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CULTURE AND POLICY





DEVELOPMENT CHANGES IN DETROIT
By Mariab Allen

Detroit has many associations with its name, such as the most dangerous city in early 2016 or the second most dangerous city in 2017. This reputation is due to high numbers of reported crime, or an infamous number of vacant homes (Kiertzner 2018). Currently, it is reported that about 9,500 demolitions have taken place in Detroit since 2014, and 700 more demolitions are scheduled (Metcalf 2016). Many find the state of Detroit disheartening, but rarely is the question asked: what caused the city of Detroit to decline? This paper is aimed at looking at how federal policies impacted the rapid decline of Detroit area. Furthermore, this paper will examine the success of the revitalization process that is currently taking place in the Detroit area.

In this paper, I will explain how zoning laws contributed to the creation of two separate life styles: suburban and city life. Next, I will recount the origins of public housing specifically commenting on the racial segregation in public housing. Furthermore, I will show the impact of deindustrialization on the housing market and specifically Detroit, which leads into an explanation of how

the housing market was further segregated. Lastly, I will discuss gentrification and how it has impacted long-time residents of Detroit.

Laws changing the city

Skyscrapers, subway stations, apartments, condos, and businesses simply come into existence without question. Families drive by new buildings undergoing renovations and quietly think “Huh, I wonder what that is going to be.” The thought is fleeting until construction is finished and citizens flock to the structure and it is labeled as a “hotspot.” These projects come into being with approval from the city and must be in compliance with the city’s zoning laws. Zoning laws allow for specific types of building to be created within city limits. These laws, along with national policy contributed to the racial divide seen across the United States, and more specifically in Detroit.

In the 1910s, zoning laws were changed to keep black Americans from purchasing housing in areas with white Americans. In order to do this, homes were classified into different categories: single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, or industrial. These categorizations allowed for planning officials to prevent specific structures from being built depending on the area. The area where black Americans lived was categorized to allow industry to be built, which further degraded black neighborhoods (Rothstein 2017). The effect of these zoning policies are still evident today. More factories were built within inner cities. For example, the auto industry is considered to be the heart of Detroit. Zoning laws from the 1900s allowed for the automotive industry to be built in the city, which drew a great number of black Americans to the area for work. Unknowingly, black Americans found themselves being confined to the inner city due to racist housing policies (Rothstein 2017). Black Americans were not allowed to move into the suburbs because of racial

covenants that specifically stated neighborhoods were white-only spaces.

The Origins of Public Housing

Beginning in 1941, many black Americans moved from the south to northern cities like Detroit to obtain industrial jobs (Mohl 2001). White Americans were also involved in this migration, which led to many conflicts between these two groups in relation to jobs and space. This is the moment in Detroit's history (and major industrialized cities) where public housing was key to the continuation of growth.

In its early stages, public housing was not meant for individuals who needed affordable housing assistance. Public housing was meant to be temporary until the market caught up to the demand for homes. The prices for housing were not subsidized, so tenants paid full cost. When public housing was built, there were significant differences between public housing for black and white Americans, such as the location. An emphasis was placed on keeping the same racial composition of the city in which public housing was built. Therefore, public housing for black Americans was placed within inner cities and was created to be temporary. Meanwhile, housing for white Americans was built in the suburbs, with the intention of being stable and permanent. Further differences were in the demand for public housing.

While public housing for white Americans had multiple vacancies, public housing for black Americans was overcrowded with long waitlists because of high prices in other neighborhoods and a lower supply of housing within the designated area for black Americans (Rothstein 2017). The decision to build segregated public housing set the tone for further segregation in the newly built suburban developments after World War II.

The Result: Deindustrialization

In 1945, after World War II, there was a major wave of deindustrialization. Deindustrialization led to job loss, deteriorating neighborhoods, and intense segregation (Mohl 2001). These changes significantly impacted the auto industry in Detroit when shifting from industrialization to globalization. As a result, factories began to close and the middle class was left to crumble (Moskowitz 2017). After the war many white Americans left the city to go to the newly built suburban developments. This rapid emigration from the city is referred to as the “Suburban Sprawl” or “White Flight.” In 1940, 15.3% of individuals lived in the suburbs; by 1960, 30.6% of individuals lived in the suburbs. Detroit lost around 1 million people from its population, but the black population increased by about 223% (Mohl 2001). White Flight changed the demographics of the area and further reinforced housing segregation.

Segregation in the Housing Market

In 1933, after the Great Depression, the government bought mortgages on foreclosed homes and set up a 15-year payment plan so families were able to get back on their feet. One of the criteria for the government to buy mortgages was an assessment of the risk of the property, by gauging that assessment based on the demographics of the area. One year later, when mortgages were being insured up to 80% of the purchase price by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), there was a whites-only requirement for getting approved for a loan. The whites-only requirement was a way to ensure that the loan had a low risk of defaulting (Rothstein 2017).

Segregation continued after World War II when the Federal Housing Administration was financing the creation of subdivisions, and the whites-only requirement was still enforced (Rothstein 2017). This became a major concern as the FHA began financing the creation of

neighborhoods nationwide (Rothstein 2017). While white Americans had housing, black Americans did not have the same access. Although the population was rising in black residential areas more housing was not being built, therefore black families were beginning to “double-up” and “triple-up” in houses and apartments, causing overcrowded conditions (Mohl 2001).

In the book, *Evicted*, Matthew Desmond recounts the doubling-up of families in one of his chapters when one tenant did not have enough money to pay rent and therefore the landlord planned on evicting the woman (2016). The family who planned to move into the apartment allowed the woman, who was a complete stranger, to continue to live in the apartment with them. This type of overcrowding contributed to the deterioration of inner cities. The population grew large enough and housing units were so dense that, eventually, there was enough pressure for housing to be built for black Americans in 1949 (Mohl 2001). Unfortunately, separation between black and white neighborhoods existed.

Different Funding in Different Markets

During the time of housing segregation there was a belief in a dual market, which meant that black and white Americans functioned in completely different housing markets, with two different types of supply, demand, costs, and quality (Boston et al. 1972). This creation of suburban space for white Americans and not black Americans developed this type of dual market. White Americans were able to leave for the suburbs because single family homes were being built specifically for them. As the population was increasing, these two separate housing markets did not grow at the same pace, which had repercussions for the Black community (Mohl 2001). White Americans were about to move from the city to the suburbs because

housing development were being created for them, but housing was not being created for black Americans.

The major explanation for separating the markets was that when a black American family moved into an all-white suburban neighborhood, it was believed that the value of houses in that specific neighborhood decreased significantly. The belief of decreasing housing prices may have been enforced by real estate brokers, who were buying houses from whites at a lower price than the purchase price because white Americans were so “panic-stricken” by the presence of black Americans, and the broker would then sell the house to black Americans at a price that suited the housing market in the area (Boston et al. 1972).

Another difference between the black and white housing market is the amount of investment in the neighborhood. In general, continuously strong credit supports housing investment, while disinvestment is a result of lack of credit. In the 1970s, disinvestment was presented as a large problem. Lending institutions were only providing loans to specific areas of a city. Race was usually the determining factor of whether a loan was given or not. This phenomenon is called redlining.

By not providing loans to specific neighbors, it creates a differentiation in housing markets because without loans individuals are not able to invest. Accounts of redlining in the 1990’s showed differences in the availability of credit was heavily influenced by race. A study in 1988 found that financial institutions provided more loans to white middle-income neighborhoods at a higher rate compared to black middle-class neighborhoods, and in addition it was found that the lending rate gap continued to increase from 1982 to 1986. Detroit faced a lot of backlash when this evidence of racial bias was released. The 1994 study conducted by Eugene D. Perle found that there was no connection between racial bias in mortgage lending and

that models are easily manipulated to show an effect of racial bias on mortgage lending (Perle et al 1994).

Lack of funds was not only an issue rooted in financial institution. The amount allocated from the national government to the federal government impacted the state of cities as well. During the presidency of both Kennedy and Johnson there were tons of assistance given to local governments, which continued into the Nixon era. In the 1970s, there were about 80% of local governments receiving aid. Governmental aid stopped due to a recession in 1974.

By the late 70s and mid-80s, city spending dropped significantly. President Jimmy Carter set the tone for further policy by stating in the state of the union address that the “government can’t set out goals, it cannot define our vision. Government cannot eliminate poverty or provide bountiful economy or reduce inflation or save our cities or cure illiteracy or provide energy. This was a clear stance taken on the investment of cities: the government would no longer be providing the generous funding it had in the past. Instead, the government was looking to attract business investment and further promote economic growth” (Tabb 2016). In 1980, Ronald Reagan cut 9.7% of non-military spending and cut the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s budget by 40% (Moskowitz 40). In order to stimulate economic growth, the decision was to cut taxes, which ultimately took more funding away from cities and continuing the theme of disinvestment (Tabb 2016). A more comprehensive perspective of neighborhood investment, emerges from a focus on the specific dynamics within the Detroit Metropolitan Area.

Gentrification

In the 1970s, Detroit was suffering from high unemployment, racial transition, and collapsing housing markets (Ryan 2014). This could be labeled as a period of

disinvestment within the community, which could be attributed the factors outlined in the previous paragraphs. The era that followed the major shift in funding was an era of development. For Detroit this meant that mayors of the city passed the reins on to private developers to create new development programs (Ryan 2014). Attracting private developers is a form of promoting business investment, which was the goal of tax cuts in the 1980's, but this investment came at a cost for those who were living in the city of Detroit.

During the 1990s, developers began to create suburban-style developments within Detroit neighborhoods. One example of the transformation is Jefferson-Chalmers (Ryan 2014). One of the reasons why developers were able to create new neighborhoods was because of the urban renewal clearances. In the 1970s urban renewal was an initiative to restructure the city of Detroit (Ryan 2008). In order to restructure the city many of the building were demolished and not replaced (Ryan 2008). This provide space and lots for further development (Ryan 2014). In 1995, there were further demolitions of public housing units under the direction of the Hope IV created by Bill Clinton, which created more space for developers (Moskowitz 2017). When the lots ran out, housing was condemned in order to meet the need of these new developments, and many low-income individuals were displaced from their homes (Ryan 2014). The developers moving into Detroit was one of the beginning stages of gentrification. The real estate was cheap for developers to purchase and their plans were heavily subsidized by the local government of Detroit.

Gentrification is defined as having four separate stages. Before the stages of gentrification are set in motion, the area must be gentrifiable, meaning that the real estate and the zoning laws must allow for individuals and

businesses to come into the space (Moskowitz 2017). In the context of Detroit, the mayors supported private developers coming into Detroit (Ryan 2008). In order to further entice developers and businesses, huge tax cuts are given in order to further built developments with ease (Moskowitz 2017). In the context of Detroit, huge subsidies were given to developers in order to build new neighborhoods in order to lower their cost (Ryan 2008). Currently, corporations like Rock Financial, government buildings, sports stadiums, restaurants, and retail are all growing in the downtown area of Detroit (Reese et al. 2017). The growth of these sectors was possibly because Detroit has cheap real estate, which makes it more profitable it is for developers, thus more gentrifiable (Moskowitz 2017). This is what attracted many businesses to Detroit, which is contributing to the so-called revitalization of the city that recently earned the city recognition.

In the beginning, gentrification is started by individuals moving into a poor neighborhood and began to renovate houses. An example of this is in the story *A \$500 Dollar House in Detroit* by Drew Philp (2017), a college student who bought an abandoned house at an auction for \$500 dollars. In his journey, he described an interest in bettering the community rather than displacing long-time residents like many of his white counterparts who participated in the gentrification of the city. While Philp was able to purchase a home for a cheap price and integrate himself into the community, the homes that were up for auction were sometimes still lived in or had sentimental value to the person who had to walk away from it. This significantly changed the dynamics of not only Detroit, but specific neighborhoods (Philp 2017).

The second step to gentrification is when people outside of the community start to become aware of the existence of the neighborhood and begin to buy real estate

in the area. For Detroit this meant that big business started to move into the area. Dan Gilbert, the owner of Quicken Loans, began buying real estate in Detroit and eventually set up headquarters in the city (Moskowitz 2017). Gilbert bought about 60 skyscrapers in Detroit (Philp 2017). Although not a realtor, he is involved in conversations about the redevelopment of Detroit and land development (Moskowitz 2017). This is a common theme found in the revitalization process of Detroit, non-city planners involved in planning the future of the city. For example, Gary Carley, who is the vice president of the Michigan-based Standard Federal Bank, suggested building single family homes on Detroit's eastern riverfront. Carley had clear bias because his bank makes a profit off of mortgages, therefore if more homes get built then Carley makes more money. Carley became the lead proponent of the development, although he was not a developer (Ryan 2008). This leads us directly into the third step of gentrification, increased power granted to the gentrifiers (Moskowitz 2017).

The previous paragraph touches on the fact that big corporations with money begin to have more power in the city than local citizens do, because of the money that is brought in and the potential for revenue they can bring into the future.

Lastly, gentrification leads to an increase in wealth of the neighborhood, but in order to achieve that wealth individuals are pushed out of the community. A more direct example of this is in 2010 when mayor Dave Bing wanted to change the borders of the Detroit area because he wanted to remove the parts of the city that were not as profitable and losing money (Moskowitz 2017). While this plan was not put into place, it is important to see in all four stages of gentrification that money is the main motivating source. In the process individuals get left out and displaced

in order to make room for the wealthier and more profitable projects.

In conclusion, housing policies in the 1910s left a lasting impact on major cities like Detroit. In the beginning, industry created a robust city whose population and economy grew rapidly. This quickly changed when deindustrialized and suburban housing developments encouraged white Americans to leave the city and transition into suburban neighborhoods. Ultimately, “White Flight” and reduction of governmental funding for local governments contributed to the decline of Detroit. Today, the cheap real estate is getting taken advantage of by developers. This stage of “revitalization” is not necessarily revitalizing because many locals are being pushed out of space they lived in for years. Detroit must wrestle figuring out how to bring change and progress without costing current citizens their homes.

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DOMESTIC TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES
by Stephanie Downing

Imagine that a vehicle deliberately rams into a crowd of peaceful protestors in a typical American city. The accident causes a fatality and leaves many others in critical condition. It is reasonable to assume that this may constitute as an act of terrorism. Within the last decade or so, vehicles have been weaponized by transnational terrorist groups in major cities around the world. In many cases however, attaching the terrorist label often depends on the ethnic and religious background of the perpetrator.

In 2016, a van driven by an ISIS affiliate penetrated into a crowd in Nice, France – killing 85 people (Visser, 2016). Earlier this year, the Taliban hijacked an ambulance and also drove through a massive crowd in Kabul, Afghanistan – killing 95 civilians (Popalzai & Smith-Park, 2018). Both attacks were immediately labeled as acts of terrorism by leaders around the world and the mainstream media, as transnational extremists have continued to use vehicles as weapons of mass destruction. However, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions did not condemn the fatality caused by a vehicle driven by white supremacist in Charlottesville, Virginia as an act of domestic terrorism until two days afterward (Horwitz, 2017).

Had the driver of the vehicle in Charlottesville been Muslim or Arab, like in the vehicle-led attacks in

France and Afghanistan, the public would undoubtedly label him or her as a terrorist. This evidently showcases how 9/11 impacted the way the public defines actors of terrorism in modern society. While it is no question that ISIS and al Qaeda are among the deadliest terrorist organizations in the world, domestic terrorist groups within the U.S. have also executed attacks motivated by extremism. Domestic terrorists should therefore not be absent from the same attention that Islamic-extremist groups receive. When Americans fail to acknowledge the terrorist threat that brews within its own borders, domestic terrorist groups will continue to prosper. Homegrown radicalization in the U.S. poses a far greater threat to national security for this very reason – as research, policies, and investigative procedures do not examine terrorist threats abstaining from Islamic extremism with the same sense of urgency.

Review of Literature Defining Terrorism

From the bombing of Pearl Harbor to the attacks on September 11th, 2001, terrorism remains a recurrent threat to global security. The U.S. State Department defines a terrorist organization as one that seeks to “pursue a political or societal objective through a premeditated attack upon civilians, officials, or non-combatants” (Hoffman, 2017, p. 31). Even though the definition of terrorism does not state nor imply that Islamic extremism is the only terrorist ideology that motivates an attack, al Qaeda, ISIS, and other Islamic extremists are often credited as the pioneers of terrorism in the modern world. The prejudiced connections drawn between Islam, the Middle East, and terrorism have distorted the way that Americans define the issue. The “us vs. them” mentality has been a prominent aspect of U.S. society since the country was discovered by Christopher Columbus, which has historically marginalized minority or non-white communities. The misleading assumption that terrorism can only be motivated by Islamic extremism poses an equivalent threat to national security as al Qaeda and ISIS do. The limited awareness and acknowledgement of domestic terrorists allows these groups to prosper from the public’s ignorance about their existence. It is important to recognize that despite a group’s

ideological basis, a terrorist's ultimate goal is to express their extremist views at the expense of national security through violence and force (Smith et al., 1994, p. 46).

Homegrown Radicalization

Wright (2011) outlines the radicalization process that an individual embarks on in her article (p.10). Violent extremism is often embraced by those who have experienced personal and environmental challenges throughout their lives, which may foster feelings of social alienation, apathy, and a detachment from society (Wright, 2011, p. 11). Over time, these challenges develop an inherent desire to discover their own self-purpose and “become somebody” (Wright, 2011, p. 11). Terrorist groups feed into these feelings of insecurity to offer opportunities for self-discovery as a member of their organization. In the modern world, the internet is the primary platform for terrorist groups to broadcast their extremist agenda (Wright, 2011, p. 11). Online forums, video messages, and violent video games all contain the capacity to broadcast extremist views and motivate acts of violence on a global scale (Wright, 2011, p. 11).

During the self-identification phase, individuals begin to align with extremist ideologies by making notable behavioral changes over time (Wright, 2011, p. 11). They may begin to associate with other radical individuals online to reinforce their extremist beliefs, or start to engage in paramilitary activities to imitate combative situations (Wright, 2011, p. 12-13, as cited in United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2008). Before long, these individuals retain enough motivation to eventually launch an attack while under the influence of an extremist ideology (Wright, 2011, p. 12, as cited in the FBI's Counterterrorism Division, 2006).

Profilers identified key personality traits and factors that increase one's likelihood to a violent extremist movement. Gebelhoff (2016) and Wright (2011) provide a socioeconomic insight to domestic radicalization in their respective works. Following the 2015 Paris attacks and the 2016 bombings in Belgium, it was revealed that the majority of the bombers originated from the poor, *banlieue*

neighborhoods in France and in other parts of Europe (Gebelhoff, 2016). For years, these communities have been plagued with economic disparity, high unemployment rates, and limited job opportunities (Gebelhoff, 2016). As a result, Gebelhoff (2016) argues that the impoverished social and economic conditions of these communities instilled a desire to seek refuge from these injustices through violence against systems of governance. Wright (2011) also attests that for some of the *banlieue* residents, the social stigma of remaining poor was far worse than escaping it by causing harm unto others (p. 14, as cited in Donalds, 2007). Gebelhoff (2016) and Wright's (2011) reasoning aligns with Robert Agnew's strain theory in criminology. Agnew claims that individuals may participate in criminal activity to lessen the strains that arise when failing to achieve socially desired goals (i.e., a stable job, economic success, higher education, etc.) (Agnew, 2001, p. 319). With regards to terrorism, people living in oppressed *banlieue* communities may be motivated to enact violence as a way to seek revenge against those responsible for their impoverished conditions.

In contrast, individualistic theories of domestic radicalization place more emphasis on an individual's personal motivations rather than their environmental conditions. These theories are beneficial in depicting the types of risk factors that essentially create "lone-wolf" perpetrators (Gebelhoff, 2016). According to this perspective, terrorism becomes a viable option for those suffering from psychological illnesses or who fail to identify with their society (Wright, 2011, p. 14). Terrorist propaganda feeds into these insecurities to persuade these individuals that by joining their organization, they will acquire a platform to discover their divine purpose in life and end their psychological suffering (Wright, 2011, p. 14). While both theories addressed the reasons why people self-radicalized, a combination of both personal and environmental factors appears to be a more comprehensive analysis of predicting future terrorist behavior. Jasko, LaFree, and Kruglanski (2017) conducted a study on 1,500 self-claimed extremists to explore specific individual and socioeconomic factors that contributed to their alignment

with extremist ideologies. Jasko and his colleagues (2017) found that violence fueled by ideological extremism is largely correlated with personal insignificance and one's association with other extremists. Often, this is a consequence of persistent societal rejection, familial dishonor, abuse, or periodic unemployment (Jasko et al., 2017 as cited in Kruglanski et al., 2016).

The upbringing of KKK affiliate Dylann Roof, who murdered nine African American churchgoers in South Carolina in 2015, reaffirms the conclusions drawn from this study. Roof came from a broken household and had suffered from many psychological disorders (Stewart, 2015). Throughout his childhood, Roof attended seven different schools in a span of nine years, which may have prevented him from maintaining healthy relationships with his peers (Stewart, 2015). A 2016 study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine affirms that frequent mobility during childhood and adolescence can increase one's likelihood of experiencing adverse outcomes later in life (Webb, Penderson, & Mok, 2016). These consequences include but are not limited to: suicide, violent behavior, criminality, drug abuse, and psychiatric disorders (Webb et al., 2016, p. 291).

In addition, "relocated adolescents often face a double stress of adapting to an alien environment, a new school, and building new friendships and social networks, while simultaneously coping with the fundamental biological and developmental transitions that their peers also experience" (p. 298). When adolescents relocate frequently in short time spans, their likelihood of experiencing these outcomes are significantly heightened as they fail to maintain any consistency with their personal and environmental associations (Webb et al., 2016, p. 291). The adverse effects of frequent mobility throughout Roof's childhood is clear. He failed the ninth grade twice and eventually dropped out of school altogether, choosing to spend most of his time in solitude (Stewart, 2015). Over time, Roof may have begun to seek acceptance from domestic terrorist groups like the KKK, who target his

ongoing feelings of detachment from society and offer him false empowerment to launch an attack.

It is important to acknowledge that not all individuals who conform to radicalism or who experience personal and environmental challenges become terrorists. "Terrorism is one of the most complex social problems of our time," says Dr. John G. Horgan, a guest editor of an article published in the American Psychological Association (Mills, 2017). Sarma (2017) also asserts that developing a risk assessment in the behavioral profiling of terrorists is hindered by several ethical and empirical challenges. Despite this however, Sarma (2017) claims that researchers can still examine the role that decision-making plays in understanding who is more likely to launch a terrorist attack. He argues that a multi-faceted approach of examining both risk and behavioral factors will undoubtedly provide a more comprehensive analysis of the profile of a terrorist (Sarma, 2017).

