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THINKING POLITICALLY



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NANYEHI'S EXPERIENCE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION by Lillie Burke

The arrival of European colonists in North America greatly disrupted the lives of Native Americans. The colonial victory of the American Revolution, which lasted from 1775-1783, made matters worse for various reasons. It separated the natives from the British, leaving them at the mercy of the Americans. Since many native tribes sided with the British during the war, their loss marked them as enemies to the Americans. This justified their practice of displacing natives, who were seen as obstacles to American progress. The Revolution also caused a split among natives, forcing them to choose a side in a conflict in which many did not want to participate. The Cherokee experienced such a rift; some sided with the British and others tried to remain neutral. The life of Nanyehi, a prominent Cherokee peacemaker, demonstrates the Revolution's harmful impact on Native Americans; she experienced her family's split and her people's loss of power and autonomy. Her experience of this conflict reveals a version of history that has been excluded from the traditional historical narrative.

Nanyehi was a Cherokee born in 1738 in Chota, a village in modern day Tennessee.¹ She came from the prominent Wolf clan, the largest and most powerful of the

Cherokee clans.² She also came from a significant family; her uncle, Chief Attakullakulla, was a respected leader and peace chief.³ Nanyehi rose to prominence on her own when she took the place of her husband Kingfisher in battle.⁴ After he was fatally injured, she led the warriors to a victory against the Creeks.⁵ This courageous act earned her the respected title of "Beloved Woman."⁶

This title bestowed on Nanyehi certain privileges and responsibilities. She served as a respected member on clan councils and had the power to decide the fate of prisoners.⁷ As a "Beloved Woman," she also had the responsibility to advocate for peace.⁸ These roles coincided with the legacy of her Wolf clan.⁹ Members of the Wolf clan cared for captives and offered healing.¹⁰ Together, her responsibilities as a Wolf and a "Beloved Woman" gave Nanyehi a respected authoritative voice among her people. They also led her to actively seek peace.¹¹ She attempted to form peaceful relationships between the Cherokee and colonists during the revolutionary era. This was a difficult and intimidating task because the relationship between natives and whites had become increasingly tense and unequal.

Native Americans and European colonists had interacted with each other since the colonists' arrival and their early relationship had made coexistence seem possible. Their primary interaction was through trade, both groups sharing goods and knowledge. Native Americans were also able to maintain an upper hand in early trade relationships by playing various European powers off of each other to ensure the best deal for themselves. However, by 1775, most native tribes were economically dependent on European powers, which left them vulnerable.¹²

This dependence changed their traditional way of life. The natives grew increasingly reliant on European guns, which gave rise to unprecedented violence both within native communities and between natives and whites. This increase in violence changed the structure of native life as war chiefs became more important than civil chiefs. Warriors began to make decisions that went against the will of the people; consensus had been but was no longer the norm. Exposure to European ways of life also created a disconnect between the young and old within native populations as traditional leadership structures were questioned. Young Native Americans doubted the traditional way of life, which whites did not understand or respect. The groups' differences seemed increasingly irreconcilable.¹³

Tension between Native Americans and the colonists came to a climax as the demand for land increased. The white population in North America rapidly rose through both immigration and reproduction, necessitating more land for settlement. This became an urgent issue as Native Americans expressed they did not intend to give up their lands. As a result, colonial governments obtained native lands through corrupt means, often tricking or coercing Native Americans to sell. Natives were also often forced to sell their lands in order to pay for debts accrued through trade. These practices provided a foundation for the eventual American policy of displacing Native Americans.¹⁴

The struggle for land increased after the British victory of the Seven Years' War in 1763, which provided Britain with more territory on the continent for colonial settlement.¹⁵ However, the British attempted to restrict colonial expansion with the Royal Proclamation of 1763.16 This proclamation reserved land specifically for Native Americans and prohibited colonists from settling there.¹⁷ It also stated that Native Americans were protected by the British.¹⁸ This greatly angered the colonists who felt they had fought for that land and deserved to expand and settle it.¹⁹ The British stated that the Proclamation Line would protect both the natives and colonists by keeping them separate, but the colonists felt betrayed. They ignored the proclamation and continued to move onto native lands. Native Americans complained to the British to no avail; at that point, the British could no longer control the colonists.²⁰

The British and Cherokee had developed a solid relationship leading up to the American Revolution. The 1761 appointment of John Stuart as the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern Department made this possible; Stuart was responsible for listening to the Cherokee complaints and helping to resolve their issues.²¹ He held frequent conferences in which the Cherokee mourned white encroachment and pleaded for an effective boundary line between themselves and the colonists.²²

This tension and struggle for land was the main Native American concern during the Revolution. Their major goal was to stop white encroachment of their lands. They also needed to maintain trade relations. Native Americans did not believe the outcome of the Revolution would determine who would govern them; they considered themselves sovereign. They knew, however, that the winner could impact trade.²³ Consequently, most natives sided with the British; they assumed the larger power would win and reward them for their loyalty by protecting their lands and maintaining a successful trade relationship. However, the unexpected colonial victory marked the natives as enemies to the Americans, even though not all native tribes allied with the British.²⁴

Nanyehi, as a peacemaker, advocated for Cherokee neutrality during the American Revolution.²⁵ She hoped that remaining neutral would allow the Cherokee to establish good relationships with both the colonists and the British, which would then defend them against abuse from either. If she succeeded, it would not matter who won the war because both sides would view the Cherokee as a potential ally. Nanyehi wisely recognized the changing times, the inevitability of white settlement, and the unlikelihood of a military success for her people.²⁶ She believed remaining neutral would benefit her people the most after the war and allow for their survival.

During the war, Nanyehi made brave attempts to ease tensions and promote harmony between the colonists and Cherokee. She fulfilled her responsibilities as a Wolf and "Beloved Woman" by sparing the life of a captive, Lydia Bean.²⁷ Nanyehi cared for Mrs. Bean and even learned from her how to produce dairy, which helped the Cherokee adapt to European ways of life as well as independently sustain themselves.²⁸ In return for this, local militiamen spared Nanyehi's village during a raid.²⁹ This occasion demonstrates Nanyehi's dedication and ability to encourage peace.

Nanyehi also aided the colonists by providing them with food and information. She tried to negotiate with Arthur Campbell, a militia leader, by providing him with intelligence in exchange for peace.³⁰ Also, she warned colonists from the Watauga Association of an impending Cherokee attack.³¹ Her warning gave the colonists enough time to flee before the war party destroyed their settlement. Unfortunately for Nanyehi, this attack was led by her cousin Dragging Canoe.³²

Similar to the colonists' experience of the Revolution as divisive, the Cherokee were terribly divided among themselves about how to approach the war. They all agreed the goal for their people was to stop further white settlement; however, they disagreed on the best way to ensure that. Nanychi, and other leaders hoping for peace, believed neutrality was the best choice. This was largely because they remembered the cost of fighting the British in the 1760s during the Seven Years' War. This experience cautioned Cherokee leaders against opposing the British. Furthermore, the Cherokee leaders hoped for peace and to avoid getting involved in a violent war that did not directly involve them.³³

However, not everyone in the Wolf clan thought neutrality was the right decision. Dragging Canoe, Chief Attakullakulla's son and Nanyehi's cousin, sided with the British during the Revolution.³⁴ Alliances between Native Americans and the British seemed promising because it was in both of their best interests to keep the colonists from settling native lands; the Cherokee wanted their sovereignty and the British wanted control of the colonists. Dragging Canoe viewed this war as an opportunity to regain and defend Cherokee lands.³⁵ When he chose to ally with the British, the younger and more rebellious warriors followed him, causing a split within the clan.³⁶ Dragging Canoe and his followers formed their own communities on the Chickamauga River, giving them the name the Chickamauga Cherokee.³⁷ This group, with British support, attacked colonists in an attempt to stop further expansion.³⁸ Dragging Canoe's decision to leave his clan divided his family and his people.

