Mike's problems had only just begun. I should know; I was there. It makes me sick to admit this but I remember it vividly. It was a Friday night and we had just finished our shift. It was a little after 3AM and Mike no longer had a car or a license. He asked me to drive him to our buddy Zach's place so he could grab something he needed. I wasn't thrilled with the idea, but reluctantly I gave in. When we got to Zach's it was clear he had been drinking (among other things). Zach was alone, his eyes heavy and bloodshot. Zach offered Mike and me both a line of oxycontin; I quickly declined. But Mike did not even hesitate. He explained that he had never done it before and Zach said, "I should not be the one opening this door for you. It is a door that never fully closes, but instead shuts you in, and locks you out from the rest of the world, a door that you will never stop knocking on, never stop wanting more from."

That comment alone scared the crap out of me. But Mike just smiled at him like he was being dramatic, romanticizing the whole thing. Mike stared down at the pile of pale blue powder and took the credit card off the table, pushed the crushed oxy into a neat thin line, grabbed the rolled up hundred dollar bill off the table, and placed it to his nostril. After he snorted the line, I waited for something terrible to happen, but nothing did. Mike sat back, appearing to be the same person he was before.

But he was different. Oxy is a demon of a different kind. Oxy is synthetic heroin. People do not just *do* heroin. Heroin means *I give up*. Heroin became bigger than Mike. It was no longer Mike's decision if he wanted to party that day; his body made that decision for him. First, he could feel it from one pill. Then he needed two, three, and so on. If his dealers were short on supplies Mike would settle for other drugs, often popping Xanax, other painkillers, and drinking until he blacked out.

The wear and tear this did to Mike's body and mind was evident. Asking him a simple question like, "Hey Mike a group of us are planning on going to the Shenandoah this Saturday to kayak and camp out, care to join?" would result in Mike yelling, "Do you think I am made of money or something? I can't take a Saturday off from work. That sounds awful anyways, it's so hot out."

Mike used to be up for anything. He was never the one to plan the adventure but he was always willing to come along. Now, Mike did not even want to be a passenger.

The severity of his addiction became hauntingly clear to me one day before work. It was just about time for us to leave when I realized Mike was still asleep; it was 3:15 in the afternoon. We had to be at work at 4 and our apartment was about thirty minutes away. When I went into his room I found him on top of all the covers wearing the same clothes he was in from the night before. I walked over and began to shake him.

No response.

I began yelling his name. "MIKE" "MIKE "MICHAEL" "MIIIIKKKKKEEE!" I was on top of him. Jumping on him. Shaking his shoulders. My knee in his back. *My God he is dead*, I thought. Too scrambled to check his pulse I grabbed his arm pulling it behind his back screaming "MIKE!"

Finally.

He woke up. He began swinging at me. He threw me off of him. He called me a "CRAZY BITCH." These words pierced my heart. We did not speak on the car ride to work. We both stared blankly ahead. Mike was in a fog.

He was gone.

These days Mike rarely sleeps. Often he slips in and out of consciousness as he is cradled to rest by heroin. I lost count of all our interventions. Nowadays, talking to Mike only results in an argument and a web of lies. Mike dropped the east coast, picked up and moved to California. Like many lost souls before him, he searched for answers out west. "A fresh start," he claimed.

Yet, a fresh start for Mike meant circling back and ending up in a worse condition from when he left. Now he injects heroin…

It is easy to get lost. I watched it happen to all of us. But what makes Mike unable to be found? A dream deferred? Maybe. Or dreams Mike never had but wished he did? These questions linger.

Mike unwilling to seek answers. Mike continually resisting his pain. He remains numb, avoiding his fears, leaving his friends calling his name, our voices unfamiliar, as Mike slips further from reality, further from our reach.

The Challenges of Correctional Nursing

by Shannon Mahoney

Abstract

The role of a correctional nurse is one of the most misunderstood yet important roles in the prison system. This paper explores the different aspects of correctional healthcare nursing and the everyday challenges facing correctional nurses. This includes the ethical issues faced when caring for an inmate who has committed a crime the nurse feels strongly against and how this may potentially impact their ability to care for the patient after the fact. It also touches upon the current nursing shortage and the consequences this has for correctional healthcare. This paper emphasizes the importance of the correctional nurse and offers suggestions on how to maintain a higher retention rate among correctional nurses.

The Challenges of Correctional Nursing

The importance of healthcare in prisons has been highlighted in recent years by allegations of inadequate health services for prisoners mostly within the established private prison industry. There have been accusations in recent years that prisons have been cutting funding and

healthcare amenities that are necessary to the health and survival of many inmates. These situations have brought to light the many facets of the corruption within the prison system in the United States and have emphasized the plight that many correctional nurses face. A specific example of this is a recent nurse in Arizona outing the negligence of healthcare within prisons in the state, explaining that the administration of the prisons have effectively given some prisoners a "death sentence" by denying them the proper forms of healthcare. She went on to say that it is "unconstitutional and inhumane" to knowingly not provide the proper standard of care to a person in prison (Lee, 2014). According to a 2014 study, there are approximately 2.3 million prisoners in the United States. This same study found that of those prisoners who had chronic illnesses, many of them failed to receive proper care for their conditions (Wilper, et al., 2009).

Part of problem contributing to this failure to provide adequate care to inmates is due to a lack of funding to prisons and jails, both federal and private. According to the Urban Institute, only about "9 to 30 percent of corrections costs can go toward inmate health care" (The Urban Institute, 2013). This decreases the number of employees prisons can dedicate to inmate health, decreases their pay, and creates limitations on the availability of proper supplies and technology needed for necessary care. It also places limitations on the types of medications available to those incarcerated. According to the Federal Prison guidebook there are only certain medications that are allowed to be dispensed within the facilities. If an incoming inmate is on a medication that is not on this list, it will either be substituted or not dispensed at all (Ellis, 2012). This creates issues for inmates who are in desperate need of that medication.

Another contributing factor to poor health care service in correctional facilities is due to an increasing shortage of medical staff that desire to be employed in such

a setting or remain employed in this environment. The nursing shortage is a nationwide problem. Barack Obama identified that there are over 116,000 registered nursing positions that remain unfilled, as there are not enough registered nurses to fill the position (Chafin & Biddle, 2013). Filling these voids in correctional facilities is even more difficult than filling a hospital position due to the vast differences in the job description. One study conducted by W. Sue Chafin and Wendy Biddle found that the retention rate among correction health staff is extremely low, with only 20% of nurses who participated in the study remaining employed at the facility over a three year period. (Chafin & Biddle, 2013). This same study found that the reasons nurses decided to leave jobs in the correctional facility had less to do with the population and facility and more to do with insufficient pay, inadequate time with the patient, and improper treatment from physicians in the prison. (Chafin & Biddle, 2013). This inability to retain certified correctional nurses leads to discrepancies in nurse-patient relationships, the continuity of care, and the documentation of inmate health (Chafin & Biddle, 2013).