Domestic Terrorist Groups

Domestic terrorist groups in America are conventionally classified as either right or left-winged. Right-wing domestic terrorist groups, such as the Army of God, Aryan Nations, and the KKK, are predominantly driven by religious extremism or racism (Fitzgerald, 2013). Their ideologies stem from white supremacy, the Christian Identity Movement, Islamophobia, anarchism, anti-immigration, nationalism, and neo-Nazism. In contrast, left-wing domestic terrorist groups hold extremist interpretations of Marxism and human nature, and typically oppose militarism and capitalism (Smith & Morgan, 1994, p. 44). The most prominent left-wing domestic terrorist groups in the U.S. are El Rukns, the Provisional Party of Communists, and M19CO. In America, right-wing terrorist groups have received more media coverage than left-wing terrorist groups, as they have been able to launch many high-profile attacks. Historically, right-wing terrorists were convicted for murdering a Jewish talk show host in 1984 and for executing a mass shooting of a Planned Parenthood clinic in 2015, among other attacks. Left-wing domestic terrorists on the other hand tend to target large

corporations and government representatives. In 1986, left-wing terrorists bombed two Massachusetts courthouses and IBM, Honeywell, Mobil Oil, and Union Carbide. Regardless of their ideological differences, Smith and Morgan (1994) assert that right- and left-wing domestic terrorists share similar tactics and methods of execution. Unlike international actors, domestic terrorist groups have the advantage of recruiting and operating in the country they intend to attack. Furthermore, domestic terrorists are able to recruit and execute covert operations without the same media and political attention that other terrorist groups receive.

Nonetheless, Smith and Morgan (1994) claim that these groups also face the ongoing conflict of requiring secrecy and also, publicity in broadcasting their extremist views to recruit new fighters (p. 47). Every terrorist attack executed showcases the fulfillment of a group's radical ideologies. As a result, the intended targets of these groups and the amount of destruction their attacks cause allow them to leave a noteworthy impact on society (Smith et al., 1994, p. 48). In his expert testimony to Congress, Bjelopera (2017) corroborates the claims that Smith and Morgan (1994) make in the tactical and methodological similarities between right and left-wing terrorist groups in the United States. He asserts that the success of domestic terrorism is largely attributed to their ability to launch non-traditional attacks, which take both law enforcement and the general public by surprise (Bjelopera, 2017). Rather than hijacking an airline or disseminating a suicide bomber, domestic terrorists operate covertly through hate-speech, fraud, vandalism, and through online platforms (Bjelopera, 2017). However, the terrorist label is not always applied to these types of attacks in the same manner that suicide bombings and hijackings do, largely because 9/11 still serves as a dominant portrayal of what most Americans presume to be terrorism (Bjelopera, 2017).

Profiling Domestic Terrorists

Profiling domestic terrorists poses several challenges for national security officials. Generally, domestic terrorists are nomadic, as they frequently change

jobs and locations to avoid their arrest or persecution (Smith et al., 1994, p. 55). Other demographic factors however vary extensively between right and left-wing domestic terrorists. Therefore, Smith and Morgan (1994) assert that it is essential for analysts to examine each group separately in developing an accurate profile of its members. For instance, right-wing terrorists in the U.S. are predominantly white, whereas left-wingers have a significantly large minority base (Smith et al., 1994, p. 51). Right-wing terrorists are also typically unemployed or impoverished (Smith et al., 1994, p. 51). As a result, only about 12% of right-wing terrorists possess a college degree (Smith et al., 1994, p. 51). On the contrary, left-wing terrorists often work as attorneys, scientists, social services, and other white-collar professions (Smith et al., 1994, p. 51). Therefore, it is not surprising that more than half of left-wingers do in fact have a college degree (Smith et al., 1994, p. 51). Right- and left-wing terrorists also live in different parts of the country, with right-wingers inhabiting rural areas and left-wingers in more urban settings. The one demographic factor that domestic terrorists do have in common regardless of their ideological base is their age, which averages from 18-35 years of age (Smith et al., 1994, p. 55).

Finally, the ideological profile of right and left-wing terrorists differs respectively. Unlike right-wing terrorist groups, the ideologies of left-wing groups are not comprised of an extremist interpretation of a certain religion (Smith et al., 1994). Right-winged and Islamic extremism both express radical views of Christianity and Islam respectively, whereas left-wing extremism tends to gravitate towards societal and political issues.

Reporting Acts of Domestic Terrorism

While both the Unite the Right rally in Charleston, Virginia and the attack in Nice, France by ISIS used a vehicle to slaughter civilians, only one incident was immediately labeled as an act of terrorism. The media's overwhelming coverage of Islamic extremism has blanketed over the growing threat of domestic terrorist actors in America.

Many tragedies received little to no coverage by the media based on the context and magnitude of the attack. In the last twenty-five years, the most covered terrorist-related events were the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing, the Oklahoma City Bombing, and 9/11 – which have all been by far the deadliest terrorist attacks on American soil. However, the FBI’s “Terrorism in the United States” article reported that 450 additional acts of terrorism occurred during this same time span, but never received as extensive news coverage. Therefore, it is evident that the mainstream media has continuously disregarded the social, historical, and cultural complexities of terrorism to instead broadcast a sensationalized account of certain attacks that are likely to gain more publicity over others (Chermak & Gruenewald, 2006, p. 436).

There are certain characteristics about a tragedy that determine the amount of news coverage it receives. Chermak and Gruenewald (2006) discovered several determining factors in their own study. They found that attacks involving the hijacking of airlines or airports, were or caused a large number of casualties have significantly “more articles and words written about them” (Chermak et al., 2006, p. 428). In particular, some of the media’s “favorite” issues feature hostage cases, hijackings, bombings, or kidnappings that are executed by Islamic extremists (Chermak et al., 2006, p. 436). A study conducted by Beuts, Lemieux, and Kearns (2017) from the Washington Post corroborates Chermak and Gruenewald’s (2006) claims. They analyzed more roughly 2,000 news articles about 89 different terrorist attacks to determine how frequently Muslims were covered in the media in connection to terrorism (2017). While only 12% of attacks were executed by a Muslim individual, they received 44% of all the news coverage (Betus, Lemieux, & Keaerns, 2017). In addition, attacks committed by a Muslim individual who was not a U.S. citizen received an average of 193 articles, whereas other attacks only had about 18 articles written about the attack (Betus et al., 2017).

The media’s ongoing illustration of Muslims as terrorists is problematic since the media does significantly

impact public opinion. In a democratic nation like the U.S., the people have the right to elect their representatives in the federal government and vote on legislation to resolve societal issues. When the public is consistently misinformed about a particular issue, it directly affects the types of policies that are created and implemented into law in response to these matters. Since law enforcement agencies and policy-makers are so concentrated on solely combating Islamic extremism, domestic terrorists have thrived while undetected by the media and the greater public.

The Criminal Justice System's Response to Domestic Terrorism

At a joint session of Congress following 9/11, President George W. Bush promised to “defend freedom against terrorism” (2001). Al Qaeda was able to successfully attack the U.S. on 9/11 as a result of the disorganization and miscommunication between the CIA, FBI, and the State Department (Field, 2017, p. 472). At the time, these agencies did not have a protocol for sharing classified information with each other, which may have prevented the attack all together (Stein, 2015).

In acknowledging this gap, the Bush Administration introduced a new member to his Cabinet to serve as the premier agency in protecting national security. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) strives to protect Americans by sharing resources and intel with state and local governments and the private sector. Additionally, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Muller vowed to fully cooperate with local law enforcement departments to share information, resources, and intelligence pertaining to terrorism (Daniels, 2002). As the premier law enforcement agency in the country, the FBI's renowned focus on counterterrorism also shifted the priorities of state and local agencies nationwide. Many officers across the country were recruited immediately after 9/11 to serve in the military, federal law enforcement, or in active duty and airport security (Daniels, 2002). The federal government has also made considerable efforts to allow to share resources and information pertaining to terrorism with state and local agencies. The FBI's Regional

Information Sharing System for instance has been expanded to foster a secure intelligence-sharing portal among all levels of law enforcement (Daniels, 2002). In addition, the Office for Domestic Preparedness has funded emergency response equipment for local agencies in responding to acts of terrorism (Daniels, 2002). Many agencies have since been able to equip first responders with radiological detection and decontamination equipment, advanced technology, pharmaceuticals, and other forms of rescue equipment (Daniels, 2002).

Furthermore, Americans have become united in patriotic solidarity following 9/11 by voting for stricter security measures, vetting, sanctions against terrorist-sponsored nations (Field, 2017, p. 472). A month after 9/11, the Bush Administration signed the Patriot Act into law, which has been paramount in reshaping global surveillance and investigative procedures with regards to terrorism. The Patriot Act also expanded the rights of law enforcement officials to search and seize individuals or information relating to terrorist activity (Justice.gov). The National Security Agency (NSA) for instance has infamously conducted electronic surveillance on Americans in investigating a variety of terrorist-related issues. The Patriot Act also imposes harsh penalties for individuals who aid in the execution of a terrorist attack and has eliminated the statute of limitations for prosecuting crimes that threaten national security (Justice.gov). With regards to domestic terrorism, Section 806 the Patriot Act grants investigators with the right to seize assets from Americans suspected of conducting a domestic terror attack without probable cause.

At the turn of the 21st century, domestic terrorists have excelled at recruiting and launching attacks online. While federal law enforcement agencies are best equipped to prosecute these crimes, they typically divert their focus to major cyber-crime cases that occur transnationally (Aguilar, 2015). Unfortunately, however, many local agencies lack the funding, expertise, and resources to investigate domestic cyber-terrorism. This leaves local communities throughout

the nation vulnerable to the expertise of increasingly adept terrorists that operate within national borders.

Furthermore, law enforcement agencies along with the greater public continue to heavily profile Muslims or Arabs in investigating terrorism cases. A study conducted by the Public Research Institute in 2010 found that 45% of Americans believed that American values were incompatible with Islam (Selod, 2014). In addition, President Trump's common-sense rhetoric in profiling Muslims as terrorists has also disregarded the presence of other extremist ideologies fostered by domestic terrorist organizations. (Phillips, 2016). Overlooking the threat of domestic terrorism beyond Islamic extremism will inevitably pose a far greater threat to national security than transnational terrorism ever will.

Discussion Causation

Despite being a pertinent threat to national security, domestic terrorism remains one of the least discussed crimes in the United States. The attacks on September 11th, 2001 completely redefined terrorism in a way that excludes this label from being attached to an American who conducts acts of a similar nature within national borders. The media has greatly influenced how the public perceives terrorism after 9/11. Americans rely on news outlets to stay informed about current events and then shape their own opinions about them (Chermak et al., 2006, p. 430). The opinions that Americans hold about societal issues are instrumental in supporting policies that address them. When the public is misguided about pertinent issues like terrorism, they will likely support policies that do not address the entirety of this threat. It is fairly easy for the public to connect terrorism to an entire ethnic or religious group due to the magnitude of the 9/11 attacks. However, this does not evade the ongoing threat that domestic terrorists also pose to national security.

In 2015, researchers Charles Kruzman from the University of North Carolina and David Schanzer from Duke University surveyed 382 law enforcement agencies about the kinds of terroristic threats made in their jurisdiction (Shane, 2015). They found that 74% of these

threats were fueled by anti-governmental violence by domestic terrorists, and only 39% of these threats were motivated by Islamic extremism. The media's failure to broadcast these findings to as sensationalized of a level as it does when a Muslim man executes an attack adds to the one-sided perspective that Islamic extremism is the only ideology that can motivate a terrorist attack.

Solutions

In their journal article, "Civic Approaches to Confronting Violent Extremism. Institute for Strategic Dialogue" researchers Barzegar, Powers, and Karhili (2016) make recommendations to several agencies to counter domestic terrorist threats. They recommend social services to continue providing opportunities to engage and offer support to all members of the community to evade prejudice and discrimination against certain groups (Barzegar et al., 2016, p. 7).

In addition, law enforcement must remain focused on investigating terrorist behavior, not physical traits (such as one's religious or ethnic background) (Barzegar et al., 2016, p. 7). The terrorist label must strictly be used in accordance to its legal connotations, and not by prejudiced assumptions (Byman, 2017). Charging a domestic terrorist like James Alex Fields Jr. with a hate crime instead of an act of domestic terrorism fails to acknowledge the seriousness of his actions and the possibility of individuals that are not affiliated with Islamic extremism to launch a terrorist attack upon Americans (Byman, 2017).

Furthermore, the government at large should abstain from surveilling entire ethnic or religious groups to identify terrorist suspects. Despite all the data on terrorist profiling, no researcher has come to an agreement on a set of qualities of characteristics that describe terrorists universally. Discriminatory enforcement of laws and security procedures will broaden tensions between "suspect communities" and government agencies and make it less likely for these groups to feel comfortable reporting crimes or assisting in the enforcement of such laws (Barzegar et al., 2016, p. 8).

Technology must also ensure that the personal information of their users is protected from terrorists. These groups could potentially use personal information to compose fraudulent documents or fund their operations (Barzegar et al., 2016, p. 8). Major tech companies should work along law enforcement agencies to reach the shared objective of protecting individuals from the detrimental effects of terrorism (Barzegar et al., 2016, p. 8).

Obstacles

The Trump Administration greatly contributes to the tensions between the Muslim community and national security. President Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric throughout the course of his presidential campaign and his presidency have furthered discriminatory practices against Muslim Americans in the name of national security. This has also motivated domestic terrorists who target minorities to launch attacks.

Following Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential election, the Southern Poverty Law Center revealed that 37% of the 1,094 attacks against minority groups were motivated by Donald Trump's rhetoric about Muslims in America and campaign slogans (Byman, 2017). In addition, one of President Trump's first executive orders was to issue a temporary ban of immigrants and refugees that originated from seven predominantly Muslim countries. President Trump also recently retweeted an anti-Muslim propaganda video posted by the leader of a far-right group in the U.K., and has repeatedly called for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" (Krieg, 2017). This commentary and the President's subsequent actions has continued to ingrain the assumption that all Muslims are terrorists in America while concurrently, downplaying the potential of domestic terrorists to also conduct attacks in the name of violent extremism.

Arguably the most significant barrier to adhering to the solutions listed above is ensuring that stricter policies on domestic terrorism do not infringe on the First Amendment right to the freedom of speech and assembly. One of the reasons why the U.S. government does not respond to domestic terrorist groups like the KKK or Neo

Nazis in the same manner as it responds to al Qaeda and ISIS is because American citizens do have the right to hold beliefs that may differ from the majority (McCord, 2017). Americans are entitled to hold extremist views so long as they do not inflict harm against others. Therefore, laws that operate under the assumption that all extremist groups will launch a violent attack infringes on the rights that the First Amendment guarantees.

Byman (2017) provides a realistic example of the implications of treating domestic terrorism in the same manner as international terrorism. He explains that a corporation's reputation could be significantly destroyed if they do business with a non-violent radical group that is legally labeled as a terrorist group (Byman, 2017). For example, an American bank chose not to support a charity organization to fund resources in Syrian hospitals due to the fear that the money could end up in the possession of a terrorist in the region (Byman, 2017). This same scenario could easily occur in the U.S. as well. Banks and other financial institutions may be wary of funding organizations located in rural areas that occupy a large right or left-wing terrorist presence out of fear that their funds could somehow be passed onto such organizations (Byman, 2017). As a country with the largest economy in the world, the dismantlement of major financial institutions in the U.S. can lead to grave repercussions both domestically and around the world.

Conclusion

Seventeen years after the dreadful morning of September 11th, 2001, the U.S. has become the global pioneer in the fight against terrorism. The U.S. government enacted astronomical changes in national security policy, global surveillance, military funding, intelligence sharing, investigative measures, and airport security to preserve the safety of all citizens. In the midst of these changes, the U.S. seems to have forgotten the presence of terrorism within its own borders. Since 2011, research think tank New America reported that white supremacists, anti-government radical groups, and other extremists without ties to Islamic extremism have killed

twice as many people in the U.S. than Islamic extremists have (Shane, 2015). Right- and left-wing terrorist groups in the U.S. have executed 19 terrorist attacks since 9/11, whereas Islamic extremists have only executed seven attacks in the same time frame (Shane, 2015). America's underscoring of domestic terrorism fueled by the media's one-sided portrayal terrorism is more harrowing to national security than Islamic-extremist terrorist groups.

In a post 9/11 America, images of the crashing twin towers continue to foreshadow the perceptions that Americans have of terrorism. While this attack remains the bloodiest terrorist attack in world history, it by no means serves as a comprehensive portrayal of terrorism. Therefore, it is crucial for leaders in national security to be reminded of societal and security implications on profiling that is solely limited to race, religion, or some other collective factor, and acknowledge the prevailing threat that also exists within national borders.

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*HEALTH POLICY REFORM: THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON
OBESITY AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH IN THE US*
By Richard Medina

“Am I sick because I am poor, or am I poor
because I am sick?” (Erwin 1572)

Thousands of children are suffering from short-term and long-term chronic health issues because their parents cannot afford health insurance or medical bills. According to Jennifer Dorning, in 2014 about 34 million people in the United States had no medical. For people living in poverty, which is defined as living under \$23,850 a year for a family of four, the uninsured rate was almost twenty percent (Dorning 4). Minorities are much more likely to be uninsured than their majority white counterparts. Minorities are more susceptible to having certain health issues due to genetics, but not having access to health care because they are poor makes them more prevalent. Public health practice has a huge impact on a community and there are some basic steps on how to create change in the United States to benefit those affected greatly. Everyone in the United States should have the right to an affordable health care no matter their race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic situation, and the ability to decide if they want to be insured.

From the beginning of our country's founding, we have lived by the documents written by our Founding Fathers. This includes the "Declaration of Independence" by Thomas Jefferson which states:

that all men are created equal, that they are endowed [...] with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. [...] it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it and to institute new Government [...] as to them shall seem most likely to [affect] their Safety and Happiness. (Jefferson 1)

These words state that every human U.S. citizen has the right to Life and the pursuit of Happiness, which includes health; if one is not healthy can they truly be happy with their way of life at the moment? An affordable health care should be implemented to allow our fellow citizens, of different socioeconomic levels, these unalienable rights given to us since our founding. Are people healthy because they are rich, or are they rich because they are healthy? Same goes with the poor who get sick and have no means to receive an affordable health care or pay for their medical attention. Some people believe the poor do not care about their health; however, it is much more complicated than that. Many do not possess the same financial means as others to pay for their medical bills and medicine; others may have been sick so much that they have spent all their money on healthcare.

Although there are minorities insured, it is still significantly fewer people when compared to their white counterparts. About ninety percent of U.S. citizens are covered by some type of health insurance, either private or government funded (Dorning 1). In 2014, almost eight percent of non-Hispanic whites, twelve percent of blacks, nine percent of Asians, and twenty percent of people of Hispanic origin were uninsured (Dorning 4). About forty percent of workers do not have access to paid sick leave, forcing workers to go in sick and prolong their sicknesses and raise health costs. In January 2014, under the Affordable Care Act, the majority of Americans were required to have some health insurance, which caused

almost nine million Americans to become insured; the majority of those who became insured after this were people of low-income, minority settings and young adults (Dorning 6). The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was implemented in 2010 by President Obama, making significant changes in the health care system up to 2014 (Dorning 6).

The majority of costs in health care come from chronic illnesses, such as obesity; these are due to “[high] hospital fees associated with repeated hospitalizations” (Dorning 3). This is because many doctors are more concerned with what is going on now rather than what will happen in the future. Medical bills in the United States are a large contributor to bankruptcy; between 2005 to 2013 eighteen to twenty-five percent of bankruptcy cases were due to medical bills (Dorning 6). The ACA also called for an expansion of the Medicaid program, which as of 2015, thirty states and Washington DC had chosen to accept. With this expansion, those who are one hundred and thirty-eight percent below the poverty line are eligible for Medicaid (Dorning 7).

Minorities living in poverty are more susceptible to having health issues and not being able to afford to have access to health care makes these issues more prevalent. There is a correlation between the duration of their life a child faces in poverty and its consequences in relation to the health problems. Children of uninsured minorities are up to ten times more likely to have unmet medical needs and are five times more likely to go more than two years without seeing a doctor (Dorning 4). As seen in Figure 1, the effect of the percentage of a child’s life in poverty negatively affects their health. Although there is the point that an African American child has poorer health throughout all the proportion of time in poverty when compared to white children (Malat 445). Because these minorities and people living in poverty do not have an affordable health care plan, their children will grow up knowing lifelong illnesses and diseases. Their children will have poorer health compared their wealthy counterparts because their parents could not afford medical attention, medicine or treatment. By creating

an affordable health care program, these children may have the opportunity to be just as healthy as those who have better opportunities than they do.

Chronic malnutrition often leads to obesity, a condition that affects a large percentage of the United States population, which masks other epidemic consequences, such as stunting: reduced growing, in both height and weight, which affects the child's development (Iriart et al. 1069). Children who spend more time in poverty are expected to experience more health issues because of increased exposure to these conditions (Malat 443). More exposure to poverty impacts a child's health, no matter the race, even though minorities are more likely to fall under this. The United States has one of the highest rates of chronic illnesses and one of the lowest life expectancies of most first world countries and higher income nations (Dorning 3). The people who are facing socio-economic problems have a greater chance of suffering health problems, such as obesity and stunting compared to those who do not face these problems (Iriart 1072). Overweight/obese Hispanic children have a higher prevalence of stunting compared with non-Hispanic White children; for the entire study, the prevalence of stunting was about three percent across all racial/ethnic groups, while for Hispanics this was about seven percent – this can be seen in Table 2 (Iriart et al. 1072-3). While those non-white Hispanic children suffer from the consequences of obesity and chronic malnutrition more often than their white counterparts, this is due to the lack of affordable health care in our country and the costly doctor visits.