Nanyehi disagreed with Dragging Canoe's choices because of their violent and chaotic consequences. She believed the Cherokee would be better off by forming friendships with the colonists and promoting the possibility of coexistence; however, this was not an easy task. She had to find the delicate balance between not showing overt support for either side. Inadvertently, her aid to the colonists suggested she supported the revolutionary cause, since the Chickamauga Cherokee had allied with the British. Regardless of the optics, Nanyehi did not choose a side in the Revolution; she chose to defend her own people.

Despite Nanyehi's life-saving aid and her hope for peace, the colonists had no intention of coexisting. They viewed Native Americans as an obstacle to overcome in order to expand and reach the fullness of American potential. This attitude can be seen in "The North Carolina Delegation Urges Extirpation of the Cherokee, 1776."³⁹ This document reveals the colonists' hostile attitude toward natives and explicitly states their desire to eradicate them.⁴⁰ This antagonism can also be seen in the Declaration of Independence, a document intended to defend universal natural rights. A grievance against the king reads,

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.⁴¹

The colonists did not recognize Native Americans' diversity and humanity, grouping all natives together and viewing them as "savages."⁴² The authors of the Declaration also used the phrase "our frontiers" to disregard native claims to the land.⁴³ Both of these documents reveal the colonists' racist convictions about and lack of respect for Native Americans. Leading up to the Revolution, those beliefs and sentiments had grown too strong to allow for the possibility of coexistence. While Nanyehi and the other Cherokee peacemakers were hoping to remain neutral, the whites viewed their presence as a major problem and a reason to revolt. The two groups had terribly different expectations of white settlement.

After the colonial victory of the war, the Americans had the justification and authority to displace Native Americans. Nanyehi, however, still hoped for peaceful relations. She attended the Treaty of Hopewell meeting in South Carolina in 1785.⁴⁴ This was the first treaty between the newly formed United States and the Cherokee.⁴⁵ Nanyehi made this speech at the meeting, imploring the new government to consider peaceful coexistence:

I am fond of hearing that there is a Peace; and I hope you have now taken us by the hand in real friendship . . . I am old, but I hope yet to bear children – who will grow up and people our nation; since we are now to be under the protection of Congress, and shall have no more disturbance.⁴⁶

Despite the tumult the war caused for her and her people, Nanychi believed in the possibility of peace between natives and whites. She was willing to trust the Americans and coexist; unfortunately, the Americans were not and went on to officialize their pattern of removing and displacing Native Americans.⁴⁷ Nanychi herself was forced to leave her home village in order to make room for American settlers; she died a few years later in 1822.⁴⁸ Just a decade later, the United States government forcibly relocated the Cherokee during the infamous Trail of Tears.⁴⁹ The American Revolution had a detrimental impact on Nanychi, the Cherokee, and Native Americans in general.

In order to understand and study the American Revolution accurately, its negative impact on Native Americans must be known. The Revolution set natives back, depriving them of their remaining autonomy and subjecting them to the control of the United States. The U.S. government disregarded Native American sovereignty and rights. Nanyehi's humble pleas for peace and coexistence were ignored by both whites and some of her own people. The Revolution split her family and clan apart.

Furthermore, the war resulted in a new country, supposedly built on the ideals of equality and freedom; however, this country blatantly excluded Native Americans from their vision. The United States chose to believe in the myth of mutual exclusivity. The new Americans believed the future growth and success of their country necessitated the eradication of Native Americans. This aspect of the American Revolution is not commonly discussed but should be in order to study real history and learn from choices made in the past.

The lack of focus on and understanding of Native Americans in mainstream American historical discussions has caused Nanyehi to be inaccurately remembered; she has been immortalized as an American patriot.⁵⁰ In 1915, the Daughters of the American Revolution created a chapter in Chattanooga, Tennessee, dedicated to her and erected a memorial near her grave site in 1923, honoring her as the "constant friend to the pioneer."⁵¹ Some have believed her to be a traitor to her own people, aiding the colonists because of the superiority of their race and lifestyle.⁵² Although her actions can appear sympathetic to the revolutionary cause, her aid to whites came from her desire and responsibility to protect her people.

Nanyehi tried to promote peace, for its own sake, but also to help the Cherokee adapt and survive in a world that was becoming increasingly hostile to her people. Her roles and responsibilities as a Wolf and "Beloved Woman" inspired her choices. In order to study and learn from actual history, people's genuine motives for their actions must be recognized and understood. Such significant reasons should not be conveniently assigned or assumed. While Nanyehi did help the colonists during the Revolution, she should be known and remembered more for her dedication to peace and her people.

Notes

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4. Freeman and Bond, 4.

5. Stan Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs: in the Wake of Empire* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 26.

6. Freeman and Bond, 6.

7. Ibid., 3.

8. Pesantubbee, 183.

9. Ibid., 181.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 182.

12. Colin Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 9, 11, 19.

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 14. Ibid., 19 – 20.

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18. Ibid.

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22. Ibid., 2 – 5.

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24. Blackmon, xxii.

25. Pesantubbee, 185.

26. Hoig, 2.

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28. Pesantubbee, 179.

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32. Ibid.

33. Pesantubbee, 179 – 180.

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42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Hoig, 67.

45. Ibid.

46. "Original Specimens of Eloquence," in *Gazette* of the United States, July 25, 1789, https://panewsarchive.psu.edu/lccn/sn83030483/1789-07-25/ed-1/seq-1/

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48. Freeman and Bond, 16.

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50. Pesantubbee, 177 – 178.

51. "Nancy Ward Chapter NSDAR," The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, accessed December 4, 2019, http://www.tndar.org/~ nancyward/history.htm; "Nancy Ward Gravesite," Tennessee River Valley, accessed December 4, 2019, https://www.tennesseerivervalleygeotourism.org/content/nan cy-ward-gravesite/tendd231693f009fa31a.

52. Pesantubbee, 177.

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RECEPTION OF NEWS ON TWITTER by Catherine Kenol

Introduction

The most recent age of technology has allowed for users to access information of many sorts, in ways that are now easier than ever. News is now quickly accessible, requiring only seconds of typing into a search bar and hitting enter, some now even preferring this method of finding news over traditional methods such as newspaper, tuning to a specific channel and waiting several minutes for the specific information one needs to hear, or even turning on the radio. Going even simpler in some cases, all a user of this new technology would have to do now is simply log into their social media account, scroll for a few seconds, and someone on their friends list has shared something that a news organization has posted.