Understandably, working in the prison system is not easy. Prisons are one of the most complex and misunderstood parts of our society. Unless there is firsthand experience with the correctional system, it all remains a mystery that is shaped by television and movies. It is hard to even imagine that in an environment that so many people have been taught to fear and avoid that the tiniest aspects of nurturing and caring can exist. The employment of correctional nurses allows for this smallest amount of humanity to exist within the prison system. To some of these prisoners, the nurse they work with offers the only type of interaction they have where they feel safe or, in many cases, their only chance to receive health care inside or outside of prison as many times these people are overlooked when it comes to concern about their healthcare.

Nurses who work in the prisons face different kinds of challenges every day. They must be able to change from acting as an emergency room nurse to a psychiatric nurse in a matter of minutes because they never know what is going to come through their door. Within the walls of the prison a correctional nurse does not just take on the role of a nurse but also the roles of a therapist, dentist, caretaker, and friend. In some cases, the nurse may take on the role of the inmate's family, becoming a person they feel like they can trust and rely on. Correctional nurses must also be able to adapt to using the equipment they are given, as resources are often not unlimited inside the prison. Along with these practical challenges, correctional nurses face many moral and ethical issues when caring for a person who is incarcerated. Oftentimes what is forgotten is that these incarcerated men and women have a legal right to have their health cared for while in custody.

One of the biggest moral and ethical issues nurses face while working in the prison system is the understanding that every person inside the correctional facility has done something that deemed them a danger to society in some way or another. Prison healthcare workers must decide whether or not they want to be informed on what crime inmates committed and how long they will be incarcerated for. They must also decide whether being privileged to this information will impact their ability to provide a high standard of care to these people. A 2014 study conducted by Ruth Crampton and de Sales Turner looked into the difficulties that come with caring for individuals who are incarcerated. They found that when it came to being informed on their patient's crime, the answers varied greatly depending on the nurse (Crampton & Turner, 2014). Some nurses interviewed in the study never wanted to be informed of their patient's crimes or actions. They felt as though knowing this information would interfere with their ability to give the best care possible (Crampton & Turner, 2014). One nurse in the

study shared an experience of the difficulties that come with having knowledge of the crime the individual being cared for had committed. He said, "I did look at that patient differently. I just feel like I didn't want to look after that person because of that. I did find it difficult to overcome" (Crampton & Turner, 2014). Other nurses wanted to know exactly what crime the inmate had committed before caring for them. These nurses felt that it was in the best interest of their safety in their work environment to be fully informed. Although these nurses differed in their desire to be informed, they all agreed that it was their job to remain non-judgmental and give the inmates the best care they could provide for them, as it is their legal right (Crampton & Turner, 2014).

This concern for safety by some nurses in the Crampton and Turner study is not unreasonable. There are a number of inmates that do have the capability of becoming violent, which is why correctional officers are always with an inmate while they are receiving medical care. While this may be the safest measure for the nurse and the inmate, the presence of another person in the nurse-patient relationship can hinder the trust and the ability of the patient to communicate freely and openly with the nurse (Foster, Bell, & Jayasinghe, 2013). Many prisoners view correctional officers as people of higher authority and thus do not feel as open to share their actual symptoms or what actually may have happened to them. This system of superiority does not allow for appropriate collaboration between prisoner officers and the healthcare workers which, in turn, causes deterioration in the level of care the inmate receives (Foster, Bell, & Jayasinghe, 2013).

Along with these moral issues that arise, practical and medical issues arise in correctional nursing as well. Correctional nurses work in a very unique setting where all patient history may not be directly at hand. Sometimes obtaining this information from an incarcerated patient can be very difficult (Williams & Heavey, 2014). They may not

always possess the information or have the ability to communicate it to the nurse. It is the nurse's job to find ways to obtain the necessary information from the patient (Williams & Heavey, 2014). Correct documentation may also not always be available. This has been improving with the introduction of the electronic medical record but this may not always be available due to funding (Williams & Heavey, 2014). In a correctional facility, a nurse may not always have access to necessary equipment, such as forceps or scissors, due to bans or restrictions. (Williams & Heavey, 2014). Since these patients are in the custody of the state or government it is often a challenge when a patient does need to be transported to the hospital as security must be provided at all times for the inmate at well as the healthcare providers (Williams & Heavey, 2014).

A nurse's role within the prison system is very different from a nurse's role in traditional bedside nursing. In traditional nursing, a nurse may be with a patient for a few weeks. In correctional nursing, a nurse could be caring for a patient for years depending on the length of their sentence (Gerber, 2012). In some cases the correctional nurse may serve as a primary provider for these patients in the absence of a physician. They may be called to assist in any number of different situations throughout the hospital. They do not have just one specialty within the prison (Gerber, 2012). Sometimes it may be difficult to understand the boundaries of nurse within a correctional facility. It is important for the nurse to remain within his or her own scope of practice (Williams & Heavey, 2014). Nurses should never participate in disciplinary actions and as of "2010 the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics condemned a nurse's participation in lethal injections" (Gerber, 2012).

The culture within the prison system has a big impact on the prisoners, their health and the individuals who work in these environments. Margaret Leininger touched upon this in her theory of transcultural nursing. In her theory she states "nurses who are culturally competent

are better able to provide optimal, holistic care that is considered to be 'culturally congruent' with their patients" (Christensen, 2014). By understanding the environment the prisoner was in before incarceration and now while they are incarcerated, a nurse in better able to relate to patients and for better relationships with them (Christensen, 2014). Leininger also notes that care is a universal trait and can be provided no matter what the setting is (Christensen, 2014). This is a theme commonly found among studies involving correctional healthcare. Nurses want to be able to provide the best care possible without the interference of judgment. Once a nurse is able to understand the patient they are able to fully provide for them.