Public health practice has a huge impact on a community, and there are ways to create reforms in the US Public Health system to benefit those affected by these problems. In "Poverty in America: How Public Health Practice can Make a Difference," Paul Erwin talks about his experience in Tennessee. Erwin describes three aspects in approaching a change in public health practice, which includes community power through local decision making about health, educating students about poverty and health in the 'arena,' and increasing employment of people from

these communities to reach these communities (Erwin 1570). Enhancing a community's power in their way of life allows them to fight for the right for the government to do what they actually need them to do, not what the government wants to do (Erwin 1571). In this small town, the rates of cardiovascular and lung cancer mortality rates are higher than that of any other part of the state, yet the County Health Council (CHC) decides to focus on the dental hygiene of the young people here (Erwin 1571). The community must use its power to force the CHC to do something about the larger concerns. When Erwin talks about education, he is not strictly talking about educating the poor, which is important, but educating the "not-so-poor" about the poverty happening and what happens to them where it takes place (Erwin 1571). By taking students out into the field where poverty and its consequences are highly visible allows students to apply their knowledge and adapt what they were taught to work for the place they work in (Erwin 1571). Change is necessary for people to learn. Individual opportunity is allowing those from areas of concern to be a part of the decision-making team and helping the outsiders gain new skills and insight on how to fix a problem (Erwin 1571). By increasing the number of people from the area of concern allows for people to have a first-person point of view of the problem and understanding of the lives of those involved (Erwin 1571). This makes serving a community much easier because those who are from the area of concern give those who are not informed about how everything works and flows.

Affordable health care should be a human right, no matter race, ethnicity or socioeconomic situation; however, it should be up to the individual to decide if they want to be insured. For the most part, when compared to their white counterparts, minorities are more likely to be uninsured. Minorities who live in poverty or poverty-stricken circumstances are more likely to be unable to afford health care and have worse health issues than their white counterparts. Public health policy and practice reforms are necessary for our country; thousands of people die because they are not able to pay for different medical

services necessary for their survival. Through my personal experience, I can tell that the way our health system is not that great and there must be a change to the way things are done. During my junior year of high school, I had bronchitis, sinusitis and rhinitis – three concurrent respiratory infections; during this time, I had countless CT scans and X-rays of my chest and was on respiratory treatment. Almost none of these medical bills were covered by insurance because the insurance companies ‘deemed these procedures to be unnecessary’; everything had to be paid by my parents and this turned out to be close to five thousand dollars.

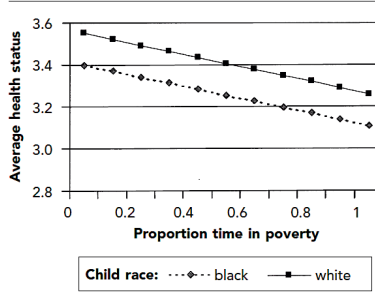
Do you believe health should be a ‘luxury’ only the rich can have, or should it be a basic human right? This is a reality in the United States as only the rich are able to afford their medications and visits. An affordable health care program in the country would decrease infant mortality rates, lower the number of children and young adults with chronic health issues, and lower health care costs.

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Appendix

Figure 1. Child health status by proportion of life in poverty and race



In this figure we see the proportion of a child's life spent in poverty negatively affects their health status; however, we can see that black children have poorer health than white children (Malat 445).

Table 2 Stunting and weight status prevalence by race/ethnicity for study population of children ages 2–19 years, NHANES 2007–2008

Race/ethnicity (n)	Stunted***		Normal weight***		Stunting among normal weight**		Overweight/obese***		Stunting among overweight/obese***	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
All ethnicities (3,102)	121	(3.1)	1,999	(66.9)	85	(3.4)	1,103	(33.1)	36	(2.5)
Hispanic (1,184)	76	(6.6)	726	(60.7)	51	(7.0)	458	(39.3)	25	(6.0)
Non-hispanic white (984)	26	(2.2)	678	(69.3)	22	(2.6)	306	(30.7)	4	(1.2)
Non-hispanic black (785)	16	(2.3)	492	(62.5)	10	(2.5)	293	(37.5)	6	(2.0)
Other race/multiracial (149)	3	(2.7)	103	(74.3)	2	(2.7)	46	(25.7)	1	(2.6)

In order to produce unbiased national estimates, sample weights were used to reflect the unequal probabilities of selection, adjustments to non-response and to independent population controls. Therefore, the results presented may conflict with crude calculations that do not consider the complex probability sample of the NHANES survey

* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$

In this table we see the comparison among different racial/ethnic groups of the number of children, between 2–19 years of age, affected by stunting – in their weight – (Iriart 1072).



*THE MISCARRIAGE OF “ALOHA” – A CASE AGAINST THE
KEALOHAS*

By Stephanie Downing

The mission of the U.S. Justice Department is to maintain the “fair and impartial administration of justice” for all American citizens (*DOJ.gov*, 2018). However, the public’s confidence in the very agencies authorized to protect their interests has dwindled in light of nation-wide occurrences of misconduct across the criminal justice system. In 2017, the State of Hawaii was plagued by the arrest of Chief Louis Kealoha of the Honolulu Police Department, his wife – an eminent state prosecutor – and five other police officers for their involvement in a massive public corruption scheme. This paper exposes the ethical and illicit violations committed by then Chief Kealoha, his wife, and officers under his jurisdiction at the expense of those they were entitled to serve – making this most heinous act of public injustice in modern Hawaiian history (Kawano, 2017).

Case Summary

As notable figures serving at the top-levels of the State Judiciary, Louis and Katherine Kealoha attained noteworthy prestige and influence throughout the Hawaiian

Islands. As the Chief of the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), Louis Kealoha presided over the largest law enforcement body in the state, while his wife was respected as a top-tier prosecutor in Honolulu (Kaneya, 2017 & *honolulupd.org*, 2018).

Beyond their professional endeavors, the Kealohas enjoyed an extravagant lifestyle and fought relentlessly to maintain this elite status. In 2012, the Kealohas' empire was threatened when Katherine became the subject of a lawsuit filed by her uncle after she allegedly withdrew thousands of dollars from a joint account without mutual consent (Kawano, 2017). In an attempt to evade criminal charges and invalidate his testimony, Louis and Katherine Kealoha used their leverage to frame her uncle into committing a felony offense (Kawano, 2017). Consequently, the inconsistencies in Katherine's testimony and the lack of evidence to connect her uncle to the crime orchestrated by the Kealohas instantly prompted a federal investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Following a two-year investigation, the FBI indicted the Kealohas and five other HPD police officers in 2017 on 20 counts of embezzlement, abuse of power, criminal conspiracy, and the obstruction of justice (Grube & Kaneya, 2017).

Investigative Issues

What initially began as an investigation into an alleged mailbox theft ultimately led to a two-year federal probe against two of the most influential figures in the state. In 2007, Katherine Kealoha allegedly received a financial trust from her uncle, Gerard Puana, to which she claims she received complete access to his finances as the delegated power of attorney (Kawano, 2017). However, the FBI's investigation revealed that Katherine not only forged her uncle's signature on the trust fund, but also made up an alias named of Alison Wong to notarize the form (Kawano,

2017). For years, Katherine was able to funnel hundreds of thousands of dollars from the trust for her own personal gain. The forged signature and the identity of Allison Wong were never verified in court until the FBI issued a formal investigation in 2015. This raises investigative concerns about whether the presiding court overlooked Katherine's offense or simply refrained from following a standard protocol to preserve the integrity of legal documents and hold anyone accountable for breaking the law.

After her uncle filed a civil lawsuit against her, Katherine filed a police report after claiming that her mailbox was stolen overnight (Kawano, 2017). Katherine told the responding officer that her outdoor security camera may reveal the identity of the perpetrator, however she asserted that she wanted to have a family member review the footage before she submitted it to police. The responding officer noted this claim in his report but failed to further question Katherine about why she wanted to delay the investigation by keeping the video footage. Katherine did not submit the camera to HPD until three days after calling 911 about the theft (Kawano, 2017).

As a tenured prosecutor, Katherine is evidently aware that withholding evidence about a crime could jeopardize the integrity of an ongoing investigation. In addition, the responding officer's vague questioning failed to uncover sufficient evidence about the crime. When HPD finally received the recording of Katherine's security camera from that night, Louis was ironically able to point-blank identify the offender as Gerard Puana, despite the video's visibly poor quality. In court, Chief Kealoha reaffirmed his confidence based on the following reasoning: "I've known Gerard for over 30 years. I know how he walks, the kind of clothes that he wore" (Kawano, 2017).

Puana was never questioned about an alibi and officers were unable to collect any physical or circumstantial evidence to directly tie Puana to the theft. Essentially, Puana's charges were solely based on Chief



Figure 1: *A comparison of Gerard Puana and the suspect in the Kealohas' security camera footage on the night of the mailbox theft. The video does not reveal any identifying traits about the offender, and it is nearly impossible to make a confident identification between the two individuals (Kawano, 2017).*

Kealoha's "ability" to identify his attire and walking patterns – an unconvincing reason to justify any probable cause for Puana's arrest.

Before Puana was formally charged, he suspected that he was under surveillance by undercover HPD officers after Katherine filed the initial police report (Kawano, 2017). Puana noted the dates, timings, and license plate numbers of cars that would frequent the neighborhood over several days (Kawano, 2016). The subsequent FBI investigation revealed that these vehicles belonged to the HPD's Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) – a clandestine squad that is not legally authorized to investigate petty thefts with the exception of excruciating circumstances (Kawano, 2016). The FBI's probe eventually discovered that several officers from CIU maintained personal ties with the Kealohas – raising the possibility that the Kealohas may have received preferential treatment based on their long-standing associations in HPD. Rather than comply with standard investigative procedures, it appears that the Kealohas orchestrated the direction of the investigation and used their connections and administrative standing to their advantage. As Chief of HPD, it is likely that Louis Kealoha easily changed the trajectory of this investigation to work in his wife's favor – showcasing a blatant obstruction of justice at the highest level of leadership.

The inconsistencies and lack of candor in the HPD's investigation into the theft of the Kealohas' mailbox raises additional concerns on the standard of conduct employed in prior investigations. It is clear that quality assurance protocols were vastly abstained from at the moment that the responding officer arrived to the Kealohas' residence. The sole reliance on a single testimony – not from an eye-witness, but from someone with no factual basis to support his reasoning, portrays an apparent miscarriage of justice that clearly swung in the favor of a single party. To date, it is unclear whether ongoing or prior investigations were also subject to such conduct – however it is critical that HPD launches an internal investigation by an independent agency to hold those accountable for wrongdoing and preserve the overarching reputation of the department.

Ethical Issues

In any organization, leaders are awarded with considerable prestige and power to govern a workforce and set a reputable standard within the agency. In the U.S. criminal justice system, leaders are expected to apply the law impartially and prosecute those who endanger the welfare of a community.

The Kealoha investigation has intensified the public's mistrust in the criminal justice system and falls directly within the plethora of recent misconduct violations among police officers. Occurrences of racial profiling, police brutality, and the unlawful deployment of deadly force has degraded the public's ability place their faith in a system that prides upon its power to protect the best interests and safety of the American people.

The most scathing ethical violation committed by the Kealohas is that as elected leaders of the community, the Chief of Police and deputy prosecutor were selfishly motivated to capitalize on the population that entrusted

them with the highest regard. For over twenty years, Louis and Katherine Kealoha pursued a profession that provided them with both the means and platform to mask their hidden agenda and profit from public resources. In addition, the Kealohas' administrative standing within the HPD and the state judiciary granted them with considerable influence to manipulate those under their jurisdiction to work in their favor – raising more ethical concerns about the underlying intent of some HPD personnel. It also begs the question about whether unconceived biases by the HPD and the greater state judiciary may impact the integrity of future investigations and hearings.

Furthermore, the crimes committed by the Kealohas while holding a high-ranking position will cast a negative reflection on the Native Hawaiian minority – who have fought incredulously for their rightful seat at the table after their Kingdom was illegally annexed. Ethnic inequality has plagued both public and private institutions throughout the United States. In 2017, *U.S. News* reported that the overwhelming majority of elected officials in America are white males, despite only making up 31% of the total U.S. population (Lardieri, 2017).

The election of Louis Kealoha as Chief of HPD marked a colossal breakthrough within the Native Hawaiian community. Since the Kingdom of Hawaii was annexed by the U.S. government, Native Hawaiians have largely remained absent from being appointed to public office (Herrería, 2018). As a minority within their own land, the concerns of Native Hawaiians are frequently overshadowed by priorities that often stem beyond their interests. Chief Kealoha's promise to instill Hawaiian values in his leadership as the premier law enforcement officer in the state was a promising claim to reaffirm the priorities of a demographic that has remained absent from recognition for nearly half a century (Sunderland, 2010).

As a result, the Kealoha investigation has become a significant setback for Native Hawaiians and their striving to reclaim their rightful seat in public office. While the Kealohas' ethnic background has no bearing on their actions, their investigation will add to the extensive history of discrimination against Native Hawaiians (Herreria, 2018). In many cases, Native Hawaiians are often blamed for personal grievances beyond their control, such as homelessness and economic disparity (Herreria, 2018). As a result, this scandal may heighten underlying prejudices against Native Hawaiians and may make it more challenging for them to apply to future positions.

Ethical leadership and candor in the criminal justice system is fundamentally critical, as the public serves as the first line of defense for any law enforcement body. The ability to protect a community is highly dependent on the public's cooperation and relationship with those enforcing the law. A community that lacks confidence with their presiding law enforcement agency will ultimately feel less compelled to report criminal activity, assist officers in future investigation as key witnesses, or fail to cooperate with law enforcement during an altercation. Ultimately, this prevents officers from preserving the safety of their communities and deepens the divide among key individuals who can help deter future criminal behavior.

Moving On

As a state with a relatively small population, the societal impact of the Kealoha investigation will transgress over several generations. Because this scandal was orchestrated by the highest levels of leadership, it will take years to reverse the Department's tarnished reputation by the self-possessing actions of just two individuals (*BOH.com*, 2018).

Last year, Susan Ballard was elected as the new Chief of HPD. As the first woman to hold the position,

Chief Ballard exhibits a fresh and renewed image of the Department. She vows to prioritize the community's best interest and work to alleviate the impact of the Kealohas' reputation among the general public.

Since her appointment, Chief Ballard has shifted the direction of HPD to incorporate a community-based policing initiative (*BOH.com*, 2018). This method encourages officers to work directly with the public in order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the qualities and deficiencies prevalent within the community (Solar, 2015). By increasing the presence of police officers in the public eye, community-based policing strives to strengthen the community's trust with their local department and empower them to immediately report injustices committed against them (Solar, 2015). This ultimately grants police officers with a more complete picture of criminal activity within their jurisdictions and allows them to rely on their fellow community members to provide intelligence about criminal behavior before it escalates (Solar, 2015). While the aura of the Kealoha investigation will not vanish overnight, there is hope that Chief Ballard's invigorating leadership will lead to positive changes within HPD and the greater judiciary.

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*NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING AND VOTER
TURNOUT IN THE 2016 US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION*

By Sabren Wahden

The relationship between media consumption and negative campaign advertising with political participation, specifically in electoral activities, has attracted considerable concern among political science scholars. Leading up to the election, presidential candidates and their campaigns send messages, typically through campaign advertisements, to the public about why they deserve their support; most often candidates will talk about their positions on specific issues as well as goals for the future. The public then retrieves these messages and considers them when voting. Political ads serve a consequential role in the election process, they inform the public. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995, 59) confirm this as they contend that ads “enlighten voters and enable them to take account of issues and policies when choosing between the candidates.” Recently, Americans have been bombarded with increasing amounts of negative campaign advertisements. A September 2016 report from the Wesleyan Media Project (2016) showed that 53 percent of campaign ads that aired in the months leading up to the 2016 presidential election were negative. Politicians and scholars have voiced concerns that the focus on negativity as a campaign tactic disrupts the legitimacy of the political process by depressing voter turnout. They argue that the

ultimate outcome may be citizens high in cynicism and apathy, unwilling to engage in the most basic forms of civic engagement and political participation, such as voting. However, given the tone of the recent presidential campaigns, it seems that many campaign teams believe it is a winning strategy to play on the emotions of voters. Negative ads blanketed airwaves in the 2016 US Presidential campaign election; the Clinton and Trump campaigns used appeals of fear and anger in their ads to elevate anxiety and cynicism surrounding the campaign; exposure to these negative campaign ads stimulated voter turnout. Negative advertisements stimulate voter turnout because they assure more attention from voters in an otherwise crowded advertisement environment, additionally, they result in voters becoming more likely to incorporate the negative information into their evaluations. While Clinton, and Trump both ran fear-evoking ads, Trump's ads were more efficacious in that his campaign strategy not only focused on evoking emotions through character-based and policy issue ads, but also targeted appropriate audiences, which allowed him to stimulate support in the polls which led to his presidential victory.

Literature Review

Negative campaigns are characterized by an attacking tone in political debates and by political messages that focus on the character flaws or shortcomings of the opposing candidate. It, of course, is not that simple, since many negative ads also feature ominous music, dark images, and scary images. For negativity to influence behaviors or attitudes, however, voters must seek-out, or at least not avoid these attacks. Indeed, an important finding in campaign research is that attack ads are typically more interesting, provocative or compelling to watch, making them more effective at catching people's attention. Psychology tells us that negativity is inherently attention-getting (Pratto and John 1991) and often more memorable than positivity (Lau 1985) and general impressions formed on the basis of negative information tends to be weighted more heavily. The use of negativity might not only ensure more attention from voters but also result in voters

becoming more likely to incorporate that negative information into their evaluations (Mattes and Redlawsk 2014). When normally inattentive people sense that something is not right they become anxious; when a voter experiences the anxiety emotion about a political situation it causes the voter to pay close attention to politics and will make a decision that will optimize their own self-interests. The affective intelligence theory then suggests that anxious citizens are more likely to vote. Assuming the affective intelligence theory is valid, the electoral candidate who wishes to generate interests in a campaign has an incentive to adopt a negative or attacking attitude towards the opposite candidate in hopes of generating a sense of anxiety about the consequence of the election; negative or attack advertisements and messages are an obvious manifestation of this goal.

Existing studies on negative advertising leads to conflicting predictions about the effect of campaign negativity on turnout. There is a consensus among politicians and scholars about negative advertisements and its adverse impact on the electoral process, critics argue that negative ads are pernicious and threaten American democracy. Former Democratic Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota compared negative advertisements to drugs as he said: “negative advertising is the crack cocaine of politics.” Scholars Stephen Ansolabehere and Shanto Iyengar (1995) contend that negative advertising disenfranchises voters by turning them off from the political process. Similarly, Thomas Patterson (2002, 51) says that negative ads have detrimental effects on the political process. He argues that “negative politics appears to wear some people down to the point where they simply want less of politics.” Additionally, scholars argue that negative advertisements intensify divisions among voters and are not good for democracy (Lau and Sigelman 2000). J.H. Clinger (1987, 746) believes that negative advertisements have created “an increasing intellectual and ethical bankruptcy of modern presidential debate,” which is undermining the “very future of democratic self-government.”

While scholars such as Ansolabehere and Iyengar contend that negative advertisements decrease voter turnout, a number of scholars such as Wattenberg and Briens (2009) Freedman and Goldstein (1999) argue that negativity actually mobilizes the electorate. For instance, Kahn and Kenney (1999) analyzed the 1990 Senate elections and found that negative advertisements increased turnout, Freedman, and Goldstein (1999) were brought to the same conclusion when they analyzed the 1997 Virginia gubernatorial election and the 1996 Presidential election. Lau and Pomper (2001) also found that negativity in political campaigns increased voter turnout when they examined Senate elections between the years of 1988 and 1998. It has been suggested, that rather than turning voters away from politics, negative campaign ads may actually increase citizens' political engagement and improve the quality of political discussions by raising issues that are important to voters and sending the message that something significant is at stake in a given election, which then, in turn, means people will vote.

Additionally, scholars have argued that negative ads help stimulate voter turnout because they provide a significant amount of information relevant to the voting decision because such negative information may be given greater weight in political judgments than positive messages.

According to Geer (2006), democracy is well served by candidates' efforts to discuss their opponents' weaknesses. These efforts inject important information about candidates' character and policy positions into the public discourse for consideration by voters. Accordingly, Geer claims that negative campaigning actually enriches the information environment surrounding political campaigns, writing, —Any deliberative process usually benefits from having criticism and debate (Geer 2006, 2).

Negative ads enrich the information environment available to citizens; negative ads serve a democratic function because they allow voters to have access to more discussions about important issues presented with specificity and evidence to support candidates' appeals (Kelly 1960). Negative ads are important because those out

of power have the right and ability to raise doubts about those in power. Otherwise, the public does not have access to full information “about the relevant alternative policies and their likely consequences” (Dahl 1998, 37). Furthermore, negative appeals may produce stronger affective responses, leading to heightened enthusiasm for candidates, greater engagement with the election, and increased motivation to learn more about the candidates. Finkel and Geer (1998, 577) reveal that “negativity augments turnout voters by arousing the voter enthusiasm for his or her preferred candidates or by increasing the degree to which a voter cares about the outcome of the election.”

On the other hand, scholars such as Krasno and Green (2006) have identified no consistent relationship between negative campaigning and voter turnout; negative ads either promote or diminish turnout. Niven (2006) found the overall effect of negativity to be null, he claimed that informed voters are more likely to vote regardless of information tone.

Overall, the relevant literature on negative political campaigning lacks uniformity.

Presidential Campaign Advertisements: Historical Context

Political ads are the major means in which candidates for president communicate their message to voters and with advertising, through advertisements, candidates can shape and mold themes they want to convey to voters. Negative campaigning in presidential elections isn't anything new. As an essential strategy of the campaign, political strategists, since the time of the United States' first contested election, have offered to voters advertising that caters in favor of their candidate and defames or distorts the candidate's opponents. In 1800, Thomas Jefferson used handbills to hurl insults at the oppositions, and he paid the editor of the *Richmond Examiner* to print anti-Federalist and anti-Adams articles and praise his own campaign. The 1952 presidential election between Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson marked the transformation of the political landscape when both campaigns ran the first televised ads,

evoking World War II memories; from that point forward, television became the primary medium of mass communication. The 1964 presidential campaign was one of the most negative races since the advent of television. President Lyndon B. Johnson's campaign aired the "Daisy" ad which is arguably, and for better or worse, the mother of all attack ads. This famous advertisement featured a small girl picking petals off a flower and counting the number pulled off. As she does, an ominous voice begins a countdown — "ten, nine, eight, seven, six..." At the end of the countdown, the screen filled with a nuclear blast. This ad was created in an attempt to frame Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater as an extremist who was not to be trusted with America's future. The Daisy ad was not the only negative attack ad President Lyndon B. Johnson had up his sleeve. He made hay out of his opponent's endorsement by a white supremacist group. The ad featured clips of Alabama Ku Klux Klan members burning a cross at night time. The ad's narrator then quotes a member of the Alabama Klan saying, "I like Barry Goldwater. He needs our help." The narrator in the Johnson ad voices concern over that the Ku Klux Klan's alleged support for Senator Goldwater. "Read my lips: No new taxes" was President George H. Bush's infamous phrase; it helped boost his popularity during the 1988 Presidential election. In 1992, President Bill Clinton's campaign cited the phrase and questioned Bush's trustworthiness in the attack ad. The ad featured a clip of Bush saying "Read my lips. No new taxes," Then the narrator of the ad says "Then George Bush signed the second-biggest tax increase in American history." The ad uses Bush's own words against him. Clinton aimed to present President H.W. Bush as a hypocrite that fails to keep his promises. In 2004, George W. Bush's campaign depicted John Kerry as a flip-flopper, in the "Windsurfing" ad. Kerry had the tendency to flip-flop on the key issues of the day; using an image of Kerry windsurfing and the tagline "Whichever way the Wind Blows," Bush illustrated Kerry's problem. In 2008, McCain's campaign used ads to aggressively define Obama as an arrogant man who is out of touch and unprepared for

the presidency. While character attacks have always been a feature of campaign advertising, during the 2016 election, character attacks were the main ad strategy for President Trump, and Hillary Clinton's campaign. Clinton and Trump's campaigns feature the takeaway message that their opponent is not fit for the presidency. Fear and anger were the key emotions of ads from all four presidential campaigns.