Social media has had several uses since the beginning of its invention, most of which have gradually increased over the years. Some of the uses include providing many benefits to the user, saving time and having convenient access to information in one area to name a few, but with every seemingly glorious invention of the time, several downsides that have yet to be properly troubleshooted also exist. What may have seemed as just keeping in touch with friends, family, and simply admired persons one year became sharing life events with those added and followed next. In addition, the built in ability in some cases to edit photos before posting, or even more importantly for the purpose of this research, to share news has also appeared on many different social media websites. With many news outlets now having a presence on social media due to its increasing demand and changes in preferred outlets, users can now check the account of a news outlet as they log onto their social media of choice and be readily informed there. While this may seem slower than using search engines to find information, if a user spends the majority of their time on social media, this is, in fact, more convenient for them as this involves less switching between tabs, browsers, and applications when all of the information can be found in one area.

Less switching between applications raises the expectations of the social media user, believing all information to be available in one place, and even more disconcerting, all information on one application to be completely accurate. If all news and the like were supposedly free of error, any existing need to view posts that comes one's way critically and do further investigating would be deemed redundant. This can lead to an increase in the spread of misinformation, as seen in Maggie Fox's study on the accuracy of news on Twitter, that "false news stories were 70 percent more likely to be retweeted than true stories were" (2017, n. pag). Social media users may do this for several reasons, whether it is simply a lack of motivation to find the truth, to confirm already existing beliefs, or to push an agenda a fellow social media user might have (Fox, n. pag).

Regardless of the reason, the question that is important to ask here is how Twitter users, as there are several social media outlets with varying audiences, receive the news that is presented to them. In other words, I will be conducting research that illustrates how Twitter users review the news that finds its way onto their timelines, and if they have the capability or motivation to know the difference between false and accurate depictions of the world's happenings. Other important findings would relate to the possible reasons a Twitter user may view the news in certain ways. This topic is important to investigate due to the positive outcomes and consequences such a phenomenon has on not just the reception of news, but how news outlets, especially journalists end up being viewed as a whole in general. With misinformation being spread as quickly as it is, especially on Twitter and users finding out eventually that such information is false, this may cause users to be less trusting of journalists as a whole, even when some journalists may not be at fault for the spread of false information among users (Shao, n. pag, Lazer et al, n.pag, Conroy, n. pag). My research intends to find out what types of users use Twitter, how and where they receive the majority of their news, whether or not they do further research after viewing a post discussing an event, the reasons that users may view news outlets in such a way, and how they view journalists as a whole.

Literature Review

Several other researchers have shared similar concerns of the "laziness" of verifying misinformation, or the more popularly coined and debated term "fake news" on social media, as such has had real life impacts on events, such as the 2016 election. A study done by Allcot and Gentzkow focused specifically on fake news and social media, and how social media users viewed informative posts that were presented to them. The results, while not as shocking given the past results of the 2016 election and the beginning of the extensive talk of "fake news," was still genuinely surprising, as they wrote "one can think of recalled exposure as determined both by actual exposure and by the headline's perceived plausibility—people might think that if a headline is plausible, they probably saw it reported somewhere," and after conducting their survey, they found that "15 percent of survey respondents recalled seeing the Fake stories, and 8 percent both recalled seeing the story and said they believed it... about 14 percent of people report seeing the placebo stories, and about 8 percent report seeing and believing them" (2017, p. 226227). They also estimated that "the average Fake headline was 1.2 percentage points more likely to be seen and recalled than the average Placebo headline, and the 95 percent confidence interval allows us to exclude differences greater than 2.9 percent" (p. 227). This information means that users are more likely to accept the information as true just by the headline alone if it simply sounds believable, regardless of whether or not such information was actually accurate or even, if such an article even existed.

One of the major reasons users may believe false headlines, according to Maggie Fox (2017), quoting an editorial with David Lazer from Northeastern University among other colleagues, is that "People prefer information that confirms their preexisting attitudes, view information consistent with their preexisting beliefs as more persuasive than dissonant information, [or] confirmation bias, and are inclined to accept information that pleases them" (n. pag, 2017). The editorial from Lazer shows that not only does a headline only have to sound plausible to a social media user for them to believe it, but that if a headline simply aligns with what a user internally believes, they may accept it as true without looking any further on the reason that someone may have an opinion in the form of a headline that aligns with what they believe alone. (Guess, n. pag). This finding becomes even more concerning on a website such as Twitter with the website having such a short character limit, even with the more recent addition of 280 characters per tweet. Users may be so accustomed to reading such short posts at a time that reading any further than a 280 character tweet feels unnecessary. Users might accept a headline a news outlet posts, legitimate or not, at face value, especially with the option to quote retweet, which is the ability to link another tweet in one's own and add a comment with the contents of the linked tweet still visible. If users see a quote retweet that either "summarizes" what the article may be about or is a reaction to what the article consists of, the need to do one's own investigation of the information present at them becomes unnecessary to the user (Kwak, n. pag).

Another study done by Rosenstiel and others (2015) also analyzes how Twitter users use their accounts and the types of people they follow, as well as the types of news they consume. When asking users in a survey why they might follow news outlets, 80% replied with "It helps me stay informed and be a better citizen," 66% stated that "I like to talk to friends, family, and colleagues about what's going on in the news," and 36% also stated that they "find it relaxing and entertaining" (n. pag). While this seems like normal and expected behaviors of social media users, Rosenstiel and others involved in the study also asked how Twitter users get the news on their platform, the top two and overwhelming responses were "scrolling through my timeline," and "browsing tweets through people I follow," while the third top result, yet significantly lower than the top two by at least half, was "seeing [a] tweet as part of articles on other websites" (2015)

Such findings alone already have several implications about how users view news on Twitter. If scrolling through the timeline alone, and not even clicking on articles and verifying information is not even the second most popular response, this already confirms that many Twitter users do not critically view the news presented to them, and accept information they view at face value, contributing to the spread of misinformation that many of those now critical of only journalists have been greatly fearful of accepting. This is not to say that journalists are at no blame for this problem, however, as the respective news organizations they work for also may have a form of political bias. Rather, the main concern in the spread of misinformation overall, be journalists or average netizens, is those with an already existing internal bias that attempt to pass off their knowledge as factual news off to unsuspecting users.

Another article continues to discuss the presence of fake news, according to Trend Micro Inc. where they further discuss the abuse of social media by those wanting to spread misinformation. It has gotten to such a concerning point that "Governments are starting to recognize that fake news is something that must be actively fought. Various government agencies are now setting up services to debunk stories that they consider to be false. They are also considering imposing regulations and punishing sites that do publish misinformation... [and that] the targets of these new regulations would include social networking services" (n.d).