Correctional nurses are a unique type of nurse and not all nurses have what it takes to become one. A correctional nurse must be able to advocate for what is best for the patient even if it goes against their own moral standards, have strong assessment and triage skills, possess excellent communication skills, and have the ability to work with a wide range of patients with different kinds of illnesses that may not be in the nurse's specialty (Gerber, 2012). The National Commission on Correctional Health Care offers a certification to those nurses who are qualified in all of these areas. Correctional nurses must also be able to separate their work lives from their personal lives so they do not take what they see at work home with them (Crampton & Turner, 2014).

The position of a correctional nurse is one of the most important positions within the prison system. Without these nurses the patients in custody would never be able to maintain their health and would be sicker than they were when they came into the prison. The inmates would die from injuries sustained in custody if a nurse was not there to act right away. Some mental health disorders would go untreated if a correctional nurse did not identify them. It is the responsibility of society and prison administration to advocate for these nurses to make sure they want to

continue working in these environments and provide them with the equipment necessary to provide proper care. Without correctional nurses, prisoners would not only get sicker but they would die.

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From Blood to Brains: How Zombies Became the Modern Dracula

by Alicia Biscoe

There is no doubt *Dracula* has maintained its popularity. In the one hundred and seventeen years since its publication, *Dracula* has never been out of print and has been the inspiration for many modern vampires of today. There's always a price though, for having a concept linger for so long, and in the case of modern vampires, we've paid the ultimate price of sacrificing what vampires truly represent to our society. Vampires have only prevailed into modernity through a vast degeneration of cultural symbolism and biological purpose, due to modern interpretations stripping away the scaffolding of the once-prolific character that was Dracula. A vampire of today resembles nothing of the Dracula of old in its purpose and distinction. Gone is the purpose of using the monstrous vampire to examine society's, and in turn, humankind's, most prevalent fears and anxieties. *Interview with a Vampire*, *Blade*, *Vampire Diaries*, the *Twilight* franchise, *True Blood*…the list of vampire interpretations has only skyrocketed in the past century, each one chipping away a large piece of the original purpose of the vampire figure. Luckily, though, there is another monster willing to take up the challenge,

willing to be the manifestation of humankind's fears and anxieties. A replacement for Bram Stoker's *Dracula,* the culturally relevant and biologically formidable zombie prevails where the modern vampire falls by the wayside, leaving the modern vampire to be an empty shell of entertainment.

In beginning to evaluate this bold claim, first there must be an analytical inquiry into what Bram Stoker's *Dracula* symbolized, not only for Victorian society, but mankind as well. What makes Dracula so special as a vehicle for complex biological and cultural issues in society and mankind? There is a distinction between society and mankind, as Dracula not only preys on cultural fears, but pressing, biological ones as well. First, let's examine the wide cultural aspect Dracula represented.

When Bram Stoker published *Dracula* in 1897, Victorian society was plagued with fear for the changes the fin-de-siècle, or turn of the century, would bring. A burgeoning middle class aspiring to reach the upper class through rigid morality and conservatism had generally ruled the past 60 years (Ping 3). Towards the end of the 19th century, the middle class seemed to be tightening their moral grip in fear of the small pockets of change in societal circles and new advances the 20th century would bring, "The Victorian body, social and individual, felt itself under perpetual assault from all quarters within and without, and responded to the perceived threat by adopting manifold defensive and retaliatory measures through various reform laws, regulations, and forms of moral policing" (May 16). That being said, there were lots of societal concerns that characterized the time period, but a few prominent ones were laid bare through the birth of Dracula, "...cultural anxieties peculiar to the Victorian fin-de-siècle darkly reflected in Dracula: fears over degeneration (Dijkstra), reverse colonization (Arata), homosexuality (Schaffer), the 'New Woman' (Senf), Darwinian materialism and the dissolution of the soul (Blinderman), and so on" (Clasen

379). Even more simply, *Dracula* seemed to break through boundaries forged by the oppressive middle class. "*Dracula* is about undermining and transgression of many of those protective limits and boundaries most essential to the bourgeois Victorian's demarcation of individual selfhood and social identity" (May 16). Given all of these boundaries, how was Stoker capable of writing a book so keen on the unspoken societal fears of the time? How did he get it through a censorship board at the time, and why does it remain so prolific today?

According to Tanya Pikula, Stoker had the ultimate control when writing about "impure or dangerous material," understanding how far to push the envelope and in what ways:

> …distanced by Eastern European vampirism and contained by insistent expressions of patriarchal ideology, the erotic clichés of Dracula nevertheless titillate its readers, many of whom have already been conditioned in quick response by direct or indirect knowledge of erotic lingo and tropes. In this sense, Stoker's text, like many Victorian advertisements, reassures the reader with its loud, declarations of traditional ideology, while stroking them in the right places. (302)

While Pikula speaks mostly of sex in her article and the quote above, this holds true for most of the cultural anxieties showcased in *Dracula*. It takes a fine hand to write something that lampoons present society while still captivating the same society into wanting to read it. Stoker does this balancing act throughout the novel with such careful consideration that he not only succeeds in talking about prominent social issues of the day no one wanted to discuss, but also in making people genuinely enjoy the story as well. If no one enjoyed the story, it wouldn't have been

so widely publicized and if the story didn't have so many societal implications, critics would have discarded it by now. This is the balancing act that makes this novel so special and is part of the reason why *Dracula* has retained its popularity and relevancy through the ages.

While the cultural aspect is one part of the *Dracula* success equation, there is another component that may be even more important when we talk about *Dracula*: biology. *Dracula* has existed for one hundred and seventeen years and as stated earlier, in all of that time, it has never gone out of print, even as far as being translated into several dozen languages. This idea of Dracula certainly seems to transcend the Victorian society of England and it is through the universal, biological aspects that this occurs. Like Mathais Clasen describes in his research, "the vampire's longevity and universality stems not just from metaphor and social symbolism, but also from biological roots of contagion and predation of the character" (386).