Methodology

This study analyzes negative advertisements issued during the 2016 presidential campaigns and its effect on voter turnout rate. To test the hypothesis about the effect of negative advertisements on voter turnout, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout's (2016) methodology will be borrowed and modified. Presidential ads are carefully developed, designed and tested. Before ads are released campaigns and their consultants make several decisions about the content of the ads and distribution of the ads. Most recently, campaigns have come up with increasingly sophisticated ways in which they direct advertisements to the electorate. Campaigns are now able to precisely locate the types of voters they want to speak to. Campaigns target specific individuals with specific characteristics. Fowler, Franz, and Ridout (2016) study the content of political advertisements specifically Presidential and Congressional ads, the distribution of political advertisements and explore how these two factors influence voters.

The underlying data from Fowler, Franz, and Ridout's (2016) study come from an ad firm, Kantar Media/CMAG which is a comprehensive database containing information including market station data and the exact time period, frame and location of each ad airing. With this data, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout examine how the ads were directed. They find that most recently, campaigns have been using methods such as ad targeting and micro-targeting. Ad targeting refers to the practice of strategically placing ads on programs whose viewers belong to the demographic groups that sponsors want to reach, these ads fit very specific profiles across the television dial and now social media and internet. Micro-targeting refers to

a campaign strategy in which campaigns use available public and private data to locate partisans for support or to reach independents or opposing partisans for persuasive messages. By micro-targeting, campaigns are able to identify the interests of specific individuals or very small groups of like-minded individuals and influence their thoughts or actions.

A team of trained students then watched videos from various election cycles and compiled information about each ad's content. They classified ads into three categories: (1) positive (or promotional) ads that talk solely and speak highly about the favored candidate; (2) purely negative (or attack) ads that talk about the opponent whether it be the opponent's character or stance on policy; and (3) contrast (or comparative) ads, which contain information about both candidates. In addition, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout's trained students kept track of whether the ad references other national political leaders, whether the favored candidate or opponent appears in the ad, and what types of references are used about the candidates (for instance if the candidate or opponent is delivered as honest or dishonest). They also researched which issues are mentioned in the ad such as terrorism, gun control or the economy.

Upon examining content and distribution/targeting information, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout (2016) then compile this information and study correlations between the two. Ultimately, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout find that citizens may grow sick of campaign advertisements, but these ads are not inherently bad. Negative ads serve a positive purpose by informing and engaging the electorate.

The methodology used in the Fowler, Franz, and Ridout (2016) study will also be used in this study, but their methodology will be modified a bit. Instead of classifying content into 3 separate categories, I will classify the ads into two categories, (1) positive (or promotional) ads that talk solely and speak highly about the favored candidate's character and policies; (2) purely negative (or attack) ads that talk about the opponent whether it be the opponent's

character or stance on policy. Upon completion of classifications, I will weed out the positive ads and focus solely on the negative ads. The way in which Fowler, Franz, and Ridout examined the distribution of ad data through marketing strategies such as ad targeting and micro-targeting will be borrowed. The comparison portion of the study in which Fowler, Franz, and Ridout study the relationship between ad content and ad distribution and its effect on voter turnout will also be borrowed.

Hillary Clinton's campaign organization, *Hillary for America*, produced 38 televised ads between July 7th and October 25th of 2016. Through negative character attacks and strategic emotional appeals, Clinton's campaign had an ineffective ad strategy for the 2016 general election. In this study, an analysis of this 16-week period will begin by an examination of rhetorical strategies used within Clinton's 38 television ads and a discussion of the distribution and circulation of the advertisements and the reception by viewers will take place.

The paper will conclude by contrasting Clinton's ineffective ad strategies with President Trump's effective campaign strategies, in which the results will reveal that Trump's campaign strategically directed negative ads accordingly (ad targeting and micro-targeting), tactics that helped propel him to victory. Trump's campaign targeted thousands of negative campaign ads which in effect brought voters to the polls.

The Clinton Campaign: Hillary for America

Hillary for America produced 38 television ads between July 2016 and October 2016. A coding analysis of the Clinton ads indicates that her campaign primarily used negative, character-based content and produced strategic emotional appeals such as fear, sadness, and anger as an advertising strategy. Only ten ads were predominantly issue or policy focused ads, while the other 28 were character focused ads; 21 out of 38 of Clinton's television ads were fear-mongering ads, that showcased apocalyptic visions of desperation (See Figure 2). A majority of Clinton's ads overtly attacked Trump; her attacks addressed Trump's temperament and intelligence by frequently using the words

and images of Trump as ammunition. “Role Models” was Clinton's most highly circulated ad on both TV and digital markets. The ad played more than 15,000 times on TV, and generated 1,550,000 views on YouTube; the ad is an exemplar of the Clinton attack strategy. Using sound bites and raw footage from Trump’s primary campaign, “Role Models” depicts Donald Trump as an irrational and inappropriate candidate, dangerous for children and society at large. Unlike negative, fear-mongering, apocalyptic visions of desperation, ads that appeal to our desire for transcendence and connectedness are generally positive and uplifting. They tap into a deeply human sense of longing, hope, and desire for a deeply spiritual communal connection, which transcends the isolation and selfishness of individualism. This ad attempts to blatantly contrast the apocalyptic violations as the ad flashes images of innocent children quietly witnessing Donald Trump saying outrageous, sexist, demeaning remarks such cursing at a New Hampshire rally, and mocking a disabled journalist. As these clips play, the ad shows the children consuming his perilous messages. At the end of the ad, Clinton is contrasted to Trump as a symbol of joy and optimism, Clinton is shown smiling, dressed in white and surrounded by light.

Trump’s ableist messages are not a kind lesson for children, nor are they a positive message for our most impressionable population. Additional ads represented an implicit attack on Trump, juxtaposing him as the negative counterpart to Clinton’s positive character. Ads such as “Just One,” “Someplace,” and “Americas Bully” served as part of a series of comparative attack ads questioning Trump’s fitness. The ads addressed Trump’s temperament and intelligence, contrasting him with Clinton’s moral character, government experience, and steady nature. In attacking Trump's characters and improprieties, the ads primarily appealed to emotions of fear, sadness, anger, and concern.

Clinton’s ad strategy mimicked the broad strategy of her campaign: a cohesive narrative of painting Trump as an unfit, erratic, bigoted candidate who poses a threat to the

country, and Clinton as the strong moral leader, fighting for the most vulnerable members of society. Although she spent a large sum of money on negative campaign ads, more than Trump's campaign did, she still lost the election. Clinton did induce fear and anxiety in the American people, but Trump had the upper hand; the amount of money she spent producing ads featuring Trump's unprecedented comments didn't move the needle.

Trump announced his candidacy so far ahead of time (June 16, 2015) that from the moment he announced his candidacy for president, he set the tone for his campaign, telling supporters gathered at Trump Tower in New York City that the country had become "a dumping ground for everybody else's problems." Calling for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, Trump singled out Mexican immigrants for criticism, saying that Mexico is not sending their "best" people across the border. By the time Clinton's campaign released their ads, Americans were used to Trump's outlandish comments. At that point, Trump had already said hundreds of outrageous remarks, and Americans became immune to Trump's words; Clinton's ads were just a repetition of what Americans already knew. She hyper-focused on pointing out the obvious. Additionally, Clinton's campaign failed to use a full range of message strategies to contrast her policies with Trump's and to bolster her own image through her campaign ads (See Figure 3). The Clinton campaign put all its advertising and messaging eggs in one basket. Her ads were simply a variation on the theme that Trump is a narcissist, a victimizer, sexual predator, race-baiting demagogue, tax dodger and a wannabe-authoritarian strong man who seems eager to trample on the Constitution. In a way, Hillary Clinton's campaign shamed people who supported Trump; Clinton's campaign discipline gave off the impression that there was something wrong with you if you could vote for a man like Donald Trump. The Clinton campaign's use of its vast ad budget to hammer away at Trump for being an ignorant Washington outsider ran out of steam.

In terms of ad spending, Clinton dominated the airwaves. Advertising Analytics for NBC cites that *Hillary for*

America, Clinton's campaign, spent nearly \$142 million dollars on TV and radio ads leading up to election day. Clinton's campaign spent a large sum of money on advertising. Meanwhile, Kantar Media/CMAG for Bloomberg Analytics indicates Clinton's spending could have been as high as \$172 million dollars. In addition to *Hillary for America's* spending, Super PACs and other outside support groups have spent an additional \$103 million dollars. Combined, ad spending in support of the Clinton Campaign was three times more than the money spent on Trump's ad campaign, which, ultimately, in the end didn't work out in her favor.

Some would argue that Clinton still won the popular vote, but you don't win the presidency by getting the most votes, you have to win the majority of electoral votes. Hillary Clinton lost the White House, despite winning the popular vote, to Republican Donald Trump on the strength of about 100,000 votes in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Clinton's unexpected losses came in states in which she failed to air ads. The Clinton campaign aired three times as many ads as Trump and his supporters over the course of the general election. Despite that advantage, the Democrats left several key states essentially unprotected on the airwaves as the race ended. Clinton's campaign and outside groups supporting it aired more television ads in Omaha during the closing weeks than in Michigan and Wisconsin combined. The Clinton campaign was planning for a blowout, they ran almost no ads in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Virginia. Clinton's campaign relied too much on poll data. Polls showed Clinton had the upper hand in those swing states, thus Clinton's campaign felt that they didn't need to air ads in those states and felt confident enough to pull the ads from the airwaves. In fact, Justin Barasky, communications director for Priorities USA, pro-Clinton Super Pac group said, "We know, at the moment, these are tough states for Donald Trump and there isn't as much of a need for us to air ads there." Clinton's campaign neglected the Rust Belt states, where the most electoral votes are, spending more effort on television advertising aimed at suburban swing voters, she tried to

appeal to moderate Republican women and white-collar voters by showing how obnoxious Trump is, rather than on resonating with the working class and framing Trump as an out-of-touch billionaire who could not resonate with regular people's struggles.

The Trump Campaign: Donald J. Trump for President

Like Clinton, Trump's subject matter echoed Clinton's character-based arguments and evoked fear and anger as primary emotions. Trump had been using the "Crooked Hillary" theme all year. Although Trump's campaign strategy focused on denigrating his opponent's character, unlike Hillary who stuck to rallying the base and attacking Trump's character, Donald Trump focused on creating issue-based negative ads, which handed him a presidential victory. Trump's campaign stayed true to the affective intelligence theory. Trump touched on policy issues that he knew would evoke an emotional response of fear, anger anxiety and overall concern from older and blue-collar whites, evangelical Christians, and non-urban voters who in polls have consistently expressed both the most economic pessimism and cultural unease about a changing America (See Figure 1). Trump rode the wave, casting himself as a workingman's candidate virtually unopposed; he coordinated his campaign with external events of consequence so that he could benefit from the additional media coverage elected by the newsworthy event. Investing much of his ad resources in key states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, and North Carolina, which together has 82 electoral votes, he additionally aired ads in Nevada, Arizona, Wisconsin, California, and Colorado. Trump was unstoppable.

Trump styled himself as a blunt-speaking champion of the blue-collar American. For example, Trump's campaign released the "Deals" advertisement, that capitalized on the economic anxieties of the American public. "Today our jobs are gone. Factories are closed... Donald Trump knows business and he'll fight for the American worker," the narrator stated. Trump promised to renegotiate NAFTA and cut taxes, and bring jobs back to America, among other economic proposals. This triggered

an emotional response from blue-collar workers, farmers, coal miners, auto workers, and the average working-class citizen. This triggered fear in what may have caused them to believe that without Trump as president, jobs would continue to become scarce. The Trump campaign recognized the need to maintain and grow support from blue-collar and union workers, particularly in swing states such as Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, thus touching base on issues that optimized these individual's self-interests, an affective intelligence theory tactic.

Trump also talked about the highly emotive topic of immigration and was able to connect, mobilize, and at the same time antagonize a large spectrum of people that felt threatened. In Trump's first TV commercial of the general election "Two Americas: Immigration," Trump masterfully paints a dichotomous image of the prospective Clinton administration versus that of the Trump administration. A narrator declared that "In Hillary Clinton's America, the system stays rigged against Americans. Syrian refugees flood in. Illegal immigrants convicted of committing crimes get to stay, collecting Social Security benefits, skipping the line...." In contrast, "Donald Trump's America is secure. Terrorists and dangerous criminals kept out. The border secure. Our families safe...." In recent decades white Americans have been told that they will soon be the minority race in America, and most haven't taken this information quite well. When members of a historically dominant group feel threatened, they go through some interesting psychological twists and turns to make themselves feel okay again. First, they get nostalgic and try to protect the status quo however they can. Trump was able to gain support from these fearful and anxious individuals. In the ad, the narrator says "The system stays rigged against Americans. Syrian refugees flood in. Illegal immigrants convicted of committing crimes get to stay. Collecting Social Security benefits, skipping the line. Our border open. It's more of the same, but worse."

Donald Trump spent less on advertising than his competitor Clinton did; Trump leaned on free media instead. In essence, Clinton was paying Manhattan prices

for the square footage on your smartphone's screen, while Trump was paying Detroit prices. Trump used provocative content to stoke social media buzz, and he was better able to drive likes, comments, and shares than Clinton. His bids received a boost from Facebook's click model, effectively winning him more media for less money. The Trump campaign leveraged lookalike audiences by targeting likely Clinton voters and micro targeted people who were most likely to show up to vote for him.

Trump's campaign seeded the audience's assembly line with content about Clinton that was engaging but dispiriting. By micro-targeting negative advertisements, Trump campaigns were more precisely able to reach a target population, increasing the persuasive influence of the negative ads.

Conclusion

Political advertisements attempt to have an impact on the way you view the politician and the issues they are for or against. The most common form of advertising politically is through programming on television. One popular strategy used in political ads nowadays is the incorporation of terror management theory to evoke fear in the viewers by what is being portrayed. A study by Niven found that voter turnout increased in a mayoral election among those who received negative campaign mail. In their study of the 1998 senatorial elections, Jackson and Carsey also attributed increased voter turnout to negative television advertisements and found that positive advertisements have no significant effect on turnout. For candidates who want voters to reevaluate their political decisions, or to take voters off their default mode, this side of the scholarly debate suggests this can be accomplished by fostering an emotional response in voters. Negative or attack advertisements and messages are one obvious manifestation of this goal and this was seen in the 2016 presidential election. Staying true to the affective intelligence theory, Trump strategically outperformed tone-deaf Clinton in advertising. There is no doubt that candidate Donald Trump was erratic, but Donald Trump the advertiser was a genius. Trump the advertiser was all for producing highly

effective message disciplines for the audience. Trump aired a more typical number of policy-focused ads compared with past elections, whereas Hillary Clinton's campaign ran TV ads that had less to do with policy than any other presidential candidate in the past four presidential races. The Clinton campaign overwhelmingly chose to focus on Trump's personality and fitness for office, leaving very little room for discussion in advertising on the reasons why Clinton herself was the better choice, and leaving little room for her to advertise her policy goals/plans.

Trump provided explicit policy-based contrasts, highlighting his strengths and Clinton's weaknesses, a strategy that research suggests voters find helpful in decision-making. Additionally, Trump's campaign directed his negative advertisements accordingly; Trump's campaign focused on micro-targeting negative advertisements. Trump's campaign was able to sow instability and feed the content to specific masses, tactics that helped propel Trump to victory.

These strategic differences may have meant that Clinton was more prone to voter backlash and did nothing to overcome the media's lack of focus on Clinton's policy knowledge, especially for residents of Michigan and Wisconsin, in particular, who were receiving policy-based (and specifically economically-focused) messaging from Trump. Clinton's misallocation of funds (both hyper-targeting on local cable and advertising in non-traditional battlegrounds like Arizona rather than in the Midwest, for example), Clinton's lack of an effective ad distribution strategy, and a lack of policy messaging in advertising hurt Clinton enough to the point where she lost to Trump by 76 electoral votes. It is evident then that negative ads are effective in that they do increase voter turnout or at least have some effect on the voter turnout rate. Presidential campaign ads are effective only if they evoke negativity through character-based ads and policy issues-based ads, when targeted at appropriate audiences.

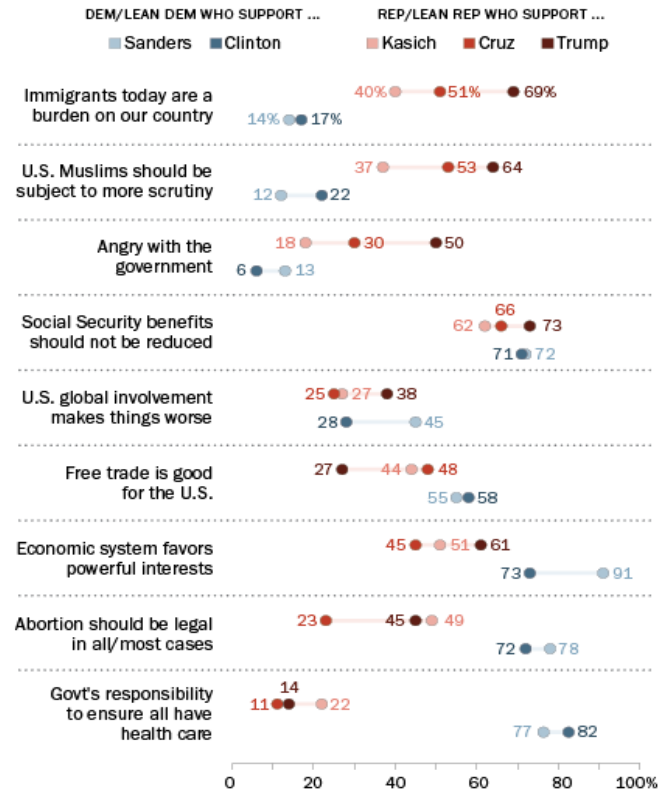
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Appendix

How the voters view major 2016 issues



Source: Survey conducted March 17-27, 2016. Based on registered voters.

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Figure 1: How the Voters Viewed Major 2016 Issues

Figure 2: Chart of Clinton's Negative Ads

Advertisement Name	Content	Emotion
Role Models	Character	Sadness and Fear
Confessions of a Republican	Character	Fear
Someplace	Character	Anger
Unfit	Character / Issue	Fear
Absolutely	Character	Fear
Just One	Character / Issue	Fear
Shirts	Character	Sadness
Hat	Character / Issue	Anger
Everything	Character	Anger; Sadness and Fear
Sacrifice	Character	Sadness and Anger
Agree	Character	Anger and Sadness
Low Opinion	Character	Anger and Sadness
Mirrors	Character	Fear
Investigation	Character	Fear
Silo	Character / Issue	Fear
Values	Character	Fear and Sadness
Respected	Character	Anger
Nevadans	Issue	Sadness
Investigation	Character	Fear

CULTURE AND SELF





AN EXPLORATION OF THE HEADSCARF THROUGH AN
EASTERN AND WESTERN LENS

by Aya Al-Alami

This thesis seeks to analyze and explore the headscarf for Muslim women throughout the Eastern and Western worlds. Views from either side are equally demanding on women – from France’s ban through a secularist, “*laïcité*,” standpoint, to the Middle East’s enforcing of the scarf, equating it to purity. Either approach is harmful to a woman’s identity; as France’s extreme secularism begins to borderline Islamophobia and racism, while the Middle East’s enforcement allows for a loss of identity. Research through the paper will focus on the question of choice in the context of the headscarf, and how it affects Muslim women’s identities. It will attempt to assess how they seek to individualize themselves in societies that have an inherent problem with Muslim women.

As a product of living in a patriarchal world, both men and women endure emotional and physical suffering. While men’s suffering may be attributed to their own doing, or self-inflicted, others may very well be victims to the system. On the other hand, women may be “footsoldiers of the patriarchy” (Eltahawy, 2018) and/or victims of it.

Footsoldiers of the patriarchy internalize what they learned from the system in place, giving them an illusion of control and grandeur, feeling entitled to impose its harmful effects on others. In this case, as is the case with men who benefit from the patriarchy, our society is hindered from being able to move forward. It negatively affects the lives of women and their psychological being.

In this paper, I will present two sides of the same issue where Muslim women will be the focal point. From either side of the world, Muslim women, specifically and recently, are the target of the patriarchy. On one side, we have governments, institutions, and civilians telling women to cover up, whether it be just the hijab, the niqab, or even the burqa. They are told that women are impure if they do not wear the hijab, that they will attract general negativity from men (from verbal harassment to sexual assault). Their response to these demands about their attire can affect their status in society, their family's reputation, and determine if they will get married or get a job. On the other side of the world, Muslim women, who wear the hijab, are told to remove it to unleash their identity. According to those who have adopted this mentality, they believe that by wearing a hijab, you are hiding a core part of yourself: your head and your face – what is most essential to identifying a human being. Evolutionarily, humans learn to trust one another when they are able to see each other's faces and open palms. The West also believes women who wear the hijab are forced to wear it, as an oppressive symbol rather than an individual choice.