Understandably, given that this was an article published in a different country other than the United States, it might be months, potentially years before such regulations happen domestically. However, this continues to show how this is not just a problem of the United States, but more of an international problem, as many people around the world also are affected by this "laziness" social media has lead to users becoming instead of the "good citizens" as mentioned as a response in a survey done by Rosentiel and others (2015). This raises several other questions, as to where and how long this idea of "fake news" has been an issue, and how and why people have let this become such an international issue that governments are now actively attempting to take action to stop the spread of fake news as a result of social media.

Hypothesis

For this study, I believe that based on the methods I will be using, I will find similar results as found in the literature review of this section. I will possibly find that Twitter users do little to verify the information they find on their timeline is accurate, and that this could almost completely be a result of just needing convenient, quick news, more than anything else, or simply viewing headlines that already affirm their existing beliefs. As it is found repeatedly in the literature review, people tend to gravitate towards, or only view news that shares the same political beliefs as them as it helps them feel more represented.

Method

The method I will use for this study is also similar to how the majority of the articles I reviewed found their results, through a survey of social media users through Google Survey Docs, or specifically Twitter users on their page. I will be asking simple demographic questions, such as age, education level, how long they have been a Twitter user, and others I might find necessary. In addition, I will be asking questions as to who they follow on Twitter, why they use Twitter, how they generally receive their news, why they might view the news on one platform versus another, how they view the news that gets presented to them, how they get the news if only on Twitter, from whom, and most importantly, how they view news outlets as a whole. This should give me enough answers to answer why Twitter users get their news a certain way, and how this may impact how they view news outlets as a result. As for how this information will be obtained, I plan to post this survey to one of my Twitter accounts with both the most amount of active followers and friends, and will ask my friends to retweet the survey so that others may participate, otherwise known as the snowball sampling method. The snowball sampling method is typically used on social media to reach as many people as possible in order to get a representative sample of what could possibly be a large number of users. (Noy, p. 328) With this in mind, I believe I will get the best representation of Twitter users provided that I receive enough responses.

Results

In my survey, I asked a total of 23 questions, with three chances for the user to explain their answers. I posted the survey on Monday, April 29, and almost immediately received a total of 261 responses in the span of just two days. I started off with simple demographic questions relating to age, gender, and education level, and followed into the types of Twitter accounts the user follows. I then asked questions about how they hear about the news, the types of news outlets they follow, and how they view discussion of news events on twitter. I also asked questions on how they interact with news links once they appear on their timeline, and finally, whether or not they believe discussions of the news are important and if they trust news organizations to be fair. My questions about how the participant receives news, the types of accounts they follow on Twitter, and the types of news outlets they follow on Twitter were based off of a study done by Rosenstiel and others, who also completed a similar survey. I specifically asked about discussion of news events as according to Stroud (n.d.) comments in the news section also have the capability to shape how people interpret a news story, and with Twitter already having its own built in comment section by default, especially with quote retweeting, this becomes twice as important to also ask users about. The results, along with their questions, are as follows.

Age

The first question I asked was about their age. By law, minors are not able to consent to participation, so I had to limit the age of allowed participation to at least 18 years old. With this done, it appears that the vast majority of active Twitter users according to my data are between the ages of 18 to 29, with the highest numbers being between 18-23. Figure 1 illustrates these results.

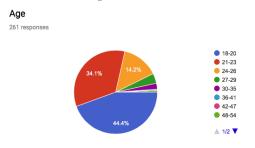


Figure 1: A graph that illustrates the ages of participants in this survey.

I also attempted to include age groups above the age of 54, but my survey was not able to reach above that age. In fact, as the data shows, the higher the age, the less users appear to be active on that website, as even up to 27 I

started getting less and less participants, with only one response from someone who appeared to be in their late forties or early fifties.

Gender

My next question was a voluntary response, which asked about the user's gender. Understanding how this may be a difficult section for some users to respond to, I made it voluntary for this reason and allowed people to type in their own responses to this question. After I closed the survey, I tallied up all the ones I received and separated them into four categories that best fit their response; man, woman, other, and no response. Figure 2 is a graph that illustrates the results.

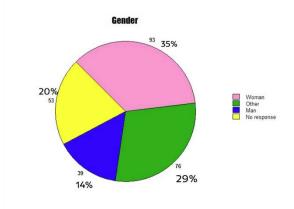


Figure 2: A graph that illustrates the gender identity of participants; 35% representing women, 14% representing men, 29% representing other, and 20% representing users who chose not to respond.

Highest education level

My next demographic question was about their education level, and it appears that a high percentage of users are either still in undergraduate school, or simply stopped at undergraduate without pursuing a bachelor's degree. Figure 3 illustrates these results.

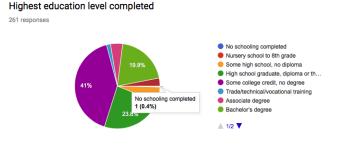


Figure 3: a graph that illustrates the highest education level of participants in this survey.

The next few possible responses were "Master's degree" which is indicated by the deep red in the pie chart, "Professional degree," and "Doctorate degree." It appears that the highest possible education level from all the sampled Twitter users was a Master's degree, but I have seen verified Twitter accounts, and even professors on the website that indicate having higher than a Master's degree. If my survey ever reached these users, my data would have reflected this.

Questions about Twitter usage

The next part of my survey asked users how often they use the site, and how long they have been a user, which is illustrated by the next three graphs below. It appears that according to Figure 4, people have been introduced to the website at varying times, with very few people being less experienced Twitter users, or have been on the website less than six months, with the highest percentage of users being on the website for about three to five years.

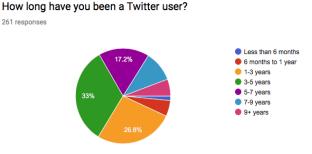


Figure 4: A graph that illustrates how long each participant has used Twitter.

Figures 5 and 6 ask how often the participant uses Twitter, both hourly and weekly. The highest percentage of users combined appear to spend 1-5 hours on the website, with the lowest percentage being on the website for over nine hours. The overwhelming majority of Twitter users appear to use the website or application daily.

On average, how much time do you spend on Twitter daily?

261 responses

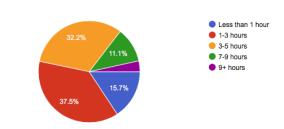


Figure 5: A graph that illustrates the amount of hours participants spend on Twitter daily.

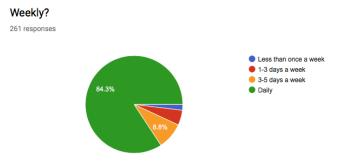


Figure 6: A graph that illustrates the number of days participants access Twitter each week.

Types of accounts subscribed

The next question in the survey asked the participant the types of accounts they followed on Twitter. This was to help get a better idea of how they receive the information they get on Twitter. The results are illustrated in Figure 7.

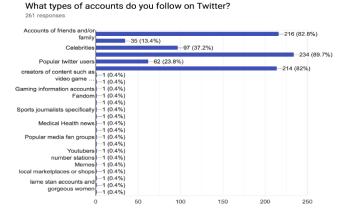


Figure 7: A graph that lists the type of accounts participants follow on Twitter.