Victorian society was preoccupied with degeneration, and while that certainly means degeneration of morals, there was also an excessive fear of disease and contamination as forms of degeneration as well. At the time, even though the atmosphere seemed to be one of staunch moral conservatism, prostitution was a rampant problem in 19th century Victorian society. The problem with prostitution, besides being a moral transgression, was the spread of disease, especially syphilis. Sexually transmitted diseases were a bodily and societal invasion caused by "minute particles" from "morbidic matter" according to doctors and social reformists of the time period (May 17). Does this concept of disease sound familiar? Perhaps it is because Dracula himself seems to be a parasitic, contagious pathogen. Jonathan Harker hints at a similar idea in the novel: "this was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to

batten on the helpless" (Stoker 71). We know at this point in the story that "satiate his lust for blood" refers to the vampire method of draining someone's blood through an intimate puncture wound, as Jonathan almost experiences with the three vampire women (54). Looking at this quote, it's easy to see the parallel of Dracula and contagion. Dracula delivers his pathogen through a puncture wound, invoking the "minute particles" from "morbidic matter" to enter the blood, as Dracula is somewhere between living and dead, and in doing so creates more and more contagious parasites like him. To fuel the fire, Dracula is not only analogous to a disease carrying pathogen, hell bent on infecting all of London, but does so while dripping with disgust. Disgust, as a biological function, is ingrained in humans to avoid diseased and harmful things. It would make sense then that Dracula, and other vampires, who are the epitome of diseased contagions, would inspire disgust from the humans they come into contact with. The novel portrays this disgust rampantly throughout the novel: when Jonathan first sees the fresh fed Dracula in his coffin (71), when the men first see Lucy as a vampire (271), and when the men encounter Mina drinking Dracula's blood (362-363). Almost every instance of humans encountering a vampire is characterized with disgust because they represent harm and disease to those living.

Speaking of harm, when it comes to human and vampire interactions, there is no beneficence to be had because, at their core, vampires are predators to humans. Vampires are presented as disgusting, diseased predators, with the sole goal of draining humans of their blood for food or turning humans into vampires to join them in their debauchery. This is one of the reasons the fascination with vampires has retained its freshness for so long. Invoking the terror through the biology of the creature is a must have in order for people to fear and subsequently be fascinated by them. Dracula, frequently throughout the text according to Clasen, is compared to an animal or beast of some sort,

"Dracula is fundamentally bestial, and has prominent fangs…He is repeatedly described as an animal…and he has fiery, red eyes, superhuman strength, and a volatile temper" (386). Clasen goes on to claim that Dracula is not your average alpha-predator because besides his beastly nature, he has the ability to infiltrate polite society with his highly evolved social intellect and charisma (386). However, despite the high intellect and some supernatural powers, the humans in the novel were never swayed by Dracula to willingly become a vampire. Stoker made sure Dracula and his vampires served a distinct purpose in being "soul-less, vile, ungodly creatures" dividing what we know to be evil (vampires, undead) and good (humans and life) (390). Even when Dracula infected Mina, she makes all the men promise to kill her should she make the complete transformation, because death is better than vampirism (Stoker 425; Clasen 390). Combine all of these biological and societal components, and what Stoker has created is a monster so memorable and so formidable that, despite its antiquated Victorian origins, Dracula still assimilates seamlessly into modern society.

It's clear that Dracula is more than just an entertaining character; he represents a societal and biological face that has transcended space, time, and culture and has remained relevant for subsequent generations. Unfortunately, this has not been the case with modern vampires. When you have vampires such as the Cullens from the *Twilight* series or Erik Northman from *True Blood* trying to represent the same face, you lose the essence of Bram Stoker's vampire and create another entity in its entirety. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that they are too busy glittering in the sun, feeling guilty about their monstrous nature, or looking like Calvin Klein models to have time to convey relevant social symbolism and biological prowess anymore. Critics like Nina Auerbach claim that the modern vampire is just the same as Dracula, but has conformed to each generation's societal issues

(Clasen 390). However, the more accurate description, and the description this paper defends, comes from Tenga and Zimmerman, who claim that the modern vampire has been thwarted by the cumbersome conscience, preventing it from remaining the horrifying monster it once was (76).

Vampires have been distorted, not enhanced, by modern culture and the entertainment business to make us believe vampires are, "everything we wish we were: beautiful, strong, rich, and happy beyond measure" (Clasen 390). The overt humanization imposed on the modern vampire has obliterated any of the original concepts Stoker had in Dracula. Gone are the "soulless, carnal, egoistic monsters" Clasen claims Stoker wanted humans to "transcend" (390). Instead, vampires have become Stoker's true nightmare, since modern society projects that we need to embody vampires, not destroy them. Longing for vampirism is a popular trend in the modern vampire narrative, with countless humans preferring the vampire life to human life (390). Bella's goal in Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series was to become a vampire. Sookie Stackhouse from the *True Blood* TV series, based on the novels by Charlaine Harris, also was in a love triangle with two male vampires, one of whom disdained his own creation, and the other a veritable sex god who owned his own nightclub business, both undeniably attractive with a sensitive side. Brad Pitt's character in the film *Interview with a Vampire*, based on Anne Rice's novels, was a weary vampire telling a modern journalist about his life of regret as a vampire. The tag line for the film from the International Movie Database reads, "A vampire tells his epic life story: love, betrayal, loneliness, and hunger" ("Interview with a Vampire").

Where are the ungodly, beastly metaphors? Where are the Mina Harkers forcefully telling their comrades to kill them if necessary to avoid turning into a monster? Stoker would be having an aneurism by now at the modern vampires and humans above. The humanization in each one of those examples goes against the very nature of the

vampire as a biological predator and also diminishes the cultural importance of the vampire being a merciless, and brutal predator. The vampire is shown as such a terrible entity because it is meant to uphold the goodness of society. Society wishes to thrive and survive, not to die in order to live fuller lives like modern vampire has us believe. The modern adaptations of vampires that show them close to the original concept, like author Justin Cronin says, focus on "connections between people", and examining "what part of [our] humanity would [we] be trading away if [we] got to live forever?" (Clasen 391). Cronin assures us that through the evaluation of those questions, we'd find ourselves a whole lot better off remaining human (Clasen 391). It's easy to be blinded by the shininess of this new, more humanized, sexualized version of the vampire, but it is a one sided version compiled without all of the facts. Dracula and vampires as Stoker presents them are evil, malicious, predatory creatures who show mortality is fragile. Vampires are supposed to show that death is something to fear, not something to wish upon ourselves so we may start our new eternal life, and that humanity prevails when we work together to overcome our fears. As a whole though, it's not hard to see how this romanticized portrayal of vampires is enticing to our fast paced, we'll-sleep-when-we're-dead society. Eternal life sounds so appealing when we look at the modern vampire, because we essentially see better versions of ourselves having it all, while living eternally. The exception, however, is that the gutting of the original vampire for this shiny, plastic, version comes under many false pretenses and is unnecessary, especially when the original idea can translate seamlessly into our culture of today.

How do we know that this idea can transition seamlessly today? It's been done in a new monstrous face, willing to eat a brain for Bram Stoker's original vampire concept: zombies. Zombies have literally and figuratively been raised from the dead as pop culture icons within the

last several decades to fulfill a job modern vampires are incapable of doing- using a story about a culturally and biologically relevant monster to talk about society's fears and anxieties.