While exploring both stances from either side of the world, I also want to explore what women themselves want. This is where the world does not do this issue justice: ask Muslim women what they want, why they wear the hijab, why they don't, and their general experience as Muslim women in their environment. Looking at it from

outside the context of Islam, we see other sects of religions and how they modernized their rules to fit today's world. They allow women to lead prayer, host sermons, and have a more active and vocal role within their religious community. This will be reflected throughout my paper, as I want to draw attention to how scholars of Islam may contribute to "modernizing" the religion and allow it to pertain to the rules of modern life.

Within this paper, I would also like to explore personal stories, as a means of providing background to my intense passion for this subject. My equally Eastern and Western identity has put me in the middle of this discussion at many different points in my life. In my mid-twenties, I feel as though my friends, family, and I lived through many experiences that further complicated this ongoing issue for us. This paper is allowing me to finally vocalize my stance on the issue, while providing closure. My future career will involve me advocating for women's rights in the Middle East – I cannot write about change without participating in it.

France

France is visible in targeting women who wear the hijab, making it difficult for them to simply exist. France's headscarf controversies seem to stem from racism, secularism, individualism, and sexuality. Their form of secularism, called *laïcité*, takes on an extreme view of all religions. *Laïcité* "refers not simply to separation of church and state but to the role of the state in protecting individuals from the claims of religion" (Scott, 2007). While this may sound fair in theory, it is difficult to execute it without the use of force. People do not respond well to force, and attempting to create a society in which there are no differences allows for a new set of problems to arise. As social creatures, humans are naturally expressive. This includes how they physically present themselves, and

whether they wish to publicly display their religious background via jewelry or clothes.

Therefore, those in France protecting Muslim women from a lack of individualism are being inconsistent and unfair in their Western interpretation of a religion foreign to them. They insist “the headscarf was an endorsement of submission, an abandonment of individuality” (Scott, 2007). Shelina Zahra, a writer for Al Jazeera, states that if people think every woman who wears the hijab doesn’t do it out of free will, then they “violate a core principle of feminism where we uplift a woman’s right to control her own destiny by trusting her ability to choose” (Zahra, 2013).

The secular prohibition of hijab as an encroachment on the Muslim woman’s “freedom” is ultimately about Westerners not grasping the true concept of choosing modesty behind the hijab and not trusting Muslim women to make the right choices for themselves. This allows for radical feminist groups in Europe – namely Femen, whose headquarters happen to be in Paris, France – to push a political, social, and anti-religious agenda onto men and women who do not align with what they believe. With their slogan being, “*Nos seins, nos armes!* (Our breasts, our weapons!),” its tactics of shocking traditional figures such as priests and women with hijab by appearing nude in public, is without a doubt not applicable nor convincing to many women around the world (Femen.org 2018).

This faux feminism has attracted the spotlight, removing it from real issues women and men face in which feminism stands for to help fix (Crosby, 2014). The elimination of religion is a privilege within itself, where a country like France that is not predominantly Muslim has the leverage to achieve. A woman who chooses to wear the hijab makes a commitment to it, a topic to be visited later on. By establishing a rule knowing it does not apply to all its

citizens, France participates in othering Muslim women. Although they treat Muslim men with the same animosity, with “depictions of Arab men associated with criminality and sex, it was Arab women who piqued the imagination of French colonists” (Scott, 2007). Muslim women who wear the hijab are more easily identifiable, thus making them a more obvious target to France’s laws on banning the hijab in public institutions. Those who side with governments and lawmakers taking a stance against the hijab, labelling it as oppressive, fail to understand that they are being oppressive by insisting the removal of it. This imposition of cultural hegemony on Muslim women in France makes them feel like second-class citizens, enforcing their inferiority not only from a sexist perspective, but a cultural one as well.

The Middle East

With Islam being the second-largest and one of the fastest growing religions (Liu, 2018), Muslims spread all around the world as a product of globalization. This attracts more conflict in areas where they are not the majority. However, even where Muslim women are the majority, they are left with a similar treatment of not being trusted to make choices for themselves. Muslim scholars range in extremism according to what country they are in, their political background, and their social background. Before delving into the discussion of the Middle East’s patriarchal stance, it is important to identify the literal meaning of the hijab, a veil worn by some Muslim women “in the presence of any male outside of their immediate families” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hijab>). The hijab is typically advised to be worn by women after they go through puberty, as a way to assert their womanhood and enter adulthood. Adolescence is naturally around the time when boys and girls become curious about sexuality in all its forms. Thus, Islam has asserted modesty of both genders,

and created parts of the body that are meant by the religion to be covered, called “awrah.”

The awrah of a man refers to the part of the body from the navel to the knees. The awrah for women is more complicated, as it varies between prayer, in front of her husband, among women, in front of male children, and in front of men she cannot marry (including family members). A hijab typically covers the hair, neck and chest, but some women go as far as covering half or all their face. Most contemporary scholars agree that women’s covering of the face was not mandated by any form of religious text. However, scholars like Al-Razi “held that by covering her face a married woman made clear that she was not available” (Intimate parts in Islam).

It is important to note that even throughout the Middle East, there are different levels of insistence on the hijab. The Gulf holds a firmer stance than the Levant, but holy Muslim cities in the Levant hold firm stances as well. It is mandatory for women in Saudi Arabia and Iran to wear the hijab, and it is likely that the West’s extreme reaction stems from these minority cases. While the impacts of forcing women to wear the hijab are indisputable, they do remain the minority in the context of whether women have a choice in wearing it or not.

Written texts of Islam are debated on whether the Quran and Hadith display any explicit words on women wearing the hijab. It was understood that the Prophet Mohammad’s wives covered their hair and dressed modestly. The question, then becomes, is the hijab an invention and a product of social and cultural mores in the Middle East and the Muslim world? There is an account of a story, as explained by Muslim author, Sheema Khan:

Shortly before his death, the Prophet travelled with a trusted companion named AlFadl. During their trip, they passed a group of women. AlFadl began

to stare at the face of one who is described as beautiful. The Prophet physically turned AlFadl's face away. He stared again. The Prophet repeated his gesture. He did not order the woman to cover her face. He placed the onus on the man to refrain from gazing, in compliance with Quranic directives. (Khan, 2009)

This story displays a lack of blame on the woman from the Prophet, who is regarded as the most important human figure in Islam, and instead allowing AlFadl to carry the responsibility of turning away in silence. This is important for both societies, where both are quick to blame women for harassment on all ends of the spectrum. While the focus is usually on the woman and what she was wearing, where she was, and who she was with, attention should be turned to men and how they are responding to women going about their daily lives. Unfortunately, this does not seem to represent the typical, modern-day Middle Eastern man. Blame is easily thrown on the woman.

History of Modesty

Modesty has always been encouraged from the context of religion, in addition to the religion of Islam. "Many Mormons, Amish, Orthodox Jews and Christians promote modest appearance, among men and women, to various degrees," according to Sarah Quinn of NPR. Certain religions assign certain clothes to be worn by both men and women. It is important to question why religions have a history of promoting modesty. Why is the human body, seen as God-given by those who practice religion, necessary to hide? Perhaps it is a tactic used to control, placing more rules on women. These rules requiring more physical veiling of women subconsciously affects their identities and their exposure to the world.

In the context of Islam, it is widely disputed as to who and where it is said that women should wear the veil.

Some believe it is simply God's word, as briefly mentioned in the Quran:

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, [a list of relatives], [household servants], or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye Believers! turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain Bliss. (24:31)

Others believe it was Umar ibn al Khattab who issued the ruling of the scarf, as there is a *hadith* explaining that Umar issued the Prophet's wives cover up so they are not targeted. It is widely debated and heavily misunderstood, as some argue the demand for wearing the hijab applies to Prophet Muhammad's wives only.

Men have a lower list of demands within religion. Though on the other hand, religions tend to treat men as though they cannot control themselves around women. This may produce a self-fulfilling prophecy for men, as they may act that way for the sake of its easiness, and blame religion as reasoning or an excuse. Not only can false interpretations cause harmful gender divisions, but they also help men maintain that feeling of superiority towards women – even if they attack women verbally, physically, or sexually. There are countries in the Middle East that will punish a woman for being sexually assaulted or raped, including forcing her to marry her rapist. A woman is seen as impure when she is no longer a virgin prior to marriage, thus justifying forced marriage to her rapist. These social standards and political policies may seem off-topic, but they

coincide and connect with forcing women to cover themselves up and connecting a woman's social status to her body.

Diversity in Muslim Women's Stances

Since both sides of the world seem to have an inherent problem with Muslim women, it is important to hear stories from the source, Muslim women, directly. Though Islam does not carry a strict stance on the hijab, it does carry a lack of progressive views when it comes to women. For example, while Jordan insists they are all equal before the law, there are still gender inequalities that stem from traditional gender roles. Women are expected to marry early and tend to domestic responsibilities. There is a presumption that men, in turn, will be the sole financial providers for the family. Also, "because men are free to divorce and stop supporting their wives if they are 'disobedient,' another law created an obligatory fund for divorced women, guaranteeing them a settlement from their ex-husband." (Alami, 2010) In Egypt, honor killings, sexual assault, and female genital mutilation happen relatively regularly. A staggering 98% of foreign women and 83% of native women said they had been sexually harassed in Egypt (BBC, 2012). Women who wear the hijab and the burqa in Egypt are also victims of assault (Estrin, 2011). Nevertheless, laws vary vastly from state to state, and it is not clear whether the Quran or Hadith express support for these greatly specific and patriarchal rules that place women at a disadvantage.

The feminist author, and a Muslim who once wore the hijab, Mona Eltahawy calls for sexual revolution in the Middle East (Eltahawy, 2016). This includes a political and cultural revolution, as they are very closely intertwined with Islam. The revolution has to start from the people themselves and funnel itself up to the lawmakers. Since it may be hard to reverse years of patriarchal rules of society,

it may be useful to elect more progressive men and women into Middle Eastern governments to issue less severe stances on women, and the hijab specifically.

The issue of policies and attitudes about the hijab ultimately stem from interpretations from the East and West. Some women choose to wear the hijab for the sole purpose of empowerment, like Nadiya Takolia who says, “Wearing the hijab doesn't have to be about religious dedication. For me, it is political, feminist and empowering...It is me telling the world that my femininity is not available for public consumption. I am taking control of it, and I don't want to be part of a system that reduces and demeans women” (Takolia, 2012).

This greatly independent stance turns the idea of Muslim women as victims of hijab on its head. Instead of playing into the role of victimhood, Takolia chose a route of direct and personal control, where she can decide her intention of wearing the hijab and how she wants people from both Eastern and Western worlds to view her.

There are also other feminist Muslims who are conducting this sexual revolution by altering key rules of Islamic worship and conduct. Muslim female scholar Amina Wadud, who converted to Islam at the age of twenty, was the first woman to lead a mixed congregational prayer and Friday sermon. This is very rare for women, and could carry penalties in many Muslim countries. Further, her stance on the hijab is summed up by her quote, “If you think the difference between heaven and hell is 45 inches of material, boy will you be surprised” (Hamdah, 2018).

Directing Attention to Men

Men from both backgrounds certainly have been detrimental to women with this issue. Nevertheless, they can and should become allies towards the cause of women's personal and social freedom. If society is collectively able to unlearn certain mentalities and begin a journey of self-

awareness, the situation of women's oppression could be greatly improved. Realistically, what women can do immediately is to continue to voice their opinions, stories, and experiences. This can be done in a way to include men in the conversation, and understand how they can be of help. With most men silent at present, they are doing more harm than benefitting either the Eastern or Western oppressions Muslim women deal with.

Men's historical upper-hand and leadership roles illustrate a sense of entitlement that allows them to believe they can tell women what to wear or what not to wear. This is present in cultures around the world, and certainly not limited to France or the Middle East. Because women's freedom and attire is a global issue, more awareness towards solutions must constantly be discussed, so humanity can move forward as a whole.

Personal Experiences

Coming from a Palestinian background, first-generation American, my family has attempted to hold onto its religion. My siblings and I were sent to a private Muslim school from kindergarten through 12th grade. My sister and I had a completely different experience than my brother – literally universes apart in our experiences. As young girls, we were told more women will reside in hell because we assumedly get our eyebrows done (apparently prohibited in Islam) and gossip more than men do. I grew up with teachers tracking the number of days I would be on my period, so they would know if I was skipping out on afternoon prayer. I was told I don't love Allah because I don't wear a scarf. We were regularly and openly judged by the teachers and administration for whatever they found out about our private lives through our social media accounts, how we physically present ourselves, and the length of our uniform skirt (despite it being an all girls' school). The

personal side effects of things I endured in that school include a psychiatric diagnosis of trauma.

These experiences led me to realize that religion was being inappropriately used to push a patriarchal agenda, causing me to temporarily lose trust in my own religion. It is certainly a terrifying thought process and experience for a teenager, feeling too foreign to live in the United States (U.S.) and too foreign to live in the Middle East.

But 9/11 defined my central experiences with respect to my identity as a Muslim in the U.S. Friends and family of all ages either adopted wearing the hijab as a means of defying the tactless remarks on Muslims, or others removed the hijab to maintain safety in a world of unknown threats. Perhaps these events, in addition to living away from the Middle East, swayed me from wearing the headscarf. My mother and most women in my family in her generation wear it. For them, the hijab is a matter of fulfilling God's word – they are not necessarily interested in an empowerment perspective. My sister, on the hand, may have taken it off as a way of aligning more with her true identity – which felt more empowering for her.

Growing up with these issues and questions clouding my thinking forced me into an early, painful journey of self-awareness, questioning my existence, identity, religion, family, and morals. For Arab-Americans like me, there is an added layer of race and racialization by the majority community. Some would say I am white while others say I am “white-passing,” and having to check off “White” on the U.S. census documents while being treated with discrimination, or “not quite white” (Samhan 1999) further complicates my experience. Lastly, being Palestinian and growing up feeling as if I never had a geographical land to call home allowed for greater complications of identity.

Conclusion

The hijab is a multilayered and multifaceted concept within itself. All of the world's major religions call for modesty, but the focus on Islam provides more insight to the harsher rules incorporated with the hijab. Things go wrong when religion and politics are mixed, which ironically is the case in both the Eastern and Western worlds. Around the globe, the issue of the hijab ultimately is ingrained in men and women's minds, making it a social and cultural issue as well. The underlying patriarchal ideology behind politics and religion seems to surround Muslim women with hostility. Though difficult to reach a solution, an important step would be to listen to the voices of as many Muslim women as possible, elect more into office – since it will remain a political issue – and encourage more conversations about the hijab that enable Muslim women to find male allies. The more people understand how simple a choice wearing the hijab could be, the more the world can focus on the experience women are facing around the world.

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HOW CONTEXT AND ATTITUDE TOWARD ASSIMILATION
OF IMMIGRANTS AFFECT THEIR SUCCESS

by Samuel Cashin

The stories of many immigrants to America is well-documented throughout literature. The difficulties and work immigrants have to overcome to integrate with a new culture is admirable. Often a new language has to be learned on top of all the different social and cultural norms that are different from their home country. This process of assimilation can sometimes trigger an identity crisis, as immigrants now have to balance the identity, they had back in their home country with the one they created through immigration. This conflict is convoluted and hard to visualize as a whole, however the medium of literature places a new light on the struggles that immigrants go through on a daily basis. Two such memoirs, *The Prince of Los Cocuyos* by Richard Blanco and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, portray this struggle effectively through their characters and their interactions with their changing surroundings as immigrants. Specifically, the characters of Riqui Blanco and his family in *The Prince of Los Cocuyos* and Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* are prime examples of immigrants struggling

to assimilate into American culture, which are subsequently hampered by racial prejudice and intolerance. Changez ultimately fails in his attempt to assimilate into American culture not only due to the fallout of the 9/11 attacks but his own hubris and denial of his past in Pakistan. Meanwhile, the character of Riqui is eventually able to successfully assimilate due to his recognition of his Cuban culture and acceptance of his dual identity as a Cuban-American man.

Changez is an immigrant who comes to America in the hopes of making a better life for himself than he could have living in Pakistan. He initially gets accepted into Princeton, which he refers to as “a dream come true” (Hamid 3). He comments that the non-American students often “tended to do better than the Americans...I reached my senior year without having received a single B” (Hamid 3). His mindset in his assimilation is due to being a foreigner or immigrant; he “was expected to contribute out talents to your society, the society we were joining” (Hamid 4). With the initial awe and the splendor Changez thought he could achieve in America, he took to assimilating quite well. People commented on his attitude to assimilate and even described him as “hungry” in his drive to better himself and his stance in the world. However, this drive to better himself is a key factor in what ultimately leads to his failure to fully assimilate into American society. The drive causes him to give up a lot of his identity as a Pakistani man with his appearance being the most apparent change.

Aesthetics are very important to Changez, so much that he goes through great lengths throughout the memoir to keep the façade that he is from a wealthy family. While being interviewed for his job at Underwood Samson, Changez is hard pressed about his past living in Pakistan. He comments that his reality while at Princeton was “two choices: pretend all is well or work hard to restore things to

what they were. I chose both” (Hamid 12). Changez rejects his past and puts on a mask of a man from a wealthy family. This can be equated to how the attitude towards people like Changez and Muslims changes in America after 9/11. A mask was put on by many people in the general to show that they were tolerant and accepting of Muslims, however there was in reality deep rooted disdain. Elora Chowdhury, part of the faculty at the University of Massachusetts Boston, comments on this distinction, stating that “Changez’s status in the United States changes from one of successful immigrant to suspected enemy” (Chowdhury 68). Having forgotten his past, his whole identity hinges on being in an elite member of American society. His job and standing make Changez believe that he has truly assimilated. He highlights that his “Pakistaniness was invisible, cloaked by my suit, by my expense account, and—most of all—by my companions” (Hamid 71). An additional comment made by Chowdhury about Changez’s behavior, states that “Changez was almost consumed by American production and consumption” (Chowdhury 69). His determination to become an elite member of American society caused him to spiral down into a hole of American products and identity, from his suit to his blazer. He hides his past in the hopes of fitting in more and assimilating better, but it actually has the reverse effect. The depth of integrating into American society went against odds with Changez. He ends up with no other identity to fall back on once he is kicked out of the circles of the American elite.

In contrast to Changez, Riqui goes about assimilating into American culture through a more drawn-out process. The chronicle of Riqui’s life covers his life as an immigrant from a young child to an adult. This is in contrast to Changez, who immigrates when he is already an adult. The process that Riqui goes through to fully assimilate into American culture is helped by the fact that it

took him so long to do so. As a child, Riqui initially tries to hide the fact that he is an immigrant, much like Changez tries to hide his past from his colleagues and classmates. Riqui says to himself while buying chicken in a supermarket, “I dropped a can in my cart and began strolling leisurely through the store, pretending I was as grown-up and American as everyone there” (Blanco 15). Like Changez, he tries to blend himself into American culture to fit in.

Another factor that helps Riqui successfully assimilate into American culture is that his family is very close. In an article written by Rodolfo Bonnin, a research consultant for the University of Missouri—Kansas City, he states that “any potential negative effect of acculturation is thwarted as a result of intact family characteristics, namely cohesion” (Bonnin 474). Throughout the memoir, Riqui is in close proximity and contact with his family who help keep him rooted in his Cuban heritage. Additionally, Riqui is able to assimilate thanks to his acceptance of his Cuban heritage through his experiences at El Cocuyito, a general store that he works at in his adolescent years.

While at El Cocuyito, Riqui is progressively exposed to his Cuban heritage through his interactions with the Cuban immigrants that frequent the store. One such character, Felipe, often recounts his experiences living in Cuban to Riqui. This slowly instills in him a pride in having Cuban ancestry. He describes these stories as “a Havana I could touch, a Cuba I could hold in my hands” (Blanco 163). He begins to pick up different Cuban slang as he continues working at El Cocuyito. This is because “after so many afternoons hablando mierda with Nunez, and buzzed on thimble-size swigs of café, his talents rubbed off on me” (Blanco 165). He begins to embrace his Cuban culture through the unusual route of learning to make fun of people in a “Cuban” way. For example, a patron of the store “looked like una tripa, and that’s what I called him—

the Intestine” (Blanco 165). Riqui’s transformation as an immigrant is highlighted in his visit to Yetta, an elderly Jewish lady who travels the world trying to find a place where she belongs. Yetta considers herself not being solely from one place but a multitude of places (Blanco 230). This is contrary to most other characters that Riqui interacts with. During a conversation that takes place between the two of them, Riqui realizes “I never thought of myself as a gringo, though sometimes I wished I were” (Blanco 232). His realization shows that he considers himself a Cuban, while at the same time others around him consider him a “gringo” or Americanized.

Additionally, his internal identity as both Cuban and American is explained through an article written by Lisandro Pérez, an associate professor and chair of the sociology department at Florida International University, states it “is unlikely that the Cuban community in the United States will escape the usual intergenerational shift toward greater acculturation and assimilation” (Pérez 136). Further, this shift is embodied in Riqui who while retaining much of his Cuban culture through interactions with his family. He also retains his Cubanism through what he learns at El Cocuyito from Don Gustavo and others, eventually fully assimilating to become a Cuban-American man. This is confirmed when Pérez accepts that “English is probably the principal language among Cubans who have lived all or most of their lives in the United States” (Pérez 136). Riqui uses predominantly English in his interactions with those not of his immediate family like Ariel, a Cuban immigrant who arrived from across the Gulf of Mexico. Ariel is similar to Riqui in many ways, due to having learned English and considering himself not fully Cuban but a “cubanso” or New Cuban.

At the very end of the memoir, there is imagery that confirms the success of Riqui’s assimilation. After

having pushed Ariel into the water, he describes holding Ariel as being like “Ariel Blanco, Riqui Jimenez—we were one...we were cubanazo and gringo, one and the same” (Blanco 247). Having come to the realization that he is very much like Ariel in some respects, he acknowledges being both Cuban and American. This acknowledgment is the reason why Riqui is successful in assimilating as an immigrant and is in the climactic moment in the development of his character.

The plights of both Cuban immigrants and Muslim immigrants to America are very similar in many ways. Both Riqui and Changez had to work hard to learn the cultural differences between their native countries and America. However, in Riqui’s case, he was able to internalize the American culture through the support of his family structure. In his study of immigration to America, Rodolfo Bonnin states, “the strength of the family’s cohesion and structure help in navigating the demands of the new culture” (Bonnin 467). This statement supports the claim that Riqui was successful in assimilating, but also explains why Changez failed to fully assimilate. Rather than rely on his family structure to help him with the new cultural changes that he experienced immigrating to America, he did the opposite. Changez almost outright rejected his family and any attempt to integrate them into his new life in America. Ironically, this was done in order to better help his family by potentially reclaiming some of the lost wealth and esteem they had in the past.