The 214 (82%) category was a response I included, which states "other accounts for 'mutual [follows]" and such, the 234 (89.7%) category was for "Artists", while the 35 (13.4%) category was for news organizations. I also allowed for users to type in their own responses for this question, which resulted in the graph being depicted in such a way. Some other various responses that did not appear in the screenshot are "funny bots," "joke accounts," "people with similar interests/fandom," "official Twitters for games and companies," "gaming news sites," and "fandom accounts and feminist/leftist accounts." I generally tried to keep my own responses general, but it appears that I should have also included "fandom" as a category as many users typed in that response, which would have helped me get a percentage of that category.

How I get news on Twitter

The next few questions ask users how they hear about news in general, to possibly include Twitter. The results are shown in Figure 8.

In the past two weeks, I have used ______ to hear about recent events.

261 responses

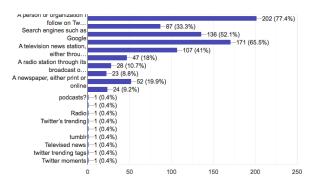
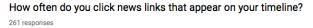


Figure 8: A graph that shows how participants used Twitter in the past two weeks.

I also asked the participants if they use any other source other than Twitter to receive the news, and it appeared that the next most popular response was Tumblr. Many other users also indicated sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Google News, the iOS News App, YouTube, Local news sources, Yahoo, Apple News, NPR, News 12 New Jersey, Snapchat, CNN, Flipboard, the New York Times, BBC, Kaiser Health News, CDC, various television programs, school sources, podcasts, InYourArea, Ted Talks, Austin Statesman, Eldiario.es, Yandex, Buzzfeed, Vox, ArsTechnica, Kotaku, Dutch news websites, and ABC. Overall, it appears that the majority of participants also use other forms of social media to hear about news.

Interaction with news links and other users

My next few questions asked participants how they interact with news links, and possibly others commenting in news links on Twitter. The first one asks how often the participant clicks news links that appear on their timeline, with almost half of them stating "sometimes," and very few saying either "always" or "never."



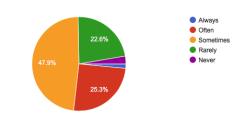


Figure 9: A graph that shows how often users click links that appear on their timeline.

Figures 10-11 show results of my question that asks how people read what others have to say on a particular event, as well as if they are interested in what others have to say about the news. The majority of users appear to use their timeline as a main source of finding what others have to say on a particular topic or event. In the next chart, over half of the participants indicated that they were interested in what others have to say about the news.

In the past two weeks, I have read what other users had to say on a particular topic or recent event by _____.

261 responses

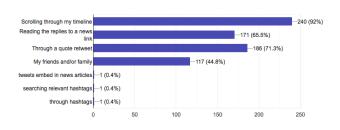


Figure 10: A graph that shows how participants read what others have to say on recent events.

I am interested in what other users have to say about an event in the news.

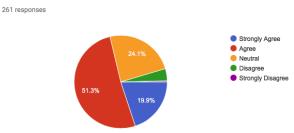


Figure 11: A graph that shows how users responded when asked if interested in other users thoughts on events.

My next question asked users if they are more likely to either get or share news on Twitter, with the majority of users stating they are more likely to get news only, with the second highest percentage stating they are likely to both get and share news to their followers.

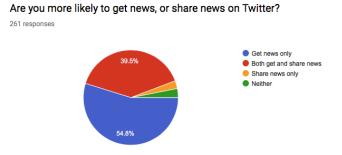


Figure 12: A graph that illustrates how users responded to the question "Are you more likely to get news, or share news on Twitter?"

My last couple of questions in this section asks the users if they remember reading the replies to tweets featuring news. The majority of responses said yes, however my next question asks them to explain why or why they do not read the comments.

In the past two weeks, I have read the replies to tweets featuring news links.

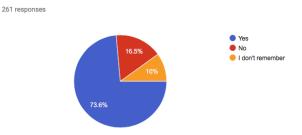


Figure 13: A graph that shows the percentage of users that read the replies to tweets featuring news links.

There were varying types of answers that users gave as to why they might read or avoid reading the replies.

A good number of responses stated that they were simply curious about what others had to say on the event in the news, such as one participant stating "I read them to see other people's opinions or reactions to the news. Sometimes they might have additional information that frames the situation in a different context, or disproves parts of the story." Some participants stated they read the read the replies to help understand the news better, with two participants stating that "I'm interested in what other people's opinions are, because sometimes I don't have the frame of reference needed to properly understand a topic. Seeing how other people react or make valid arguments helps me understand it better," or as another participant wrote,

> "It's a mixed bag, sometimes there's some awful stuff in the replies but I read them mostly to see what the common viewpoint is. sometimes people make some good points! But personally, it makes me feel better to know there's others out there who share my opinion, especially on issues concerning [marginalized] groups I'm part of, or those who agree with me about the ways in which the world is failing [marginalized] people for example."

However, some users have a very negative view on the replies that typically occur in the reply section, such as stating "[I read replies] to find people to block," or "Normally there are Nazis lurking in left-leaning article comments and I hate looking at what they think." Other users have a different reason for reading the replies to news articles, which also appeared to be a popular response. One participant stated that they read the replies "...to check for misinformation – sometimes the original poster gets something wrong, and I like to double check what other people have to say about it, especially if they have corrections."

The next couple of questions I asked relates to the article by Stroud on the Engaging News Report. I asked users if they typically find their views on the event being affected by what others have to say, which also partially relates to some people's responses in the previous section. I also asked users if they've participated in the replies section of tweets featuring news articles. The highest percentage of users find that they agree with the statement about comments affecting their perception of the news, while the majority of users also stated that they typically do not participate in the reply section of tweets with these news links.

I typically find my views of an event being affected by what others have to say about it.

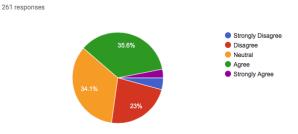


Figure 14: A graph that shows the percentage of users that have their views on events being affected by what other Twitter users post.

In the past two weeks, I have replied to an account posting a news link, or another person in the replies.

260 responses

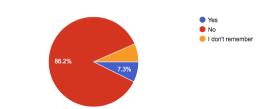


Figure 15: A graph that shows the percentage of users that reply to news links.

My next couple of questions asks participants if they're more likely to check out a news link once another person has added a comment, or quote retweeted a tweet featuring the news link. Figure 16 depicts the results, with 1 being less likely, and 5 being more likely.

How likely are you to follow through on a news link once another user

has added a comment, or quote tweeted it? 260 responses 100 75 50 25 21 (8.1%) 30 (11.5%) 19 (7.3%) 19 (7.3%) 19 (7.3%)

Figure 16: A graph that shows how likely participants are to view a news link once another user has added a comment.

The question in Figure 17 asks users if they're more likely to check the relevance of the source once a person has quote retweeted it, with 1 being more likely and 5 being less likely. The majority of users tend to gravitate towards 1 and 3 than 4 and 5 as their response.

How likely are you to check the validity and/or relevance of the news source once another person has added a comment, or quote tweeted it? 260 responses

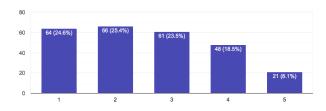


Figure 17: A graph that illustrates how likely users are to check the validity or reference of a source once another user has added a comment.