Culturally, zombies symbolize several major themes: fear of death and aging (Tenga and Zimmerman 78-79), the loss of identity (80), and the idea that large organizations, through their irresponsible globalization of capitalism, greed, and errors cause disasters like the literal creation of monsters (83). AMC's *The Walking Dead* highlights what zombies can represent to a society, with episodes focusing on the survivor's loss of identity in comparison to the zombie's loss of identity, the fear of death and aging heightened by the fact you are running for your life constantly in a world of peril (79), and the notion that larger entities in society are responsible for the situation (83). While it's true that Bram Stoker's *Dracula* focused on different themes, the unifying moral themes of evil vs. good still apply, and zombie narratives, especially *The Walking Dead* still take the essence of what Stoker was trying to accomplish with *Dracula* - examining relevant societal fears and anxieties through a monster.

Biologically, zombies are very similar to Stoker's *Dracula* as well. The predation factor comes not from the vampire that stalks and infects its prey cunningly, but from the overwhelming horde of mindless, insatiably hungry for human flesh zombies (80). While vampires and zombies seem to be on the opposite spectrum of what you look like after death, they still embody a threat to humans from the natural order. In terms of disease and disgust, this is really where the zombie shines. According to Tenga and Zimmerman, "Many recent zombie narratives express anxiety about globalization in terms of infection. The T-Virus in *Resident Evil* and the Rage virus in *28 Days Later* are created through scientists and unleashed through human error" (82). Zombies, in recent narratives at least, are literally born from disease and each zombie is representative

of the threat of that disease. Not to mention that zombies, on the opposite spectrum from modern vampires, are some of the most disgusting things imaginable, usually portrayed with rapid decay and gruesome mutilation, "the zombie reminds us that we will soon be rotting flesh without thought or control" (78). But most of all, zombies portray what society craves: "a genuinely abject monster" (84), as Julia Kristeva's quote explains in Tenga and Zimmerman's article "the corpse…is death infecting life, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object" (78).

That quote certainly does not describe the modern vampire, with all of its humanization and the eschewing of its monstrous responsibilities. What it does though, is highlight just how perfect the zombie is in fulfilling Stoker's vision for examining social fears and anxieties through the use of a monster that is both culturally relevant and biologically menacing. Ghosts, goblins, witches, and other supernatural entities don't seem to have the gravitas to inspire fear and force us to analyze why we are afraid because there has been too much dilution of character and spirit. The zombie, like Dracula and the vampire of old, is the beacon for monsters everywhere to aspire to. Hopefully, the zombie can continue to be the abject monster society needs and craves.

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Negative Political Campaigns Might Not Be Killing Politics Like Everyone Says

By Brandan McCammitt

Negativity in politics has long been seen as the cause of everything wrong with politics, but what if it wasn't? What if voters actually were motivated by negative campaigns that presented a contrast to them over the differences in the candidates so that it became clearer why each candidate was running for office? What if negative political campaigns actually increased voter turnout? It is my purpose in writing this paper to further the discussion on this topic and to increase the information on this topic within the political science community. It is my belief that if policy informative statements are made with a negative connotation, then they will cause an increase in voter turnout in the election between two or more candidates and their campaigns.

My hypothesis is that when negative campaign messages are based in policy and informative contexts then voter turnout will increase. My key independent variables are negative campaign messages and whether the messages or advertisements are policy informative. I intend to define political campaign messages as negative if they are negative in tone or connotation toward an opposing candidate or

campaign. Also I will define messages or ads that are policy informative as a political campaign's message which is specifically focused on a policy issue and that the majority of the message is informative in nature and not based on a character or personal attack on the opposing candidate or campaign. My hypothesis' dependent variable is voter turnout. I will define voter turnout as the number of eligible voters who turn out to vote in an election. These three parts will make up my research characteristics and equation.

It is my belief that candidates and their campaigns will not have vastly divided messages in their efforts to win elections. I will be embracing the belief that there is a correlation between what a candidate and their campaign would put up on the air waves in campaign-funded television advertisements, what they would say in their speeches, what they would say on their website, and what they would say in their closing statements in a debate. This belief allows me to observe a different type of message than other researchers have observed while still using their understandings of results from negativity in political campaigns. It also allows a view of what candidates are saying to voters when it is actually them saying it and not a television advertisement, what part of their messages they are willing to say directly from their lips to voters.

Conventional Wisdom

Through reading multiple sources, I have found the conventional wisdom on negative campaign messages and their correlation to voter turnout to be somewhat of a mixed result. Many of the sources have stated that the general view of political scholars is that negative campaign ads and their messages hurt voter turnout, and that it results in a damaged political system (Krupnikov 796), even though nearly all of their results have said that when the negative campaign message is informative and shows how the candidates are truly different it results in an increase in

voter turnout (Franz 108). So, for my paper, I am viewing the contemporary conventional wisdom on negative campaign messages and advertisements to be different from the previous trend. My understanding of the conventional wisdom is that negative and informative policy based campaign advertisements and messages increase voter turnout.

Building the belief that negative and informative policy campaign messages increase rather than decrease voter turnout is the book *Campaign Advertising and American Democracy*. In this book, the authors Franz, Freedman, Goldstein and Ridout come to the conclusion that campaign ads are helpful to increasing voter turnout (Franz 108), but also the fact that negative contrasting policy ads increase the knowledge of most voters about the election and candidates running for office (Franz 125). Then, Goldstein and Freedman's article *Campaign Advertising and Voter Turnout: New Evidence for a Stimulation Effect* shows that, in fact, voter turnout is "stimulated" by negative advertisements and that these ads help bring people to the polls (Goldstein 722). The authors further found that positive ads had no real result, but that negative ads actually increased voter mobilization by "a significant and substantial" result (Goldstein 733).

Three other articles along with Franz's had a major piece of research showing the importance of contrast in advertisements. Jackson, Mondak and Huckfeldt found that contrast ads were actually good for voters in helping them become more knowledgeable and more energized to vote (Jackson 61). Leighley and Nagler found that the contrast factor "perceived policy differences between the candidates lead to increases in turnout" (Leighley 131). Finally, Martin found that the contrast factor in negative ads was found to increase anxiety and fear of candidates, strengthening voter energy (Martin 554). All four groups found strong evidence supporting the belief that contrast is an important point in political advertisements.