A counter argument could be made that Changez had a unique experience and outcome because his religion was also different than the predominantly Christian religion pervasive in America. Riqui and his family could have had an advantage in that they shared a religious connection to America. This can be offset by the fact that Riqui and his family were in part political refugees, while Changez

immigrated to the country through a presumed student Visa. The different ethnicities and religions that the characters have can be juxtaposed with each other into the more common experience of being an immigrant in a new country. Elora Chowdhury comments that “juxtaposition engenders a thinking through of race at the intersection of religion and ethnicity” (Chowdhury 77). Meaning Americans unfortunately put religion and ethnicity into their definition of what is a “race”. No matter how similar that race may be to the norm, if it is in any way different, they are ostracized from the greater populace, however intentional or unintentional that may be.

Chowdhury uses the examples of African Americans, even though they were Americanized for centuries, they are still discriminated against because of their race being different from others. She compares this to Changez being Pakistani and therefore part of the Muslim race, which faces the same discrimination thanks mostly to the events on 9/11. This change in opinion of Muslims was so sudden and stark that it was coined “Islamophobia” due to it being so widespread as well (Awan 525). Changez is ingrained in American society and thinks of himself as “American,” however he is subsequently ripped away from that identity through this catalyst for failure to fully assimilate. This is covered succinctly in Aysem Seval’s academic review of the memoir in what she calls the “discourse of tolerance” (Seval 103). Seval, part of the faculty at the University of Calgary, argues that the nature of tolerance, whether it be religious or racial, is hypocritical and in reality, shows the dysfunction of liberal discourse (Seval 122). She uses the Turkish word *başgörü*, which means “fair sight” or “seeing someone/something fairly” (Seval 120). The destruction of *başgörü* is what Changez faces after 9-11. By being unable to fall back on any identity that isn’t intertwined in being a part of elite American society, he

crumbles. Changez eventually loses his job and has to emigrate back to Pakistan where he becomes a teacher and is slowly radicalized. The more radicalized Changez becomes, the more of the American identity he created is lost. This spiral continues until he assimilates back into his old Pakistani identity, albeit a much more cynical one than he the original.

The work that these immigrants put in to successfully immigrate to America cannot be overlooked. The character of Riqui Blanco in *The Prince of Los Cocuyos* is able to successfully attempt to assimilate because of his realization that he is both Cuban and American. He does not try to stifle or deny his Cuban past and ancestry, but instead he chooses to embrace it alongside his new American identity. This is counter to Changez in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* who denies his past and ancestry as a Pakistani man in order to fully assimilate into American culture as an immigrant. Changez's failure is also due in part to his whole identity being rooted in his new life as part of the American elite. When that is taken away from him after 9/11, he immigrated back to Pakistan where he assimilates back into his old Pakistani culture. It is due to these facts that Changez is ultimately unsuccessful as he eventually changes his view of America from positive to negative due to his emigrating back to Pakistan and subsequent radicalization. Both memoirs serve to highlight the struggles of immigrants assimilating into the new country they have immigrated to, which allows the reader to better understand the plight of immigrants coming into the country by offering differing perspectives. These stories are based off of real-life experiences of the authors and therefore add more credibility to the lessons they attempt to impart upon their readers.

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POSITIVE EFFECTS OF PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

by Krist Adofo

All my life I have enjoyed playing video games. Nothing can destress and bring me happiness in a more relaxing way than lying in bed playing a video game. I have always believed video games to be all around good. However, in my childhood, I've heard about so much negative stigma around them. People have said things to me such as "video games are a bad habit" or "you're wasting your time," and even my favorite "they're ruining your mind." This is not and has never been true for me. I believe video games have positive psychological effects and have shaped who I am today.

There has always been a long-standing argument on the effects of video games on the brain. Many people have argued since the invention of video games, that they have bad effects and are doing things such as "spoiling the senses" or "rotting the brain." Not only are these arguments outdated, but there is significant evidence to support that they are not true. In fact, one could believe that there are positive psychological effects to playing video games. Not only does this form of media offer use for

enjoyment and leisure, but it provides many real-life benefits to the player.

Video games have a positive effect in that they improve cognitive functions. In a study conducted by Green and Bavelier in 2012, the results showed that action video games improved a person's abilities when tested in a field of distractors. A field of distractors is a test that is considered a good predictor of a person's driving ability and concentration or attention (Gray, 2015). People have been complaining for decades that video games ruin attention span but studies such as this counteract this complaint. In the same study by Green and Bavelier, naive gamers, who have been assigned to play a shooting or other type of game, tested better than control participants in areas such as attention allocation and visual processing (Granic, 2014). These are skills that are used every day and they were improved in these new gamers, just by playing video games. Another study, conducted by Nature.com, found that specifically designed 3-D video games improved the cognitive abilities of older individuals (Nichols, 2017). These studies found that video games could be used to not only improve, but reverse the negative effects of aging. This is done through brain fitness and exercising the brain in ways that an older person may not be already used to (Granic, 2014). In this particular study, "participants race a car around a winding track while a variety of road signs pop up." As these signs popped up "Drivers are instructed to keep an eye out for a specific type of sign, while ignoring all the rest and to press a button whenever that particular sign appear" (Granic, 2014). Tests such as this are not different to the racing or reaction video games that many people play. Games like this test a person's ability to multitask and in turn make quick decisions. Benefits in cognitive function propose huge possibilities for the positive psychological effects of gaming.

Another way video games have positive psychological effects is their impact on executive functioning. Executive functions are mental skills that people use to complete tasks. An example of executive functioning that is used often is problem-solving. Problem-solving is a key component in a variety of video games. Games such as Mario or Fez make the gamer use their brain to solve problems designed by the creators. This is a test of a person's analytical skills. To aid in this “game designers often provide very little instruction about how to solve in-game problems, providing players with a nearly blank palette from which to explore a huge range of possible solutions based on past experience and intuitions” (Granic, 2014). This has a positive psychological effect because it forces gamers to use their problem-solving skills to solve puzzles when given little to no instruction. This is beneficial because in the real world individuals must solve problems all the time. It is an obvious advantage to have a brain that is used to solving problems than one that is not. Playing action video games have been shown to improve an individual's ability to rapidly multitask between tasks of conflicting demands (Gray, 2015). Executive functions are extremely useful in the real world and video games have been proven to improve these functions.

Video games may also provide psychological benefits that can be used in jobs. Video games allow people to communicate and play with people that live across the world via online gaming. Players can converse and work together to reach a common goal. This helps gamers “acquire important prosocial skills” that can be used in work (Ewoldsen et al., 2012). According to an article by Granic, video games can “reward effective cooperation, support, and helping behaviors” (Granic 73, 2014). This has positive psychological effects for building communication and useful team skills. Skills such as this may be directly

used in work situations. The ability to do work as a part of a team is not only an important skill to have for a job, but also in life. Another way video games provide benefits that can be used in jobs is their improvement of hand-eye coordination, attention, and decision making (Gray, 2015). A study performed by the pioneering specialist R.A. McKinley proves that gamers were as good as trained pilots at learning how to fly and land aerial drones, when compared to non-gamers (Gray, 2015). This study shows that playing video games better prepares these people in learning skills that can be applied to a job.

Even with all these benefits for playing video games, the argument is still being made that video games are negative. Outdated arguments are still made by many people on the internet about this media is harmful. Studies and research have shown that it has positive effects, but the uninformed critic still persists with these outdated criticisms. Even in experiments conducted to prove that video games are harmful psychologically, the studies return inconclusive. The data always has too many variables and “the authors openly admit their findings might not be entirely conclusive” (Grgurich, 2014). This helps to provide evidence that these negative effects cannot be proven and outside the case of addiction, do not exist. If more people did research on the psychological effects of video games instead of relying on cultural moral panic, they would see that the negative claims made are not based on research.

Video games have been a big part of my life. I believe they have not only helped me grow into the person I am today, but have also helped me obtain skills that have helped me through life. The old argument about this great form of media corrupting the brain is outdated. There have been plenty of research and studies published that counteract these old claims. To ignore the benefits of video games in this day and age is obsolete. The psychological

benefits are extremely useful. The cognitive benefits have universal applications, the improvement to executive functioning is a key component in life, and the benefits that can be applied to jobs provide skills that give gamers advantages. This leisure activity is not a waste of time; it is not only tons of fun, but psychologically beneficial.

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NATURE AND SELF





FEELING IN HAIKU
by Sabrina Koumoin

Most of us have probably experienced at least once a desire to escape everything – our homes, our responsibilities, our banal lives. Though for many of us such desires never actually materialize, Matsuo Basho, a Japanese Haiku master of the 1600s, realized his escapist fantasy when he embarked on a pilgrimage to explore the Japanese Deep North. In his travelogue *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, he recounts the experience of travelling with his friend Sora and becoming a tourist in his own country. He connects with nature, the past, and his inner self on this exciting adventure and uses haiku to immortalize his feelings and discoveries.

He invites us through his poetry to savor the experience with him. Bashō's decision to embark on this five-month journey to the deep north is made after he accepts the "summons of the Deity of the Road" (683). Before he leaves and parts with his house, he dedicates a haiku to the event: "Time even for the grass hut / to change owners – / house of dolls" (683). These verses articulate his renewed understanding of transience and impermanence as he moves into a new period of his life.

“Even for the grass hut” emphasizes how nothing in life is invulnerable to change.

Bashō’s last stop before beginning his journey is Senju, where he is seen off by a crowd (684). He immortalizes this moment with his first journal entry of the journey, ‘Spring going – / birds crying and tears / in the eyes of the fish’ (684). He mentions Spring to not only mark the starting time of his travel, but also to express his own transition into a novel personal season.

Additionally, the imagery conjured by these verses – that of animals crying, in particular the fish – emphasize his attunement to nature and sensibility to the melancholy of change.

One of the places Bashō visits during his pilgrimage is the holy Nikko mountain. It used to be called Nikkozan, Two Rough Mountains, but was renamed by the late Priest Kukai as Nikko, Light of the Sun (684). There he writes: “Awe inspiring! / on the green leaves, budding leaves / light of the sun” (685). He finds the reflection of the sun on the leaves particularly inspiring, as if they perfectly embody the meaning of the mountain’s name – as if the Priest had peered from the past into this specific moment in the present. He feels a “sense of reverence and awe” at the Priest’s apparent transcendence (685).

Bashō’s journey is not only filled with dreamy moments. In the midst of enchanting or dreamy poetry, “Fleas, lice – / a horse passes water / by my pillow” is a more realistic entry, highlighting the difficulty of the road and its often unpleasant aspects (689). He also writes about being forced to stay “in the middle of a boring mountain” and in doing so allows us and himself to also experience the more mundane and earthy aspects of his voyage (689).

One night as he goes to bed, he hears two “women of pleasure,” who are also on a pilgrimage of their own, conversing with an old man in the neighboring room (693).

He captures this night with the verses, “Under the same roof / women of pleasure also sleep – / bush clover and moon” (693). He paints a peaceful scene of humans just being – where “moon” (693) symbolizes the priest and “clover” (693) the women – suggesting that despite our differences in class and reputation we all share a common humanity.

In *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* Matsuo Basho sets off to discover Japan, his native country. His haiku verses help him capture his emotions – from awe and inspiration to melancholy and boredom – and in the process, he also discovers himself.

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SUNDAY 9TH OF SEPTEMBER

by Christos Antonaros

If that Sunday were a Friday, it would have been Friday the 13th. However, in retrospect, I wonder if what we call “lousy luck” is responsible for every inconvenience that happens to us. And if there is bad luck, when does good luck happen? Does *Lady Luck* indeed frown or smile on us?

Don’t get me wrong, I am not a superstitious man. I grew up in a country whose culture places superstition at its core. If a black cat walks in front of you, then spit on your chest three times. Never walk under a ladder. If you feel dizzy, or you have a stomach ache, it’s not because of dehydration, or the fifth coffee you had today along with the twenty cigarettes. No, it’s the *evil eye*. The one your grandma can take away after she chants and spits on your face, or by dripping oil in water, or burning nine clove seeds. You call the names of those whom you believe gave you the *evil eye* until a seed bursts, which in turn means the name you gave to that seed belongs to the culprit. I never really believed in those things, but they became part of my daily life as I grew up. They reside in my consciousness, nearly inherited from my parents. Even today if I see a black cat, I spit on my chest three times. I don’t walk under

a ladder, and if someone talks about cancer, then I knock on wood three times.

Come that unlucky Sunday morning as I watched the torrential rain blurring the view outside my windows, I blamed *Lady Luck*, and no one else. It was the beginning of the soccer season; and there can be no soccer without a referee. However, the rain was not the unluckiest event of that day, and the day was still young.

Jacob woke up at 5:10 am and shouted “Dada” three times before I heard his calling. I stood up, put on my pants, and walked in the darkness toward his room.

Strike one from Lady Luck: a puddle of pee; which was a thoughtful contribution of my eleven-year-old King Charles spaniel, Lucy.

Lucy was the most expensive purchase Jan made before we bought our current apartment. Lucy usually doesn’t pee in the house, but on that early Sunday morning she decided to pee on the rug, the kind that doesn’t clean easily (carpet cleaners charge three hundred dollars to clean one spot of urine). Who would have told Jan that cleaning up after Lucy would be more expensive than the dog itself in the future? I wiped Lucy’s mess, I washed my feet, and the moment I entered Jacob’s room, he was fully awake. He stood in his crib laughing and calling, “Dada.”

Lady Luck’s second strike: Have you ever tried putting a ready-to-play toddler back to sleep?

A quick and straightforward answer: don’t try! And if you do try, you should know by now that it will take you more than an hour. I slept again finally at 7am and was woken up at 7:30am by Jacob and Lucy, both hungry. Unfortunately, only one of them able to pee in his diaper. Jacob’s regular nanny’s husband had his birthday, so I had to call our backup nanny, Rocio. Rocio came, and I began driving to the field.

Strike three: A flat tire.

My first soccer game was at 10am. The rain kept pouring. When I arrived at the soccer field, I tried to park in the regular parking lot, but it was full. I had to park on the street.

Before I go any further, I would like you to know something about me, Christos.

I got my driver's license in 2017, but I had never driven a car before. Never. For the first 35 years of my life, I walked, took the bus and occasionally a cab. Athens is not the best place on earth to be a driver. Traffic is terrible all the time, drivers are rude and furious all the time. Parking, as a matter of fact, is a gift sent by Lady Luck. So, Christos, as a new driver, is not skilled enough in parking his car. The moment the car struggled to turn right, I knew something was wrong. Immediately, I got out of the car and went to check my front right tire. Flat, ripped, gone. A lady who had just parked her car behind me came to see me.

"Oh no, you have a flat tire? The iron grate must have done it!"

Oh yes, lady, the grate did it, absolutely. It was its fault.

Not mine. Fuck you, Lady Luck, I thought.

Strike four: Roadside Assistance.

Roadside assistance answered my call only forty minutes later. Let me remind you, it was a Sunday around lunch time. When I finally got to speak to the kind-but-bored lady behind the phone, I thought she was about to solve my problem; wrong.

"I can't find your reference number, sir," she said.

"How is it possible? I have my card right here."

"I am sorry, sir. I can't find your name or your reference number, *anywhere*."

I hung up and called Jan. Some friends from college had visited her at Houston last night, and her voice tone showed she had a good time.

"Hey, honey!"

“Hey. You won’t believe what happened to me,” I said.

“What?”

“I got a flat tire.”

“Oh, no!”

She asked me how, and I replied that it was the grate on the curb that did it. She pretended it wasn’t my fault. Nonetheless, if anyone knows my weakness in parking the car, it is Jan. I had to park at the hospital every Thursday when we were going for her Chemo, but I didn’t have to do parallel parking.

“AAA can’t find my name. Have we renewed the contract?”

“Yes. Let me check with them. Maybe I need to put your name in it. Love you.”

“Love you too.”

My hero warrior-queen solved my problem within minutes, and the second time I called for road assistance took me only fifteen minutes.

How lucky of me, right?

The tow car was two hours away – I wasn’t expecting earlier, anyway. Most of the time spent waiting, I spoke to Jan. We talked about her last day at MD Anderson, how much we couldn’t wait for her to come back home. She made jokes about my day or her night the previous evening. We were having fun even though we were separated by eight states. Maybe it wasn’t a bad day after all.

I came back home at 6 pm, with a new tire installed on my car and heavy, wet clothes. The tire shop, the only one I found open on a Sunday, was only five minutes away from the soccer fields. The guys who worked there stayed overtime for me. I felt guilty, but mostly I felt lucky despite my earlier grumble about Lady Luck. I felt even more fortunate when Jacob ran into my arms screaming joyfully, “Dada!” When Jacob was finally asleep,

and after I had taken a shower, in my silent living room with the sound of rain playing in the background, I had plenty of time to think about luck.

Jan and I met by luck.

We met after a series of coincidences. During my childhood and adolescence, I spent most of my summers on my parents' vacation house on a small island across Santorini, called Ios. Two of those summers, I worked for a watersports company. One night, after a long day at work, I decided to go out and have a drink instead of staying at home and doing my occasional reading and writing. I chose *Katogi*, an underground, walk-in bar-restaurant that served my favorite drink: rakomelo (like moonshine warmed up with honey and cinnamon).

Jan was on vacation with a friend, and they both had already visited Santorini and Mykonos. Her friend was dating a guy back in D.C., and she missed him, so she decided to return to the U.S. Jan decided to stay in Greece. Jan chose Ios out of three other islands to spend two days and one night before she sailed back to Athens for two days, and then back to the United States. On her first night at Ios, as she was walking the narrow white streets, she asked three different people, in different locations, where she could go to have a drink and dinner. All three of them recommended *Katogi*.

Did *Lady Luck* smile on us?

Absolutely.

The day of our engagement, Jan had a series of unfortunate events. It was a year after we had met, and it began with a three-hour-late flight. Consequently, when Jan landed on Santorini, every boat sailing to Ios had already gone. Because of the long trip, her phone was out of battery so she couldn't call me. I was waiting at the port of Ios, watching boat after boat opening their hatches, tourists walking out of them, but Jan was nowhere. When she

arrived at the port of Santorini, she plugged her phone in at the welcoming center and called me.

I had planned to bend the knee that day and ask the big question, but it seemed at that moment that I would have to wait. My big Greek family back in my parents' vacation house should have to wait. They would have to throw the engagement party another day. Jan, however, shared the same eagerness to see me. She didn't know what I was about to ask her, at least that's what she says. Maybe she is lying, but even if she is, I don't care. It's a good lie. She ended up paying a fisherman to give her a boat ride to Ios, but she could not have known that the fisherman was planning to leave her on a beach thirty miles away from the port. When she jumped in the seawater, carrying her luggage, she saw a sign that took away any frustration or worry; a tavern, with my name on its sign. Did *Lady Luck* smile at her? Maybe, but it was not a full smile. Perhaps a childish, playful giggle.

The day of our wedding was the luckiest day of my life.

There was a lot of drama, but it didn't matter. The second luckiest day of my life was the day Jacob was born. There was a lot of drama preceding that day, too. But, seriously, when happiness concludes, bad luck becomes nothing but a bunch of meaningless events.

The unluckiest day of our lives was the day Jan came out of the bathroom and told me she had felt the tumors. One large node on her left breast, and three smaller nodes underneath her left armpit. Then came the news: it was breast cancer, triple negative, stage 2C/3A. Which meant that the disease had metastasized in her lymph-nodes, ready to infest the rest of her body.

Did I cry?

Yes.

Was I scared?

I was terrified!

Did Lady Luck frown on us?

Don't let me start on her.

But on Monday, September 10, while I was waiting for my next class, Jan texted me a video. Her hair was longer than the last time I'd seen her. Her face was pale despite the heat in Texas, but she smiled, as always. She wore a cute flowery shirt and blue jeans. I could still see the red marks from radiation. She stood in front of a white wall with her left hand holding a little golden bell. I pressed play. She rang the bell three times to show she was cancer-free. People behind the camera began clapping and cheering. She cried happy tears. I cried, too. I am crying right now. I wanted to be there, but Lady Luck, a toddler, and my academic life kept me here in D.C.

Jan is back home now, and cancer-free. Her next appointment is on October 1, 2018, with the plastic surgeon in MD Anderson hospital, in Houston. Then, she has appointments every six months for the next five years. Jacob still wakes up calling "mama." Lucy still pees on the rug. But, you know, we are healthy, alive, and happy.

Thank you, Lady Luck – you are fantastic.



BIOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by Barbara Walas

When I asked my friends, what do they think consciousness is, all of them seemed to know the answer immediately. None of these answers, however, was even close to defined. The more questions I asked to validate the strength of their certainty, the more blurred and questionable their definitions became. The idea of consciousness seems to be an unresolved issue for people, as human drive towards rationality, logic, and reason, as well as our curiosity, elicit the willingness to comprehend any creation of our mind. However, no matter how long do we ponder upon the idea of consciousness, we do not seem to be any closer to finding the right answer. Consequently, people accept that perceptual awareness of the surrounding world is a defining feature of consciousness and the problem of the panoptic yet finite definition becomes the 'elephant in the room'. The major problem with scientists and philosophers searching for consciousness is that they assume that what we already know is sufficient to find the answer and that the methods we use are appropriate tools. I think, and will aim to prove in this discussion, that with the knowledge we currently possess, the idea of consciousness is not possible to define.

The traditional philosophical view on consciousness was called Cartesian dualism and it stated

that “mind and matter are fundamentally different in nature and one cannot be reduced to the other” (Robinson, 2003). According to the author of the abovementioned theory, Rene Descartes, spiritual and physical world communicate with each other via specific brain area. Descartes opined the pineal gland as crucial in this process (NeuroQuantology). My skepticism towards his theory does not only come from the lack of the scientific proof of the Descartes’ theory. Its theorist himself, does not seem to aim reaching the very source of the human consciousness as he uses the idea of God in his evaluations on what makes humans, humans. He said: “I suppose the body to be nothing but a statue or machine made of earth, which God forms with the explicit intention of making it as much as possible like us” (Lokhorst, 2013) which suggests the conclusion that it all comes down to what we believe in and therefore, does not explain anything.