The last question in this section asks if the participant has retweeted another person's comment or quote retweet featuring a news link, with the majority of users picking yes as their answer. In the past two weeks, I have retweeted another person's comment, or quote retweet on something happening in the news.

261 responses

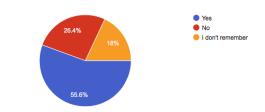
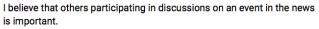


Figure 18: A graph that shows the percentage of users that retweet other comments on news events.

Civility in the replies

This last section is about discussion on news events; as mentioned previously, another person's comment or opinion as demonstrated in the results has the capacity to shape how one views the news. The first question in this section asks the participant if they believe discussion of the news is important, with the vast majority of users either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, shown in Figure 19.





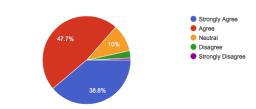


Figure 19: A graph that illustrates the number of participants that agree with the question "I believe that others participating in discussions on an event in the news is important."

The next question relating to this question asks the participant if the discussions should stay civil, even if two different viewpoints are in conflict with each other, which came with very mixed results, with the highest percentage of responses feeling neutral about this statement, shown in Figure 20.

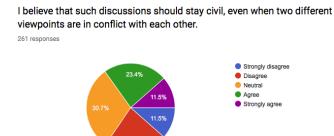


Figure 20: A graph that shows the percentage of users that agree with the statement "I believe that such discussions should stay civil, even when two different viewpoints are in conflict with each other."

Participants were also given an option along with this question to explain the reasoning for their answer, with some people agreeing on the basis that, as one user stated,

> "All discussions, especially events in the News, should be discussed in a civil manner. Twitter is an international website and various users could live in areas that the news is about and can offer better insight into what is happening (take for example, the Notre Dame fire where the French were saying it was an accident while US sources were thinking it was "a terrorist attack").

> "Due to a level of anonymity discussions on social media platforms – and especially Twitter – tend to get heated very quickly and stop being civil. And because of Twitter's character limit people commenting in the replies to news often can't get their point across in an appropriate manner which

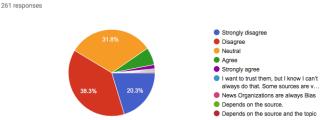
makes the quality of discussion even worse. I believe that online discussion should follow the same etiquette as that in real life with the main rule being "if you wouldn't say that to a person standing in front of you shouldn't say it to a person online."

Several other users also explained that civility is situational, depending on the topic and who is attempting to hold a "civil" debate with the person. For example, a couple of users stated:

> "I don't think anyone has to stay civil when arguing against outspoken bigots or those who are purposefully ignorant. On more trivial issues then it's better to stay calm, but trying to enforce this idea of people having to be civil even when facing their oppressors and sometimes violent hate groups, [marginalized] people are justified in their anger on the topic. e.g. trans people arguing against TERFs in an online space for example! TERFs are a violent anti-trans hate group, therefore shouldn't be shown the same respect and common decency by those that they're responsible for murdering"

> "If the two different viewpoints in question are harmless, then I absolutely believe that the conversation should remain civil. However, if someone's viewpoint is directly harmful and generally ill informed, I certainly wouldn't want to treat them civilly, and I wouldn't blame anyone else for not treating them civilly, either. Racist, homophobic, transphobic, etc. views don't warrant people's kindness."

My last question in this survey asked users to state whether or not they trust news organizations to be honest and fair when reporting the news. The highest percentage of users disagree with this statement. Figure 21 illustrates these findings.



I trust news organizations to be honest and fair when reporting the news.

Figure 21: A graph that shows the number of users that trust news organizations to be honest when reporting the news.

The users that strongly disagreed with this statement did so because they are aware of the bias that some news organizations hold, and not because of other user's comments. For example, three participants wrote

> "Many corporations are owned by one bigger company so their words are regulated. Many will not critic their own government's action as a whole if they can pin it on an individual or smaller section. Often it's best to examine the news with a critical lens, even if the source believes it's being honest and fair because they may not even realize they're being biased"

"More often than not, I have missed out on big international news because local and national news outlets have failed to report on them. For example, I live in the United States and while there was extensive coverage on the Notre Dame burning down, there was little to no coverage on the Sri Lanka attacks a day/ few days later. Additionally, the news is heavily distorted from outlet to outlet — a notorious example being Fox News which often twists the news to fit their conservative/ republican agenda and ideals. The United States constantly criticizes other countries for their lack of fair and honest reporting, their heavy use of propaganda, and heavy state censorship but I think the US needs to take a look in the mirror since we do the exact same thing as well — sometimes to an even more extreme (and covert/thinlyveiled) extent."

"It's important to know your own biases, as well as the biases of news sites and stations. I think liberal and conservative biases can often tilt the angle in which news is being reported, and even more "neutral" news sources can show the occasional bias. I'm more inclined towards sources like NPR and Huffington Post as an intersectional feminist and someone whose views align most closely with socialism, but even these are not entirely reliable. It's always important to make your own personal assessments when you read the news."

Many of the users who responded generally believe that many news sources have a tendency to be biased, regardless of political beliefs, and are unable to trust many news sources as a result of that. However, many users also believe that journalists still have a duty to try to be as unbiased and fair as possible, as one user states

> "I don't think all news organizations or rather those that present themselves as news organizations are always reporting in good faith. Like Fox News, for example. But I also do not believe all news organizations are illegitimate facts churning machines as some seem to claim. It's the duty of journalists and reporters to present the facts unbiased so that the populace can come to a conclusion on their own. But lately that doesn't seem to be the case, with some news stations presenting some biased accounts to keep their ratings up. Social media too seems to have that issue as well.."

Almost all the responses received are similar to the ones provided, and I have yet to see anyone state that they genuinely trust news organizations to be unbiased and fair.

Discussion

Overall, the results that I received from this survey are not what I expected, considering some of the other studies I consulted prior to having the survey go live. When I expected Twitter users to not be active in seeking factual information, the majority of responses I received stated that many users are aware of the issue of "fake news" and as a result, do more to find factual and accurate news. In studies, such as the one conducted by Allcot and Gentzkow (2017) that found "15 percent of survey respondents recalled seeing the Fake stories," the users in this study appear to know and tell the difference between false stories and true ones, and also real from legitimate sources. Despite many of the points in the hypothesis, such as Twitter users wanting "fast" information, many of the users I surveyed appear to actually take several other steps to verify that the information is true, whether it is from reading the replies to news links to debunk the article, or doing further research to verify that the source is credible before "retweeting" the link. Also, while it is still likely that Twitter users are just as likely to retweet news that aligns with their beliefs, they still recognize that many news outlets still hold some form of bias, and are critical of such once they see news appear on their timeline. One user especially that stated that we rarely hear news about what is going on in other countries outside of the United States or even some European countries further illustrates this point. As for civility in comment sections, participants generally agree that conversations should stay civil, but only if the other person is willing to also be civil, or not state that certain groups of people do not deserve the same rights as others. This has the capacity to shape how people see the news, but according to the results, in a completely different way. In general, it appears that Twitter users have built their own self moderation system, such as stating in quote retweets and replies that some news sources are inaccurate, which itself shows that users are aware of how to spot legitimate information, and a quote retweet featuring an old or false news link reacting that may make it seem more believable likely has users in the reply stating that the link is either outdated or false.