Along with the need for negativity, contrast and policy information in campaign advertisements there also is the need to be aware of one's own campaign: who they are, and who they are running against. Robert Hogan, in his article *Campaign Spending and Voter Participation in State Legislative Elections*, presents his research on how spending affects voter turnout. Hogan also revealed, along with a lot of information on campaign spending, that he found proof that voter turnout is positively affected by incumbents running for reelection (Hogan 858) and that when voters were contacted by state legislative campaigns it encouraged them to vote for the down ballot candidate (Hogan 859). These observations point to the fact that if voters have more knowledge about candidates and their campaigns it will help them to better make their choice, or even just a choice, on Election Day.

In reading an article by Yanna Krupnikov titled *When Does Negativity Demobilize? Tracing the Conditional Effect of Negative Campaigning on Voter Turnout*, we are able to learn that also the timing of campaign messages matters in that "late negativity about a person's preferred candidate has a statistically significant, negative effect on turnout" (Krupnikov 804). The author believes this shows that voters can be persuaded to either change candidates late or convince them that both candidates are not worth their time (Krupnikov 809). The fact that these debates are late in the campaign season suggests that it may be more meaningful what a candidate will say because it could be the last time people hear them and their message.

In Jackson, Mondak and Huckfeldt's article, *Examining the Possible Corrosive Impact of Negative Advertising on Citizens' Attitudes Toward Politics*, they found "no support whatsoever" for the idea that exposure to negative campaign ads would decrease people's beliefs in politics as a whole (Jackson 61). In Kahn and Kenney's *Do Negative Campaigns Mobilize or Suppress Turnout? Clarifying the Relationship between Negativity and Participation*, they found that

"negative information significantly enhances turnout" and that mudslinging hurts turnout (Kahn 883); negative information influences voters, but differently, based on their own personal political identity and knowledge (Kahn 885). They also found that voters were able to identify negative messages as appropriate or inappropriate (Kahn 887). In Lau and Pomper's article *Effects of Negative Campaigning on Turnout in U.S. Senate Elections, 1988-1998*, they found evidence that says negative tone does affect voter turnout and it affects it in a positive way, causing an increase in voter turnout (Lau 811). They also found that issue-based negativism "does indeed tend to stimulate turnout" while person-based negativism "has a much smaller effect on turnout that is also positive" (Lau 812). All three of these articles found evidence validating each other's arguments in favor of negative campaign advertisements being good for voter turnout.

In Leighley and Nagler's book *Who Votes Now?* they found evidence that the more education someone has, the more likely they are to vote (Leighley 60). In Paul Martin's article *Inside The Black Box Of Negative Campaign Effects: Three Reasons Why Negative Campaigns Mobilize*, he finds that negative ads were seen to make certain voters believe a race was closer and therefore more worthy of them spending their time to vote on it (Martin 556), so it increases the competitiveness factor in elections. In Raphaël Soubeyran's the *Contest with Attack and Defense: Does Negative Campaigning Increase or Decrease Voter Turnout?*, evidence shows that "voters tend to vote more when candidates use both attack and defense" ads in a campaign (Soubeyran 348) and that it is easier for the opposition to attack than the incumbent because of a lack of record (Soubeyran 350).

All of these articles and books present one resounding answer to the main question of the effect of negative ads on voter turnout. It would seem that negativity in campaign messages and advertisements increases voter turnout. Further, a majority of the sources agree that there

is a limit to that point, in that mudslinging will hurt voter turnout and that if the negativity presents a contrast it will help voters even more to make a choice in the election, which will increase voter turnout.

Research Design

My hypothesis is that when negative campaign messages are based in policy and informative contexts then voter turnout will increase. For my research, I will be reviewing 2010 toss-up U.S. Senate races by comparing debate closing statements to see how negative they are, and how informative they are to the voter turnout rate in the state on Election Day. This research was conducted through a comparison of The Real Clear Politics Election 2010 Battle for the Senate final state poll ratings, C-SPAN Debate footage from the C-SPAN Campaign 2010 Series, and Voter Turnout Results from the United States Election Project's 2010 November General Election Turnout Rates page.

The reason I used 2010 Senate race data is because I was looking at non-national elections. At the time of my research, the 2014 midterm elections had just occurred so voter turnout numbers were either not present or were not fully complete, and therefore would not be fully reliable. The reason I did not use 2012 Senate races is because it is a more national election atmosphere and the national attention is being paid to the Presidential race. The issues and campaign tone are all being set by the national campaigns rather than the individual Senate campaigns, so there will be less variety. Also, national elections always have higher voter turnout rates than midterms, and the dynamics as a whole are different than in a midterm election cycle.

In order to keep my research testing within somewhat of a controlled setting, I will only use Senate Races that are ruled to be toss-ups from the 2010 Election

Cycle, so it is clear that the competitiveness factor is already present in the races, and that there is some attention being paid to it already in the media and by the public at large. Despite having two independent variables, I only have a score for one, that is because when doing the research every candidates' remarks when they were addressing their opponent were policy informative, so I did not include a score scale or a score in general for policy informativeness. As well, it was a 50/50 ratio for candidate remarks about themselves being positive personal and positive policy remarks.

Further, as a review of my subjects, I can see that two of the Senate contests I am using had Governor Races that were considered to be toss-ups (Colorado and Illinois), three others just had general non-toss-up Governor Races (California, Nevada and Pennsylvania), and the two others had no other major state-wide races (Washington and West Virginia). Every state had only one U.S. Senate election in 2010 in the November election, but two states (West Virginia and Illinois) had the stipulation that the winner of the election would take the seat immediately, so those races were both General Senate Elections and Special Senate Elections. Every single one of the U.S. House of Representatives seats within each of the seven states tested was up for election on the same day as the U.S. Senate Election was being held, also some of the states had other state-wide elections and referendums and local races.

I will be testing the negativity and informativeness factor of my question by using a five point scale graded by myself of the candidates' comments during their closing statements at a late campaign season debate in their election cycle. The five point scale will be based on the number of references to the other candidate and their policy beliefs with negative policy connotations in their statements. The scale I will be following for my research will see a zero (0) as having no negativity at all in the statements of either candidate at the debate. A one (1) will symbolize one to

three negative statements by either or both candidates combined during the debate, but not filling a majority of their time. A two (2) will be a 50/50 negative to positive statements by one or both of the candidates involved. A three (3) will be a mostly negative statement by one or both of the candidates at the debate. Finally, a four (4) will signify an entirely negative policy-based closing statement by one or both candidates involved in the debate. To signify that one or both of the candidates in their closing statements use mudslinging and personal attacks against their opponent at the debate, I will use a five (5) on my negativity scale.