Another theory, commonly accepted by neurologists today, focuses rather on the neural activity in the human brain. Different parts of the brain had been characterized as the seats of consciousness in the past, however, the modern approach targets “all the electrochemical signals stimulating the glands to output floods of hormones” (NeuroQuantology) that cause us to experience sensations, perceptions, and emotions, as generators of consciousness. Researchers assume that consciousness is created by brain activity, therefore, they search for what are called the ‘neural correlates of consciousness (NCC)’ (Taylor, 2013). Up to this point, no scientist found the proof to the brain creating consciousness. The reason for it lies in the inability to observe anything more than the consequences of consciousness. What NCC target are just the correlations between neurology and measurable behaviors that they think are bringing them close to consciousness, such as ability to communicate, comprehend what is happening around, etc. We do not know “what exactly the brain activity represents as part of the conscious experience” (Taylor, 2013).

As it turns out, not all the areas of neural activity are necessary for consciousness which was proven by removal of large parts of the brain that did not render an animal unconscious. Consciousness can persist loss of “hippocampus, the cerebellum, the frontal cortex, or even the entire cerebral hemisphere.” (Cavana & Nani, 2013) However, scientists claim that it cannot exist without the thalamic intralaminar nuclei, the part which project axons widely to all cortical areas, loss of which can result in a permanent loss of ‘consciousness’. Nevertheless, these conclusions address only pieces of the consciousness puzzle suggesting that consciousness exists as long as we are able to see, to hear, to smell, to touch, to taste - and these are the consequences of consciousness, as mentioned earlier, not the source of it. When we conclude that a person has lost the consciousness, how can we determine if the person’s sense of self is gone forever? Perhaps it is just something we cannot assess anymore, because nobody can tell us what they are currently experiencing in that state.

In order to compromise all the evidence, scientists became to claim the overall activity to create an “illusion” of consciousness that best adapted us to the surrounding world (Seth, 2017). They think that what our sense of “me” is, is the creation of brain that aims to develop the best guess of ourselves and the reality around us. It is important to note that this theory assumes that the reality goes on whether we perceive it or not. The time stops for a person in coma, but the objective time does not stop, it passes for conscious people, which contradicts the often brought-up idea that perception is reality. What we see is not everything that is there, there is most likely much more than we are conscious of, but what we know is enough for us to adapt and to survive.

“The contents of consciousness are . . . discriminations made within the neural system” (Edelman, Gally, & Baars, 2011). These discriminations choose what we are conscious of and are made by perceptions, motor activity, and memories – all of which shape, and are shaped by neural connectivity that occurs as an animal interacts with its world (Edelman, Gally, & Baars, 2011). Since

natural urges are controlled by chemical factors based on external stimuli, they contribute to our perception of consciousness. As it turns out, our brain can easily get confused by the lack of coherence in the incoming stimuli. Testimony to that is the phantom limb effect which makes people experience pain of a limb they do not possess anymore. The brain merely thinks it is still there but asleep from time to time which is supposedly triggered by emotional thought associated with the loss of a limb. In the study conducted by Vase and colleagues, scientists discovered the biological predisposition to experience phantom limb pain concluding that “cognitive-emotional sensitization contributes to the altered nociceptive processing seen in phantom limb pain patients” (Vase & colleagues, 2011). It proves furthermore that perceiving senses is not everything that our consciousness is based on.

As I have mentioned earlier, memories make up another factor that is thought to contribute to our sense of self. Brain stores episodic memories defining all the events that has ever happened to us, semantic memories which are all the facts and information we have gathered, and implicit memories such as motor memories, etc. (Queensland Brain Institute, 2017). Accepting that human is a sum of their memories and experiences, a question occurs regarding the idea of consciousness- if we find them and implant them in a new brain would it be considered a continuation of one’s consciousness or would it be a brand new ‘self’? This seems particularly abstract since memories themselves are difficult to define. If we wanted to implant the memories, we would have to include experiences of pain and all memories of perceptions that are subjective and experienced differently by people with different biological predispositions. Moreover, the exact seat of the memory has not been yet defined as well. As the Queensland Brain Institute researchers claim to affirm, memories are stored in multiple parts of the brain: hippocampus, neo-cortex, amygdala, basal ganglia, cerebellum, and prefrontal cortex (Queensland Brain Institute, 2017). However, the way memories are ‘coded’ within these areas still remains uncertain as the theory, commonly accepted as the most

probable, that the neurons' synapses play major role in storing memories has recently been disputed by the study of scientists at the University of California, Los Angeles working on the PTSD treatments. Instead, according to their study, "memories may reside inside brain cells" (Jacobson, 2015). None of the conclusions regarding the exact technique brain uses to store the memories was supported by definitive data. Moreover, assuming that we are defined by memories only, we dare to claim that we can only see what we have already seen and we accept Da Vinci's dogma which has been acclaimed as wrong by scientists who noted that there is a certain amount of knowledge we already possess as infants.

The miscellaneous theories on consciousness show how the mystery of this issue has been intriguing the scholars for as long as the philosophical sources are reaching. Technology develops incessantly and we learn more and more about the human brain, but the actual problem of what we call 'sense of self' still remains unexplainable. Many people try to accept one of the existing answers to this eternal question so they agree that consciousness is an effect produced by all the patterns that neural activity creates; all the chemistry of the brain that make us experience emotions and perceptions. The deeper I dived into the issue, I realized the brain cannot be the only stance responsible for consciousness, in fact, it does not comprehend it completely itself. We cannot assume, based on the evidence we have, that perception is consciousness. Perception is nothing more than the "belief in the existence of external objects produced by the means of the senses" (Gibson, 1996). After all, everything comes down to the "What color is the dress?" (Gegenfurtner, et. al, 2015) issue causing people to question existence of the objective reality based on their perceptual differences. Where consciousness comes from, we cannot yet define as we cannot even be sure that the paradigm we operate in, assuming that the idea of 'me' truly exist, is correct.

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ROMANCE ?





IS FANFICTION BETTER THAN PUBLISHED ROMANCE NOVELS?

By Gina Fendley

Popular romance novels and fanfiction have much in common. Romance novels focus on the relationship between two lovers; much of fanfiction does the same. Both genres are produced and enjoyed largely by women, and for this reason it is often that neither genre is taken seriously, being subject to ridicule. Why then won't the majority of fanfiction readers pick up a romance novel? (Morrissey 78). Why then does fanfiction make *Twilight* author Stephenie Meyer "frustrated"? Acknowledging the passion and hard work that goes into writing fanfiction but unable to understand its appeal, Meyer said, "I'm like, go write your own story" (Hayman). How can we explain the discrepancy between the audiences of romantic fanfiction and romance novels?

The answer is in the difference between fanfiction and romance novels. Fanfiction takes place in a familiar universe while romance novels feature original characters and settings. This does not mean that fanfiction is repetitive or lacks creativity. Because fanfiction is usually posted to the internet rather than published, fanfiction authors enjoy freedom of creativity. Romance novelists do not because of the publishing industry serving as a "dominant gatekeeper" (Morrissey 76). Romance novelists have conventions to work with that fanfiction writers do not. This paper

examines three conventions of romance novels: the importance of the relationship process, uplifting women, and the protagonists' commitment to each other. I argue that the nature of the fanfiction genre is more suitable to fulfill these conventions than the romance novel.

Process Over Outcome

Romance novels emphasize the journey on which the lovers embark. A happy ending by itself would not make for a satisfying novel. Pamela Regis (2003) identifies eight essential elements of romance novels. One element is the barrier to the happy ending. According to Regis, the barrier "drives the romance novel" (32). Because *Romance Writers of America* requires a happy ending for a novel to be classified as romance, the journey and barriers to happiness define each story. The outcome of the relationship is already known. How the characters come together and learn to love one another despite challenges is of greater interest to the reader.

Like romance novels, many fanfictions focus on the process of the relationship. Fanfiction, however, can go deeper into this process than can the romance novel because there is no maximum or minimum length. According to Morrissey, "[commercial romance novels] are much more restricted by page limits and printing costs" (80). They need to be long enough to tell a story from scratch, but they also need to fit a printed book. Fanfiction, meanwhile, can be anywhere from hundreds of words to millions of words. The freedom that fanfiction writers have to create a work that is very short or very long means that they can portray the process of the relationship in more diverse and elaborate ways than the romance novel.

Fanfiction that is short can elaborate on the romantic process. Fans want to see the "in-filling," or "the process of fleshing out the backstory behind characters, situations, and events" (Thomas 13). Since fanfiction is

based on another text, a fanfiction author does not need to use extra words to establish characters and plot elements; they can attend straight to the romance. Conversely, romance novels can rarely be short because the author needs to introduce the plot, the characters, and the setting. Because the fanfiction universe is pre-established, the piece can be short and still explore the romantic process.

Fanfiction can also be longer than romance novels. The extra length allows writers to indulge in trivial scenes and secondary characters that would perhaps not make the cut in the final version of a published novel. *All the Young Dudes* by user MsKingBean89 is a 526,926 word Harry Potter fanfiction that focuses on the era of the Marauders (Harry's parents and their friends) at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The main romantic relationship in the story is between Sirius Black and Remus Lupin, a non-canon romance. MsKingBean89 imagines the events of their childhood deemed unimportant to canon as well as the events leading up to the canonical Wizarding War and rise of Lord Voldemort. The length of *All the Young Dudes* as well as its spotlight on secondary characters and the trivial routine of Remus's and Sirius's days at Hogwarts is a testament to the versatility of fanfiction in detailing a journey.

After by imaginator1D is another enormous fanfiction of over a million words that highlights the relationship process. *After* features One Direction singer Harry Styles as a non-famous college student with original character Tessa Young. Thomas (2011) notes that "while fans might urge each other on to bring a story to its climax, it is undoubtedly the case that continuity is preferred over closure" (10). *After* certainly demonstrates continuity. Imaginator1D posted each chapter online as she finished it, serializing the story, and made it up as she went. Fans were not aware of how long the finished product would be nor

when it would end; they enjoyed following Harry's and Tessa's (dubbed "Hessa" by fans) entertainingly tumultuous relationship. While romance novels typically consist of at least one "point of ritual death" at which the success of the relationship seems impossible (Regis 35), the number of ritual deaths endured by "Hessa" far exceeds the required number. A published romance novel does not have the capacity for an on-and-off relationship. To summarize, fanfiction can be longer or shorter than a published romance novel. Fanfiction writers have more flexibility to elaborate on the romantic process.

Leveling the Playing Field

The romance genre is often criticized for being formulaic. Morrissey describes this formula as an "aggressive" and "powerful" hero in need of "taming" (86). The heroine is conveniently present to do the taming and is therefore deserving of the hero's love. *Flowers from the Storm* by Laura Kinsale is one romance novel that follows this formula. Christian, the Duke of Jervaulx, is the hero. He has suffered a stroke and is frustrated by the aftermath. The heroine, Maddy, is a caretaker at the psychiatric hospital where Christian is sent. She receives a self-proclaimed mission from God to help him. Maddy's and Christian's relationship is wrought with outbursts from Christian and fear and loneliness on Maddy's part, but the novel has nonetheless received praise. "One of the greatest love stories of all time" from the *Washington Post Book World* is broadcast on the first page of the book. The popularity of the heroine-saves-hero storyline is further evident in the themes of the Harry Styles fanfiction *After*, which has been published by Simon & Schuster; a movie release is scheduled for April 2019.

Although popular, the aggressive hero and domestic heroine model does not have to be followed. Many novels portray the heroine as more than the hero's

emotional savior. Catherine Roach states that “romance levels the playing field for women” because “unlike in real life and much of literary fiction, women always gain power in [popular romance fiction]” (26). Particularly in contemporary romance fiction, authors create strong, feminist heroines. *Into the Night* by Suzanne Brockmann features heroine Joan Da Costa. Joan is a public relations specialist in the White House. She is so entranced by her career that she has doubts about entering a relationship with hero Mike Muldoon. Despite Brockmann’s feminism, Joan is sexually insecure and her self-worth is only realized by Mike’s willingness to have meaningful sex with her. So regardless of Joan’s security as a career woman, she still lacks confidence without the reassurance of a conventionally attractive white male.

When Dimple Met Rishi, a young adult novel by Sandhya Menon, similarly attempts to place Indian-American heroine Dimple on a feminist pedestal. Like Joan, Dimple is confident about college and her future career but struggles with interpersonal confidence. Unlike Joan, Dimple is not as much a feminist as a girl-hater. Menon gives Dimple strength by endowing her with traditionally “masculine” traits rather than empowering her traditionally “feminine” ones. Dimple “always chose computers while all the other more popular girls seemed to cluster together in art or reading” (Menon 81). Here Menon suggests that there is something inferior about girls who enjoy art and reading. Menon also mentions frequently that Dimple does not wear makeup. This implies superiority to girls who wear makeup. Further disparaging women, Menon has Dimple make a joke about a popular girl having an eating disorder (237). According to Menon, the only way for a woman to be powerful is to be more like a man. Menon attempts to mitigate this effect by making hero Rishi passionate about art and settling down with a family, interests that are

stereotypically feminine. This attempt comes off weak because Rishi suggests that art is impractical. To even further diminish Menon's attempt at feminism, Dimple's "strength" comes across as abusive and manipulative; she frequently punches Rishi and causes him physical pain, and she seems to think it is romantic that Rishi offers to withdraw from the camp they are both attending so she does not have to deal with him (Menon 64). Overall, the "feminism" in *When Dimple Met Rishi* backfires to belittle women instead of lift them up.

Swapping the traditional roles of hero and heroine does not empower women. Instead, it makes a statement that masculine stereotypes are ideal and feminine stereotypes are disposable. Uplifting women is not an easy feat to accomplish in romance novels because of the industry's "gatekeeping." Fanfiction, however, can succeed in diversifying the gender roles of the protagonists and leveling the playing field.

A subcategory of fanfiction called slash eliminates gender and power dynamics by replacing the heroine with another hero. The male-male relationship is less about homosexuality and more about equality. Salmon and Symons propose that slash represents "a female fantasy of heterosexual sex acted out via ostensibly male bodies" (98), but Morrissey argues that it is not so simple as "one of the men tak[ing] on a female role" (97), as Menon characterized Rishi in *When Dimple Met Rishi*. The male-male relationship broadens the stereotypical hero "to incorporate perspectives and feelings which are traditionally restricted to women" (Morrissey 96) but maintains "traditionally male camaraderie, adventure, and risk taking" (Salmon & Symons 99). Assigning both sets of stereotypes to two male characters is a way that slash fanfiction can avoid the sexism of demeaning feminine men and celebrating women only when they are masculine. When lovers are not limited to

gender stereotypes, they are not warrior and “Mrs. Warrior” but “cowarriors” (Salmon & Symons 99). In *All the Young Dudes*, Sirius and Remus fight in the First Wizarding War and address their personal tragedies and feelings for one another. One is not the other’s caretaker. Rather, they are “slaying each other’s dragons” (Salmon & Symons 99).

Yours is the Earth (Hold On, Hold On) by user chickenlivesinpumpkin is another Harry Potter fanfiction with romance and action. It differs from *All the Young Dudes* in that the writer domesticates both male lovers, Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy. The story takes place after the original series; both Harry and Draco are adults with homes and careers. Draco suffers from severe anxiety, insecurity, and panic attacks from the war featured in the canon series. He is plagued by a mysterious magical parasite that has taken control of his body, similar to Christian’s ailment in *Flowers from the Storm*. But Maddy and Christian differ from Harry and Draco because Maddy is wholly “feminine” and Christian is wholly “masculine.” Maddy is burdened with taking care of Christian and taking responsibility for his wrongdoings. Draco is responsible for himself. His and Harry’s relationship demonstrates both feminine and masculine stereotypes. Because Draco faces emotional challenges as well as an external challenge, he is playing the role of both the traditional hero and heroine. He is “feminized” in his anxiety and insecurity, how he requires Harry’s reassurance, and his smaller physical stature. He remains “masculine” in his external magical battle and prestigious career. Harry complements Draco by playing a traditionally “masculine” role without the associated power dynamics. By assigning “feminine” traits to male characters without eliminating such traits in female characters, fanfiction celebrates these traits instead of putting them down. The flexibility of gender roles in fanfiction means

that problematic power dynamics imposed by the limits of published romance novels can be mitigated. Women win.

Genuine and True Love

Another convention of romance novels, described by Regis, is the protagonists' commitment to be together (37-38). A story that does not center around the power of love is, by definition, not a romance novel. Ironically, romantic fanfiction holds an advantage over published romance novels in portraying love. If lovers in fanfiction are already familiar with one another from the original text, fanfiction can proceed under the assumption that the lovers' relationship is maintained by something that transcends lust. Salmon and Symons contend that previously acquainted characters are "united by a bond that is plausibly more durable and secure than sexual or romantic passions" (99). For romance novels the attraction needs to occur hastily because the lovers usually start off as strangers. The attraction is subject to greater scrutiny and more likely to appear "inexplicably and magically" (Morrissey 90).

Romance authors use plot to compensate for rushed attraction. *Flowers from the Storm* and *When Dimple Met Rishi* include gaps in the timeline before the resolution. Brockmann has a different approach, having Joan and Mike from *Into the Night* admit their anxieties about their relationship status. Despite these attempts, the heros and heroines begin as strangers and enter hasty relationships in all three novels. In *Into the Night*, Joan and Mike are engaged within weeks of meeting one another. In *When Dimple Met Rishi*, teenagers Dimple and Rishi become boyfriend and girlfriend and have sex within weeks of meeting one another. *Flowers from the Storm* is more elaborate but still features early feelings of lust.

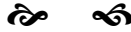
Fanfiction eliminates the problem of main characters as strangers. Even when the characters did not

develop a friendly bond—Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy were bitter rivals in the original series—they still knew each other well after seven years at Hogwarts. The power of love in *Yours is the Earth (Hold On, Hold On)* is so strong that it can turn enemies into lovers. *After* is different; there is no original text because the story is based on band members rather than a novel. But the massive length of *After* allows Harry and Tessa to get to know one another much better than they might have had they been lovers in a traditionally shorter, stand-alone novel. Unlimited length and a pre-established acquaintance in fanfiction allow a deeper relationship between lovers than in romance novels.

This paper has covered three conventions of the romance genre: the romantic process, uplifting women, and the lovers' commitment to each other. By definition romance novels include these conventions, but that does not mean they do so in an ideal way. Because fanfiction does not need to go through the publishing process and is based on a pre-existing universe, fanfiction writers enjoy freedoms that romance novelists do not. Fanfiction is also more accessible. It reflects a greater diversity of human experiences. The community of romance novelists is more homogenous. Fanfiction allows readers to re-enter a familiar universe in a way that reflects the fandom's culture. According to Thomas, fanfiction is a genre that "poses a challenge to the models of narrative that insist on defining the story text as a stable and finite thing" (20). Romance novels are static. They are for readers who want something new and who can part with the novel's universe upon completion. Readers of romance novels must accept what is given. It is difficult to condense a tale of love to fit a novel, but many romance novelists have done so. But perhaps they would have been even more successful had they been privileged with the flexible format of fanfiction.

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AMERICA'S OBSESSION WITH DEAD GIRL STORIES
by Julia Torrico

On a hot summer day, I lingered around my local Barnes & Noble bookstore looking for something new to read. Aisle after aisle, all I find are books about girls who were killed...killed in ways that makes me dizzy and nauseous like the moment you see someone in a movie being chased down by the monster. Panic bubbles inside my chest, and my mind spins at the thought of countless female bodies piling up, shoved under mounds of earth, the dark abyss of the river pulling these bodies into a forgotten place. I imagine bloodied hands of a man wiping them clean, and I quickly rush towards the entrance of the store.

Suddenly, I stop in front of a book display, the book titled *Mr. Tender's Girl*, inspired by the case of the Slender Man stabbing. I remember hearing on the radio how Payton Leutner, a young Wisconsin girl, at the age of 12, was lured into the woods by her classmates/friends, Anissa Weier, 12, and Morgan Geyser, 12. Weier and Geyser stabbed her nineteen times. Their reason for attempting to murder their friend, Leutner, was to become Slender Man's servants. Thankfully, Leutner lived, but if she was not found in time, she would have become another

dead girl—or maybe she has, possibly in another way. While this attack was committed by young girls, it was influenced by a male monster—a monster that only exists as an internet phenomenon (Associated Press).

For years, Americans have been obsessed with tales of horror, terror and mayhem, and no doubt, this obsession includes dead girl stories. These stories always have distinct qualities in portraying female characters. The female characters are constructed as victims who are weak and overly dependent on male saviors. They become “damaged” by violent and psychological acts committed by one man or many men; the premise of the story is always the same; the woman is attacked brutally and killed by a male murderer—a misogynistic male who always has the face of a monster—and this is where her story, as a person and human being, ends.

In America’s mass appetite to consume these dark and enticing stories about murdered and/or sexualized women or young girls, it seems we, as readers, tend to forget we are allowing ourselves to be entertained by a woman’s pain and brutality. When reading these stories, the dead girl—as a human being—remains, ironically, dead in our memories as she does in the start of the story. We never ask ourselves if we truly understand that this popular story misrepresents US society. This issue does not only appear in books, but it has spread across various forms of media, especially in films and shows such as *True Detectives*, *Twin Peaks*, *Unsolved Mysteries*, and *Law & Order: SVU*.

Like horror, dead girl stories are not a simple subject to understand, and readers may be quick to assume it is a genre solely for entertainment. Many dead girl stories are inspired by true events. Unfortunately, readers tend to forget this fact—or wish to forget this for escapism purposes (I am guilty of this from time to time). Dead girl stories are a popular vehicle that allows writers to create a

male protagonist who forces his depraved fantasies upon a female victim (Chocano). The entire story is about the male protagonist and their manhunt for the killer. It is never about the women (living or dead), and this perception has caused dead girl stories to depend on criteria that are a tradition and prerequisite to writing these tales.

List for Writing a Dead Girl Story:

Below, I have created a list to present the common features found in a Dead Girl story. This isn't a real checklist for writing these stories, but the point of this list emphasizes how these stories have fallen prey to the criteria of writing these horror stories.

Not only have these stories fallen into this criteria trap, horror has become pigeon-holed into this circumstance as well.

Please mark a check next to included feature

☐ Young white female dead girl

☐ Misogynist Male Killer

☐ Violent killing of female(s)

☐ Naïve Male Cop/Investigator

☐ Entertainment effects

☐ Overly Dramatic Screaming

☐ Dependency on Male Saviors

☐ Other Female Victims

☐ Sexualization of the Female Body

Congratulations! You have just created a story that continues the practice of sexualization and violence against women and young girls.