However, Twitter works in a way that interaction, regardless of the type, is likely to still show up on users timelines, that even a quote retweet, or false information will still show up on a user's timeline, and it is up to the user to figure out whether or not it is legitimate. In fact, as an active Twitter user I can name multiple instances where Twitter users have failed to check a Tweet for misinformation or spread of harmful agendas before retweeting the post, sometimes understandably because the issue at hand may also directly affect them as a marginalized group. Many Twitter accounts exist that are solely dedicated to fact checking and identifying viral posts as hoaxes, such as @HoaxEye or @snopes. The results I received are likely more illustrative of what Twitter users perceive is the right thing to do, or what they attempt to do most of the time, rather than a full hundred percent compliance with being a responsible media consumer.

It is also possible that the sources I consulted had a different demographic, such as differences in age, political leanings, geographical location, or even social media platform, that resulted in such varying results, but this also still shows that out of the 261 users I sampled, with the majority of respondents being under 30, that they are more aware of how the news media works than possibly other generations, or other demographic groups. My study shows a different audience of people from the studies I consulted, with younger users and varying demographics, and it shows what is typically overlooked; how these younger users examine the news links that come to their timeline. The results could have been different had this been on another social media platform, or with a different group of users as a result of the snowballing effect, but 261 users is the best sample size I could have gotten that best illustrates how many Twitter users feel about the news.

Conclusion

In this study, I initially believed that being a social media website, Twitter users would prefer fast, convenient information that aligns with their political views and not take the extra steps in critically examining the information that appears on their timeline, to which I found varying results with possible explanations. I found that Twitter users might be aware of news outlet bias, and might be quick to verify and fact check the information that appears on their timeline in the replies to news links, and view civility as conditional given that the other person would also like to be civil. Of course, however, no person is fully able to avoid falling for bias and propaganda, especially if it may align with their own views or if it deeply affects them as a person, which is still illustrated in some of the literature review and from my observations in the discussion. As a result, it is still up to the user to be able to differentiate between legitimate and false news and information, and spreading good and responsible practices such as encouraging fact checking and research is still necessary, especially on a website such as Twitter. While comments still have the ability to shape how people view the news, it is more to give a different perspective and why such news might be important, or to show what the general consensus might be, while dismissing others that are intentionally malicious in the comments. Due to the ability comments from other users have to shape how another user views an event in the news, participants generally believe it would be beneficial for others to all stay on the same level of civility rather than attacking others, provided that other users share that same hope for civility rather than resorting to malicious attacks on others, or "trolling" in the reply section to get a reaction from others.

As I found in some of the results, and reasons people might not agree with civility in all cases, especially with the aforementioned individuals making transphobic, racist, or otherwise prejudiced comments, I believe now that another important demographic question that I initially left out would also be on race, ethnicity or geographical location. Many participants stated how the news and comments affect them as a part of a minority group or their geographic location, and having this question may have also helped to shape and explain some of the results. In addition, I was not anticipating on getting as many as 261 responses when I first posted this survey, so it took an extensive amount of time to read and review all the comments, as interesting and insightful as they were. It is

also possible that I got many of the same replies as a result of the snowball sampling effect; how I asked my friends to send this to their friends, and so forth. Had I posted this somewhere else or asked another group of individuals to complete and boost my survey, it is possible that I might have also gotten some different results. Ten, or even five years after this article's publication, another major social media outlet may eventually replace Twitter, and the way people view the news may differ. If I were to do this survey again, I would cater my questions to reflect the time and observe if the responses are any different from the results now, except also including some of the key factors I believe I missed in this study. With that in mind, however, I hope that users will continue, or learn to be good social media citizens in search for the truth and believing in fair reporting for all events. Whether or not something is true, as seen in even the past three years of this article being drafted, can have a major impact on the lives of every citizen, even the ones without a social media presence.

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For a link to this survey, follow this link: https://forms.gle/WAXNHtUVgvBAjSzy6

For full results of the survey, follow this link.: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Fv9wbmJvEQ_ VPNwhhRhKFjUxJpFGLnhjvK_5tkZwtUE/edit?usp=sha ring ক ক

THE RISE OF THE FRONT NATIONAL IN FRANCE *by Wail Saher*

Introduction

The Front National (FN) is a far-right party in France experiencing significant electoral success in recent years. However, in 2007 the electoral success that they are experiencing today was almost unimaginable. The party had issues with its finances after an inspiring run to the second round of the presidential elections in 2002. This culminated in the retirement of Jean-Marie Le Pen (JMLP), the founder and president of the FN, from the political scene. Until 2015, he still had a very significant voice in the party and still represents the legacy of the Front National. The party struggled electorally from 2007 to 2011. However, this changed with Marine Le Pen's successful campaign and election in 2011. The Front National began gaining popularity again in the regional elections and later in the European elections. They continued to gain steam and broke through to the second round of the presidential election in 2017. This is highly unlikely for a far-right party, as center right and center left parties like the "Union pour un Mouvement Populaire" (UMP) and the "Parti Socialiste" (PS) usually dominate the elections. This success was the culmination of the work that Marine Le Pen has

accomplished as president of the FN. She changed the image of the FN by distancing herself from her father, changing her rhetoric and shifting to the center. This, in conjunction with a rise of xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment in France, bolstered the FN. Therefore, both Marine Le Pen's reform of the party and the fear of immigration led to the elevation of the FN (now known as the Rassemblement National: RN).

Front National Reform

Following Marine Le Pen's rise as the president of the party, she made dramatic changes to revive the party. In 2008, her father Jean-Marie Le Pen (JMLP), stepped down as president of the party following a disappointing presidential run in 2007, where he ended fifth in the primary round and didn't advance. She took the helm in 2011 after 3 years of campaigning against other high ranked party officials. Following her election as president of the party, her goal was to change the FN from a notoriously xenophobic party into a party that is a more acceptable by the mainstream public and media. This was the start of a process called "dediabolisation" by Marine Le Pen. Diable is the French word for devil and is used here because the notion of the FN being an evil and 'diabolic' party was part of the political discourse in France. This is largely due to the branding that JMLP had given his party. Before then, JMLP was known for making inflammatory comments often considered antisemitic and racist. This stigma has largely dissipated in recent years as 68% of French people now consider the FN as a mainstream party.¹ This reform combined with the rise of xenophobia in France has enabled the party to become one of the most popular in France despite its far-right discourse.