What I am considering to be a policy informative statement that is negative is something like this statement from the California Senate Debate from Sen. Boxer: "My opponent is fighting for tax breaks for Billionaires and Millionaires and these companies who ship jobs overseas." Something that would be uninformative or personal-based would be a statement like this from that same California Debate from Mrs. Fiorina: "She has become a multi-millionaire while she's in Washington, DC." Looking at positive examples, I would consider "I believe in you and I'm asking you to believe in me" from Gov. Manchin in the West Virginia Debate to be a positive personal statement. I will be considering this to be a positive policy informative statement: "We have the Bush tax cuts out there which I feel are very important, we need to make them permanent," from Mr. Raese in the West Virginia Debate.

I am using a scale rather than the raw time of the statement that is negative or a timing percentage because the raw time or raw percentages could be skewed because not all of the closing statements were the same time. Some candidates went under or over the time they were allowed, and some spent time, rather than talking about issues, to thank the presenters and stations or to remind voters about when to vote. All of these, while important, can be taken into account better by a scale rather than just looking at the timing of the statement. There is no way in a timing

percentage to show personal attacks apart from policy informative like I can through a specific mudslinging number on the scale.

I will also be testing the voter turnout factor of my question by using a 7 point scale graded by the amount of voters who turned out to vote in the election that year. The scale I will be using will see a zero (0) score as turnout in the range of 0 to 30%. A one (1) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of a 30.1 to 35%. A two (2) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 35.1 to 40%. A three (3) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 40.1 to 45%. A four (4) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 45.1 to 50%. A five (5) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 50.1 to 55%. A six (6) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 55.1 to 60%. A seven (7) will symbolize voter turnout in the range of 60.1 to 100%. The voter turnout numbers I will be using are made up from the voting eligible population and all total ballots counted in the state. The reason I scale these is so that the percentages can be put better into a formula for a final result.

After conducting the testing of these two areas, I will be comparing the numbers together. If my hypothesis is correct, that negative and informative campaign messages increase voter turnout, then the numbers should be similar to each other. By similar, I mean the margin of error would be within one number length of each other on either side of the scale. I intend to test this by subtracting the negativity number by the voter turnout number for an equation of Negativity Score – Voter Turnout Score = Results, or in simplified form N-V=R. For instance if a senate race had a 5 on the negativity scale, but a turnout rate of a 3, then their score would be a 2, meaning that then the negativity did not help voter turnout. If my hypothesis is correct, the final numbers should be close to if not dead on 0. The more off they are, the closer they will edge to 5 or -5. If my hypothesis is wrong, that positivity helps voter turnout, then the average number score will be a more negative

number. If my hypothesis is wrong, in that negativity did not help voter turnout, then the average number score should be a higher positive number.

After Tabulating the Final sums for all seven U.S. Senate races, I intend to separate them up into Senate Races with an Incumbent and Open Senate Races. I will do this to see if there is a significant difference with an Incumbent on the ballot or not. Then I intend to separate the Senate Races with a Governor Race on the ballot and those without. I will do this to see if there is a significant difference between states with or without a Governor race. Finally, I will separate the toss-up and non- toss-up Governor Race, to see if either of those groups have a significant difference. By separating these races, I intend to see if there are any other effects that could be playing into the toss-up U.S. Senate Races.

In my research there were other possible variables, such as: how different the candidates' policy positions were (in that more centrist candidates or more moderate candidates could affect voter turnout), the race and gender of candidates, and the type of media through which a candidate transfers their message to the voters. My intention in this paper was to look at negativity and its effects on voter turnout. While there are many other possible variables that are important I will not be observing them or reviewing their effects on voter turnout in this paper.

Results

After conducting my research on negativity and informativeness, as well as its comparison to voter turnout in the seven toss-up U.S. Senate races held during the 2010 Midterm elections, I found that my research is inconclusive. According to my results, I found that my hypothesis was incorrect in that negativity did not help to increase voter turnout, but because none of the U.S. Senate races except

for one which I tested had a highly negative closing argument section, I do not have enough evidence to prove or disprove my thesis. For all the races I tested, I did learn that there was not a lot of negativity in the debate closing statements. Voter turnout was above it, but on a relatively low scale. I learned that in the race characteristics portion there did seem to be some differences.

When looking at the U.S. Senate races divided by those with an incumbent seeking re-election and those races that were open, I learned that the races with an Incumbent running were more negative, and that turnout was in fact higher. The negativity scale averages showed that Incumbent involved races had a higher negativity by 1.25 pts on my negativity scale. The voter turnout rates were also higher in those races that saw incumbents seeking re-election; they were just under 10% higher in actual voter turnout and just under 2pts higher on my voter turnout scale. On the total score field when an Incumbent was seeking re-election, it was -0.64 pts higher in my scale. This area shows that, in comparison, more negativity did show an increase in voter turnout when an incumbent sought re-election compared with an open Senate race.

When looking at the U.S. Senate races separated by having or not having a Governor's race on the ballot, I learned that when there was also a Governor's race on the ballot, the U.S. Senate Debate closing statements were a point more negative according to my scale. There was less than a two point difference in actual voting percentage averages, and on my scale that equated to a difference of .6 higher voter turnout when a Governor's race appeared on the ballot in the state. This, once again, would show that in comparison there is a slight difference in favor of negative closing statement in comparison of Governor's race to Non-Governor's race on the ballot.

When you look at the U.S. Senate races separated by having a Governor's race and either being a toss-up or a non-toss-up, I learned that there were only minor

differences in comparison to each other. If the Governor's race was a toss-up, the U.S. Senate Debates tended to be less negative by just over a point and a half (1.667 pts) on my scaling mechanism for negativity over those races that did not have a toss-up Governor's race. As for Voter Turnout rates, though, the Governor's Races that were not toss-ups brought more people to the polls by around .667 on my scaling mechanism, but by just about 4.2% in the actual voter percentage average. On the final score count, non-toss-up Governor's races showed to be just a few points closer to a perfect score than did a state with a toss-up Governor's race.

After looking at the differences in each voting area, there is some evidence to show in favor of my hypothesis that negative informative policy messages do affect voter turnout in a positive manner. If there is a Governor's race or an incumbent Senator seeking re-election, my hypothesis holds true. In comparison, between toss-up and non-toss-up governor's races, my hypothesis does not appear to hold up, and in the full charting it appears my hypothesis does not hold up to the testing of my experiment on 2010 toss-up U.S. Senate Elections.