Like many American readers and horror buffs, at a young age, I believed that horror was a type of entertainment genre that was to see people shrink in pure terror. I once perceived the dead girl stories as horror to keep me awake past bedtime. However, horror does not only give readers a chance to enter a world filled with terrors and monsters for the purpose of scaring you. Dr. Cynthia Freeland, a philosopher of horror, states, “horror

involves a severe violation of our sense of moral, natural, and social order” (Tallon 39). Horror plays a role in our understanding of morality, natural order, and society, and dead girl stories should follow this philosophy.

I had the opportunity to interview Dr. Tonya-Marie Howe, Chair of Literature and Languages and Professor, on her interest in horror films and genre-fiction. In high school, she watched a lot of horror movies with her friends and her step brothers. The experience of watching horror movies with a particular audience allowed her to see these movies in different perspectives. Later on, she developed an interest in film history and production, and “gravitated towards a self-reflexive component,” or a feeling that was campy, or unusual.

Julia: *How does the horror genre and violence against women reflect American society's morality and values of the expectations and role of women? Is this an accurate representation of American values today?*

Howe: “Horror—like any genre—isn’t a monolithic category, signifying in the same way all the time, for all viewers. There is a scholarly tradition that looks at the way horror represents the collective unconscious, or subconscious fears and worries, and this changes over time.” Horror is about our fears, as individuals or a collective whole, which—to add what was previously stated on the role of horror—in understanding of individual and collective morality, natural order, and the reflection of society. Horror shouldn’t solely focus on the purpose of sensational terror and fears change as society changes. Think of horror as many puzzle pieces that we must put together in order to see the full picture. However, this concept is barely shown in dead girl stories. Furthermore, this monolithic concept downplays the true values of US women as a collective whole and the fight for stronger and better representation of US women.

Most of the dead girl stories begin with a female character brutally murdered, and the male detectives finding her body. The moralistic implication from these stories is the desire for the men to solve the murder of the dead female character and to stop the male lunatic who carries out the same vicious act on other women. The moral aspect is to enact justice on the evil that is prying on the women, however, where is the morality in ignoring a person that was once living? Isn't this female considered a human being rather than just a body? Kristen Martin, author of "Why We Love—and Need to Leave Behind—Dead Girl Stories," explains her early interaction with the murdered female subjects in stories. As an adolescent, she wanted to understand why girls and women were murdered, she says, "but the more I got sucked into these stories, the more I lost the thread of the victims themselves, who were eclipsed by the hunt for evidence and the murder's motive" (Martin). The reader is sucked into a place that only focuses on the men running around, halting each other, and rushing to solve the case of the dead girl, and this always leads to the same result: the case is solved and closed. Is this how American society truly thinks of solving cases of murdered women? Are we, as a society, supposed to ignore who the dead girl was before the murder and just focus on closing the case quickly? Does this truly represent the U.S. sense of justice and perception of women?

If so, then the U.S. sense of morality is a half-constructed concept of justice, especially when we apply it to murders inflicted on women, and this particular understanding of morality forms the idea that women need to be saved and protected by men. Julia Kristeva, a philosopher in horror, explains "the drive toward matricide as a kind of original, generative anger, expressing a need to destroy the mother [or female], the origin place, to become an individual self. This is messier than an Oedipal reading

of history, as the will to matricide is born in confusion and creates only chaos” (Bolin 22). Kristeva brings an interesting point to matricide being an element to becoming an individual self. This particular idea might be why dead girl stories center around the men; in the chaos of solving the case, the men are forced to face a darker side of the self (i.e., the male murderer or the madman).

The root cause of these murderers committing acts of violence and death on female victims is due to their struggle with their relationships with their mothers (think of Norman Bates from *Psycho*). These murderers end-up breaking the maternal bond with their mothers by brutally killing them, and, from some dark magic in the universe, they have obtained the power to inflict their power and corruption upon innocent female victims. However, are both male and female writers considering this idea of morality and matricide reflecting America’s concepts of true terror when writing these stories?

It’s not clear if writers, either male or female, are thinking about this when they’re writing, and it would be too strictly demanding to request writers create stories that are not traditional dead girl stories. Most readers would say a writer should limit how much truth is included in the dead girl stories, and how much the writer should be prohibited from constructing a world that reflects our reality. However, this demand for a writer to follow the audience’s rules, and force them to construct stories to shield readers from facing their fears displayed in horror stories. Some writers may assume that it is necessary to sexualize women to make point about the deranged insanity of the male killer. Moralistically, this is wrong. This sexualization demonstrates a limited and singular concept of women, which states that women are just bodies to fetishize and fantasize with.

Dr. Howe gives an example of misogyny in mainstream shows, which further represent the US's perception of women in society. She says, "one place where I do think misogyny is on full view is in syndicated mainstream television shows like *CSI* or *Law and Order: SVU* where the female body is only there, for the most part, to be fetishized as victim. The methods of consumption, there, too—it's on every day, all the time—reify the dominant message". I remember in high school the craze of watching *Law and Order: SVU* and *CSI*. The students were so moved in watching a show—a show that focused on solving the crime and hunting for the attacker who has repeatedly attacked various women and *CSI*—well, it almost has the same focus as *Law and Order: SVU*. To be honest, I was never interested in *Law and Order* and *CSI*. *How could I have lived most of my life without watching these shows that are considered amazing?* Most viewers consider these shows as great examples for teaching people about the judicial system of the United States. But overall, and realistically, the show continuously displays women as just bodies, not people. Nor are they shown decently as human beings, and this is what has always bothered me about these shows. Furthermore, these shows rely heavily on scripts that fabricates over-dramatized scenes that would never fly in a judicial court, and the solving of the cases of women who have been violated or murdered is, for most of the time unrealistic. Shows like this makes me grind my teeth, and I wonder how U.S. society could accept a show that devalues women and the nation's current values on justice and morality as a whole.

For years I've stayed away from dead girl stories, and I try numb my senses to trailers or commercials that portray these dead female bodies as things rather than people. I try again and again to tell myself: *I am not a body. I am a person. People should respect me as a person—a human being!* I

am not someone's fantasy or object to toy with. But, like most audience members—like Kristen Martin had experienced—I get sucked into the stories, and I forget my everyday mantra. At the end of watching or reading these stories, I mentally berate myself for continuing to feed this problem of the sexualization and violence inflicted on women and young girls. But, as a reader, we can't *always* be politically correct. Maybe leaving the dead girl story behind, as most scholars and academics have suggested, is not entirely the answer.

Shows like *Twin Peaks* and *Law & Order: SVU* were released within the 90s—a time where people freely wrote and produced without fear of societal backlash. These shows are still stuck in 90s concepts, and we, the audience, want the show to reiterate our *current* values as a nation that has changed over time. However, maybe this approach is wrong; wrong as forcing a writer to produce what we believe, as a collective whole, is morally right on the subject of women. Instead of trying to add in our moralistic values of women in the middle of the problem, we need to pull the problem apart. We'd have to deconstruct and reconstruct to remedy the issue of sexualized female bodies and violence against women.

Martin explains that the novel, *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold, debunks the traditional construction of all dead girl stories. The story centers on the death of Susie Salmon, the dead girl, and how a seemingly normal person/neighbor murders Susie. The solving of Susie's murder and/or the catching of the murderer is not the center of the story. The focus is on Susie, as one of the dead, and ultimately, to explore how her family and other characters are impacted by her murder (Martin).

Sebold demonstrates Susie as a *person* who was once living. It does follow the dead girl concept of a murdered young white girl, but she's writing what she is

able to write. She is deconstructing traditional dead girl features and constructing a story that is beyond entertainment or escapism. In the film, her father, Jack Salmon, seems the most affected, and he even lashes out violently, unsure of how to cope with his grief. Other people in Susie's family cope differently with the loss of Susie. Her mother, Abigail Salmon, uses psychological treatment and time away from her family to deal with her grief. Her sister, Lindsey, pushes to solve Susie's murder, to the point that she almost risks putting her body and life in danger. The people of the town are affected in some shape or form by the loss of Susie, and even George Harvey, Susie's killer, has to be careful of drawing attention to himself.

Carmen Maria Machado, author of *Her Body and Other Parties*, has recently deconstructed dead girl stories in a way that makes reader's form their own significance towards the subject of sexualization of the female body. The collection blends horror, noir-fiction, fantasy, and experimental fiction. I've read only two stories in the novel so far, and it's quite a difficult collection to digest for a reader, and some readers have even reviewed the novel as disgusting. However, Machado is purposefully doing this to make us feel uncomfortable with a subject has always looked away from. If we can watch in *Law and Order: SVU* female bodies being sexualized and fetishized by male characters, then why can't we accept the deconstruction of this idea? Machado presents strongly the concept of women having ownership over their body, and they can choose what can or cannot be done to it. Also, she criticizes beautifully society's concept of women's sexuality and sexualization of female body in different perspectives.

One story that criticizes the misogyny in *Law and Order: SVU* is Machado's "Especially Heinous." Even by the title of the story, she is strongly suggesting how

unrepresentative the show is to females everywhere. The story centers on snippets of narratives or small explanations of 272 episodes of *Law and Order: SVU*, and the narratives are divided into seasons, like the show. It's formatted somewhat like a character with dialogue. The most striking features are that the males in the story are demonstrated as constrained, uncaring, over reactive, ill-mannered, complainers, and, at times, weak. Some of the female characters are not free from this scrutiny either. For example, an attack occurs against two underage models:

“Or Just Look Like One”: Two underage models are attacked while walking home from a club. They are raped and murdered. To add insult to injury, they are confused with two other raped and murdered underage models, who coincidentally are their respective twins, and both pairs are buried beneath the wrong tombstones”(65).

The short narrative is simple, two underage models are attacked, violated, and murdered. But then there seems to be confusion happening as we continue to read this small narrative, and this is where readers get lost in Machado's work. The confusion and frustration lies within the reader's desire to know what Machado exact message, which overcomplicates the story—and her other stories in the collection. It is not necessary to watch *Law & Order: SVU* to understand the story. Returning to the narrative, the underage models are confused with two other models because someone assume these bodies are the same. With making this assumption, the bodies are buried under the wrong tombstones. There is no detail on facial or body structures that set the four models apart, and there is no distinction between each model's personality. However, Machado wants us to realize that *Law & Order: SVU* depicts murdered women to place emphasis on the issue of the repeated attacked female body and the societal illusions of the female body. This effect instills in us fear. She

maintains over-dramatization to remind us that this is a show; it is reflective of society's values and individual morality on women as human beings.

Dead girl stories have fallen into generic criteria that require female bodies to be sexualized and brutally violated by male murders. Many books and shows use this technique to draw readers in, but that does not mean that it is reflective of what US values should be. There are women, like Machado and Sebold, who are deconstructing traditional dead girl stories. These women force readers to think of women as human beings rather than just bodies. This strategy is not only found in literature, but movies, other TV shows (i.e. *Sharp Objects*), and, possibly, comic books/graphic novels. This effect no longer demonstrates dead girls for entertainment, but for exploring the depths of morals in society. US readers should not conform to the continuation of sexualization and violence against women as sheer entertainment. Like all of us, women are human, and these stories are, at times, *a story*; some are good, some are bad, but they don't speak entirely for us as individuals and a nation.

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TRUE LOVE
by Naiya Dalce

April 7, 2018 was the day my life changed forever. That was the day I fell in love for the first time. That day led to perfect moments, as well as traumatizing ones. It was a complete rollercoaster and I never thought that I would ever have to ride one. That moment of falling in love is the best feeling one could describe, but it had hurtful events as well. I didn't sign up for the hurtful part, but it just happened unexpectedly. I also didn't expect for him to step on my heart like he did.

I lay there in his bed while we talked about the party we went to the night before. The laughs, and the looking into his eyes made me realize what this feeling was. We were only dating for a month, but this feeling made me feel like God created him just for me. *How could this happen?* I found the love of my life while I was a sophomore in college. It was perfect because he went to school only 20 minutes from me. His birthday was a week before mine, he was an athlete, and he lived 15 minutes away from me at home. He held me in his arms and I was instantly teary-eyed. This was a fairytale to me, because I never thought that I would ever fall in love. I've always wondered what it felt like. That day, I finally felt the high that I've wanted for so long. I have always wanted a guy to adore me and to be obsessed with me. Love is something hard to explain, but I love to think about what led to this moment.

I was hesitant to even meet him, because he was a D1 athlete, and they're always more likely to cheat. His

teammates were a great example of typical athletes. He surprised me when I realized that he wasn't like them at all. He loved watching anime, cleaning, reading, and hated parties. He also wears glasses, and so do I! He even loves to eat food; ah he was so greedy. I loved eating too! It's safe to say that I was smitten by this guy. We started to hang out every day after class, and watched movies on weekends. He introduced me to his teammates and his family quickly. I showed up at his basketball game at the end of the season, and he realized that I was serious about him. Fast forward, we were inseparable. Wow, I was definitely falling for him quicker than I thought.

On April 6, we went to our first party together. I finally got to see him interact with his teammates when it came to drinking and partying. This was a big thing for me, because I knew he didn't like going out, so I wanted to see how he acted. We kind of stuck to ourselves, but we danced together all night. The next morning, we just lay in bed and reminisced on the night before. He was going on and on, staring at the ceiling and talking. All I could do was stare at him and smile. This was my man, my boyfriend, my lover. I knew I fell in love, because it was a feeling I've never felt before. I continued my weekend with him and kept the feeling to myself. I didn't want to jinx it. I was so excited to have this relationship grow, and was so excited for him to feel the same way if he didn't already.

On April 22, he finally told me that he was in love with me. I was so excited, because I was able to say it back. I just knew that the relationship would grow. We went on dates, took so many pictures, and watched movies all the time. This relationship just couldn't get any better. The kisses were so sweet, and when I was in his arms, nothing else mattered. I did everything for him, and loved spoiling him. I thought that this would last forever. Well, I was fucking wrong.

Remember the roller coaster? This is when I reached the first dip. April 27, the arguments began to grow, and my trust for him was gone. What was I doing wrong? Was I not good enough? I was in love with someone who I was always arguing with. We would go weeks without arguing then it would turn to arguing with each other every other day. The secrets, the lies, and the pain became prevalent. He cheated on me, which was something I never thought would happen. Like after all the things I've done for that boy, and he still felt the need to get the "ho-ness" out of his system. I loved him, and this was normal in relationships, right? I guess all men cheated. I told myself that it would get better and I had to fight for this relationship. He never cheated again, that I know of. So, I just let it go. Who knew being in love would cause this much heartache? This wasn't like the movies, and my fairytale was gone. The roller coaster dip seemed to last forever. I just wanted to be at the top again.

Being in love wasn't supposed to be cheating, it wasn't lying, it wasn't fighting. We managed to make it to the summer, and I was still googly eyed for him. This was the worst summer I've ever experienced. We broke up about four times through my three-month summer, and I became someone else. That's what being in love entails right? I always wanted to have a summer where I would go on vacations with my boyfriend and have late summer nights. I was so excited! Instead, my summer ended up being filled with work and drama. Drama that had me wanting to stay in bed and cry all day.

Since I was in love with him, I became blinded to what was going on. He would hurt me, and I would take him back. I was showing him how to treat me by letting him get away with the things he did. I just wanted to go back to how we used to be. Which was happiness, and laughing, and kissing. What made it worse was the fact that

I felt like I cared more than he did. He seemed to not care whenever we were on bad terms, while I was sitting at home miserable. This man would go on social media and post hurtful things whenever we got into a fight. Why was I letting this man treat me like shit? He constantly said he would change and that it would never happen again. Well damn, how many times was he going to say that? He would be the wrong one in the situation, and I found myself sending him long paragraphs. Why was I teaching him how to apologize? Why the hell was I pouring my heart out every time? Why in the fuck am I chasing him? I am always giving my all to relationships, and no one ever gives me that same energy. See, I knew this wasn't healthy, but hey, I was in love.

The problems began to grow throughout the summer, and I was becoming depressed. What was this turning me into? My mom grew worried about me, and I found myself not being able to function. I was no longer happy Naiya. I was taking my anger out on family members, and crying before I got to work in the morning. Why was I so in love with someone who treated me this way? I wouldn't necessarily say he was a bad person, but he didn't know how to love correctly. He was not used to having a loving girlfriend. His family situation was different than mine, and it began to affect him.

I was in love with someone whose family began to interfere with our happiness. His family was over-protective, and they began to disrespect me. I got so many phone calls, text messages, and indirect comments about me. I'm not their child, so why were they harassing me? He didn't stand up for me like he said he would. I was used to empty promises. The thing is, I never wanted him to feel like he had to choose sides. His family didn't want me to hurt him like his last relationship, but I never did. They weren't used to that. Who knew being in love would cause a

family feud? My family wanted me to stay far away from him, but I couldn't. My mom was forced to support my decision, because I just couldn't let go of him. My mom began to believe I had low self-esteem, and if he loved me he wouldn't let his family treat me that way. I wanted it to work out so bad. I told myself that it was just a rough patch, and that we were going to get through it.

I did not realize that being in love hurt so much. He told me that he was going to make it up to me and prove everything to me by his actions. It became so toxic that I became numb to the pain. Whenever he would do something, it would no longer hurt. I began to expect it like it was a norm. I saw myself marrying this man, and was willing to look past it all. We planned on moving in together. I even planned law school around his NBA goals. I was willing to move around the U.S. for this man. What did I get in return? A slap in the face. One thing I will say, he did have a good heart. When things were good, they were good. He treated me so well, and wasn't abusive. He did love me and was in love with me, but he couldn't prove it in the correct way. Or maybe he never loved me but was just raised on survival. He probably just loved the way that I loved him. I will never know.

To this day, I find it harder and harder to live without him. I miss him so much. Sometimes there are days that I don't want to get out of bed. There are other times where I just want to punch him in the mouth. Why am I so in love with a man that I no longer talk to. Rather, he doesn't talk to me. I have to teach myself to learn how to be alone and to not depend on him for happiness. It is so hard, because I think about him every day. How can I not be with the person I'm in love with? I just wish he would get his shit together. The thing is, I know he won't. If he loved me, I wouldn't be feeling this way. I know he isn't good for me, but in the back of my mind I still think we'll be together in

the future. I don't want to date or marry anyone unless it's him. I want things to be how they were. Being in love with this man makes me not want to move on, ever. If he texted me at this very moment, it would be so hard to not just run into his arms. I will always love this man. But I realize that being in love wasn't worth all of this. I have to remember all of the things he did to me, and that everything happens for a reason. I will get through this. So long, loser.



AUTHOR AND EDITOR BIOGRAPHIES



Krist Adofo is a first-year student in Information Technology.

Aya Al-Alami is a Psychology major with a focus in Gender and Society. Her identity as a Palestinian, Arab, Muslim woman guides her potential career options and passions, which include counseling, teaching, and research on examining gender differences and their effects on humanity. Her interests include travel, Muay Thai, and art, where self-discovery and human connection are implemented through each. Aya enjoys trying new foods, spending time with her family and loved ones, and playing with her furry niece and nephews.

Mariah Allen is a Junior Sociology and Economics major. After graduating in 2020 Mariah plans on joining the Peace Corps. During her time at Marymount, Mariah went on three different study abroad programs to Costa Rica, Cuba, and Peru. Mariah spends her spare time being a student leader in the OCRS and student affairs office. Her interests include language, art, movies, nonfiction and fiction books, and learning about different cultures and religions.

Lujain Alsulaimani is an English major with a focus in Creative Writing. She is an experienced writer/editor with a background in both long form and short form fiction. She is a podcaster on the *EnglishSamwich* Podcast, a Saudi podcast with an English version that discusses various books and current social issues in the world. She is also the director of the Human Resources Department in *Saudis in USA* organization. Her interests include reading books, writing short stories, watching classic and old movies, and being around her lively, exuberant family.

Christos Antonaros is an English major with a focus in Secondary Education. He is a published author in his homeland, Greece. He writes mostly Fantasy and Horror fiction, but on special occasions, he will write non-fiction as well. After graduating in 2020, he has aspirations to begin teaching English at a high school. His interests include going on adventures with his wife, Jan, and their son, Jacob, reading, writing, cooking, and binge-watching tv shows.

Samuel Cashin is a Liberal Studies major with concentrations in Chemistry and Information Technology. Upon graduating, Samuel hopes to pursue a Master's degree in Cybersecurity in order to pursue his goal of working in the cybersecurity field. His interests include running, listening to NPR, swimming and relaxing with his somewhat loud but loving family.

Amanda Cordon-Campa is a first-year English major and a new *Magnificat* editor.

Naiya Dalce is an English Major in the class of 2020. She has an outgoing personality and loves talking to people. When she graduates, she plans on attending law school to become a criminal defense attorney. In her free time, she loves to dance, read, write, and workout. She is also the manager for the men's basketball team at Marymount.

Stephanie Downing is a senior from Ewa Beach, Hawaii. She is pursuing a degree in Criminal Justice with a

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Gina Fendley is an Economics and Philosophy double major. When not in class, she can be found doing Sudoku and crossword puzzles or reading Harry Potter for the millionth time. Her favorite food is Jell-O. Gina's favorite city in the world is Washington, D.C., where she hopes to live and work after graduation.

Sabrina Koumoin is a sophomore majoring in Information Technology.

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Julia Torrico is a dual major in Information Technology and English with a minor in Philosophy. After graduating in the summer of 2019, she hopes to work in the Library of Congress in the Preservation Directorate division to obtain training in digital preservation. Her interests include reading various books, ranging from fiction to non-fiction, playing video games, and spending time with family and friends.

Madeline Vazquez-Pena is a politics major with a minor in writing. After graduating, she would like to attend law school and become an immigration lawyer. Her intention is to take a gap year, travel, and then start law school. Her interests include rock music, creative writing, and going on

adventures with her younger sister when she's not working or studying.

Sabren Wahdan is a Politics major with a minor in Philosophy and a minor in Communications. Since she was younger, she knew law school was indeed her calling. Having witnessed and contributed to the inner workings of a law office, having put her own earnest effort into clients' success, the practice of law carries a deep personal significance. Her experiences with the law have instilled within her a passion for the law and a healthy respect for its pervasive influence on the people it governs. Sabren plans on attending law school this Fall. Her goal in life is to be an attorney who uses basic human values as the bedrock of her life, work, and aid to others.

Barbara Walas is a Psychology major and Biology minor honors program student. She is an international student from Poland. During her undergraduate program she focuses her research on pediatric psychiatry as well as on ethics of neuroscience research without the use of animals. Her interests and hobbies include vegan lifestyle, classic literature, and paintings. On weekends, she volunteers at Inova hospital or revisits DC museums. After graduation she aspires to provide treatment to mentally ill children and teach at a university.