Due in part to the lack of substantial evidence on my overall question and the lack of multiple highly negative or positive races with higher levels of turnout, I am ruling my research to be inconclusive, with the understanding that on the characteristic surveys there is some evidence that could be taken from my research to prove my hypothesis correct and incorrect.

Conclusion

In doing this research, I made a correlation which I had not seen practiced in any research surveys conducted prior to my own: a correlation in which there is a connection made between a non-television advertisement type of campaign messaging and negativity in policy information as the means by which voter turnout increases.

After conducting my research and discovering it to be inconclusive, I believe it is clear that more research should be done on this area of campaign politics in order to see if it was just a fluke year, or if it is in a similar connection to campaign advertisements and their negativity in policy information being a positive for voter turnout, or if it has no connection at all to voter turnout.

I believe that, in the future, it would be helpful to review not just one segment of the states up in an election, as I did with toss-up Senate races in the 2010 Election, but rather to test the entire field of states and seats up in a particular election cycle. This would make for a fuller study to take note of every debate in the general election campaign and its closing statements. This would show if there is a continued line of connection to negativity in policy-based contrast messaging, and if it is a cause of increasing voter turnout. Looking into all of a campaign's messaging would be a good next step as well, if someone were to try and take the research I conducted here further by observing the negativity in campaign messaging and testing to see if ads, speeches, websites and debate remarks are similar in their amount of negativity or different.

One area of campaign politics where this type of research could present a lot of new data would be looking into whether primary campaigns or general election campaigns are more negative in their messaging. This would also be a means to see if the turn in polarization in national politics is also affecting party politics and local state politics.

It is also worth noting that this research was conducted in a midterm election cycle. This means that this information could change in a presidential election cycle with a more nationalized campaign atmosphere and the national candidates for the parties setting the debate on national issues, and setting the tone of the campaigns from their national headquarters. This research could change in off-year elections, or even in respect to Governor's races. Having not looked into the possible side effects of

negativity in the Governor's races means there could be a major area of information that I did not tap into for my research paper. There are still many unanswered questions into how Governor's races can interfere with Senate races and how Senate races can interfere with Governor's races.

I would also like to state that all of the data I have, and all of the research on this project was conducted on the 2010 U.S. Mid-Term Elections. In those elections there was a larger than normal level of voters who chose not to turn out to vote, which means that the research I did was possibly on a fluke election cycle. The 2010 Election cycle saw many different events occurring in it compared to an average Mid-Term Election year, which I wanted to have noted.

I conducted all of this research in the interest of knowing more about how campaign messaging works. Specifically, I wanted to know more about negative and policy informative messaging and how they can affect voter turnout in elections. Elections are very important, in that they allow voters to choose who they want to represent them in the halls of government and who they want to lead them. Living in a democracy requires the participation of the citizenry, and those people who are working in politics and in campaigns are often seeking ways to energize voters and to get them to turn out and express their beliefs, so that the country can be led by the majority's will. Only through research like this, the research cited within this article and other groups of research into the different aspects of campaign politics, will those people involved in elections be able to know the best ways to get more voters to the polls.

Negativity in 2010 Senate Debate Closing Statements Table					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
California*	Tossup	4	45.8	4 Yes/No	0
Colorado*	Tossup	1	51.7	5 Yes/Yes	-4
Illiniois	Tossup	1	43.1	3 Yes/Yes	-2
Nevada*	Tossup	2	41.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Pennsylvania	Tossup	2	42.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Washington*	Tossup	2	54.3	5 No/No	-3
West Virginia	Tossup	0	32.2	1 No/No	-1
Total Mean		1.7143	44.4143	3.4286	-1.71 Average
*= Incumbent Running					
Incumbency Races					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
California*	Tossup	4	45.8	4 Yes/No	0
Colorado*	Tossup	1	51.7	5 Yes/Yes	-4
Nevada*	Tossup	2	41.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Washington*	Tossup	2	54.3	5 No/No	-3
Incumbency Mean		2.25	48.3	4.25	-2
Open Races					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
Illiniois	Tossup	1	43.1	3 Yes/Yes	-2
Pennsylvania	Tossup	2	42.4	3 Yes/No	-1
West Virginia	Tossup	0	32.2	1 No/No	-1
Open Mean		1	39.2333	2.3333	-1.33
Governor's Race Effects					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
California*	Tossup	4	45.8	4 Yes/No	0
Colorado*	Tossup	1	51.7	5 Yes/Yes	-4
Illiniois	Tossup	1	43.1	3 Yes/Yes	-2
Nevada*	Tossup	2	41.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Pennsylvania	Tossup	2	42.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Governor Race Mean		2	44.88	3.6	-1.6
Governor's Tossup Races					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
Colorado*	Tossup	1	51.7	5 Yes/Yes	-4
Illiniois	Tossup	1	43.1	3 Yes/Yes	-2
Gov Tossup Race Mean		1	47.4	4	-3
Governor's Non-Tossup					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
California*	Tossup	4	45.8	4 Yes/No	0
Nevada*	Tossup	2	41.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Pennsylvania	Tossup	2	42.4	3 Yes/No	-1
Gov Non-Tossup Mean		2.6667	43.2	3.3333	-0.67
Non-Governor's Race					
2010 U.S.Senate Races	RCP Rating	Score on Negativity Scale	Voter Turnout	VT Score	Gov Race/Tossup Score
Washington*	Tossup	2	54.3	5 No/No	-3
West Virginia	Tossup	0	32.2	1 No/No	-1
Non-Gov Mean		1	43.25	3	-2

This Table contains the scores of each debate and each states voter turnout with a breakdown of each specific sub-grouping under research from the 2010 Senate Elections.

Appendix A

California Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?295735-1/california-senate-debate
Colorado Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296189-1/colorado-senate-debate
Illinois Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296086-1/illinois-senate-debate
Nevada Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296018-1/nevada-senate-debate
Pennsylvania Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296168-1/pennsylvania-senate-debate
Washington Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296056-1/washington-senate-debate
West Virginia Senate Debate: http://www.c-span.org/video/?296062-1/west-virginia-senate-debate
Voter Turnout Data Source: http://www.electproject.org/2010g
Race Ratings Source: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2010/senate/2010_elections_senate_map.html
Governor Race Rating Source: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2010/governor/2010_elections_governor_map.html

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