One of the ways that Marine Le Pen has excelled at fighting the criticisms of the party is the use of identity politics. Identity politics is defined as "political positions based on the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify. Moreover, identity politics includes the ways in which politics are shaped by aspects of

their identity through loosely correlated social organizations".² Her criticisms by the media and opposing parties were that the party remained a homophobic and racist party and that the changes and reforms were just optics. In 2012, the addition of several gay and minority members to the party turned some heads. The controversial additions did not sit well with the traditional Catholic and regionalist factions of the party. How can one party be racist when there are members of minorities within the party? How can you consider the Front National to be homophobic when the vice president is rumored to be a gay man and there are several gay members of the party? This inclusion of minority members also pushed the Front National towards a change of rhetoric. When it came to North African immigration to France, the rhetoric shifted from 'we don't want them here because they are a potential threat and possibly criminals' to 'these people can't fit within our society because the society they come from is drastically different from ours'. This shift in rhetoric also helped the Dediabolisation of the FN as the message of one not being able to adhere to a society's norms and values was more appealing than one of disdain towards a group of people.³ "FN as a party, takes great care in using words in its official documents and manifestos which are not seen as incitement to hatred. Fringe Extreme-Right movements with a combined membership of no more than a few thousands do exist, which openly use Racist rhetoric".4 This shift in rhetoric was adopted by several other populist parties in Western Europe and allowed them to succeed in the 2017 elections.

Another action she took to change the image of her party was to start distancing herself as much as possible from her father. Her father had now become a retired politician but still had close ties with the party and had a role as an advisor. In 2013, Marine Le Pen announced that her father had no official role in the party anymore but remained to advise candidates as an honorary chairman, as he was the founder after all. When asked about comments JMLP made earlier in his career she blasted his remarks as "unacceptable" and "from a past era". Despite this, JMLP

kept a public persona giving several interviews and tried to participate in the normalization process of the party. In late 2014 and early 2015, he gave several interviews with left and foreign media where he denigrated the decisions and comments he's made in the past showing a renewed openness that was seemingly uncharacteristic. However, the collaboration between Marine Le Pen and her father didn't last long as controversy struck the family again. In an interview to BFMTV, JMLP made comments about WWII, implying that gas chambers were simply a detail of a much larger war and that the "white world" is under attack.5 Following these comments, Marine Le Pen officially suspended her father from the party and refused to acknowledge his comments as something the FN would sanction. After this decision by his daughter, JMLP publicly disowned Marine Le Pen and said that he feels ashamed having to share a surname with her and hopes "she gets married quickly to avoid more embarrassment".6 Following these comments, Marine Le Pen announced that more sanctions were coming against her father, while he simply tweeted, "La force d'une famille, comme la force d'une armée, réside dans la loyauté de ses membres"7 on April 10th, 2015 and announced that he was officially stepping down from his political career. However, more drama ensued later on as during an FN rally JMLP made an intrusion and received cheers from crowds which was later called "malicious and contemptuous" by Marine Le Pen.8 This was the birth of a growing rift among supporters of the party, between a younger generation who wanted to see JMLP gone and Marine Le Pen start a new chapter of the party and the older generation who clearly continues to support the founder of the party as can be seen through the cheers at the rally (Yves Camus).9 Following this incident, the two have since been at odds and JMLP has had no political activity since.

Marine Le Pen herself has also taken several steps as the party's leader to redeem the racist image that her father had created. First, she banned several militants from her party that she considered to be too neo-fascist. She also recognized the holocaust as an "abomination" which was a symbolic step as her father often claimed that it had no significance: "Its sincere rejection of Holocaust denial and Nazism also limits the persistence within the FN of radical militant nuclei whose vision of the world is based on necessity to repudiate all the founding ideas of liberal democracy, with a particular fixation against anti-racism, egalitarianism and universalism."¹⁰ Here Camus explains the importance of Marine Le Pen's choice to recognize the holocaust. It sends a message to militants of her party that a new era has begun and exemplifies her move from the farright to the center. In 2012, she also left several far right "alliances" like the European Alliance for Freedom, which united far right groups across several European countries.

However, this normalization and dediabolisation of the FN was done gradually and meticulously in order not to not alienate its base.¹¹ In several studies the FN and the LFI (far left party) were considered the two most "antiestablishment" parties by French public opinion. This means that the move towards centrism by Marine Le Pen risks alienating its voters who support the FN as a form of protest against the political establishment. "This need for normalization clashes with the need of the National Front to remain an "anti-system" force to maintain its credibility with its militants: to normalize, the National Front would run the risk of cutting itself off from its historical base".¹² This is an important characteristic that the party needs to retain for electoral success. Due to the system of the French elections, the second round is often voting for the lesser of two evils, leaving the president with relatively low popularity. This has been exemplified in recent years with Francois Hollande having a 2% approval rate during his presidency and, in more current news, Macron's low popularity and even being criticized by Trump for having an approval rate of 26%. This low approval rate of presidents proves itself useful for the FN as general dissatisfaction with a president's decisions often leads the people who voted for the lesser of two evils to become voters of the opposition and in some cases an anti-establishment party such as the FN or the LFI. Marine Le Pen was able to maintain this anti-establishment image because her party

was never elected to the presidency. There also is a stark contrast between the FN and the UMP (conservative right). The conservative right has had multiple scandals ranging from Francois Fillon's suit crisis to Nicolas Sarkozy taking money from Colonel Ghaddafi. Through her criticism of the current presidency and her constant presence as a member of the opposition in the parliament, she has cemented her party as an anti-establishment party.

An IFOP (National Institute of French Public Opinion) study observed that the FN has multiple facets to its voters. This study determined that there is a clear schism between the North and South when it comes to FN voters. The 'South' electorate is much more to the right while the 'North' electorate hopes for a more social FN. Both align when it comes to the central question of the party: immigration. When asked if there are too many immigrants in France both north and south electorates voted over 90% yes. They also agree on several other issues of security and immigration. "These convergences, however, coexist with real cleavages concerning economic and social policies. "Immigration aggregates voters who do not vote for the same party, as can be seen with differences in the economy and the social".¹³ The differences in the party can be traced back to the impact of the party leaders. JMLP had a staunch base in the south, where there is heavy illegal Mediterranean immigration. The North identifies closer to the new era FN with Marine at the helm. "The FN "Philippiste" (named after the former vice-president Florian Philippot, whose line is followed by Marine Le Pen) or FN "du Nord" (in reference to its geographical location), sovereigntist and protectionist positions, and the FN " Lepeniste "(named after former President Jean-Marie Le Pen) or FN "South," less statist and more sensitive to identity and social issues".¹⁴ This separation of the electorate creates two problems for Marine Le Pen. She may lose her north electorate if a prominent candidate on social issues arises. However, if she broadens her speech to social issues and goes too far, she may lose a part of her southern electorate.15 Therefore, as observed during the 2017

presidential election, she put a special emphasis on the common issue of both electorates, immigration.

Schism of the party

Following the success that the FN experienced at the 2017 presidential elections, they began to be scrutinized more closely by their electorate. Following the party's congress and tensions between Marion Marechal and Florian Philippot, Marine chose the side of Marion Marechal thereby, suspending Philippot from the vice presidency of the party. This is surely because she felt her presidency was threatened by Florian Philippot. Following the suspension decision, he left the party and created his own party Les Patriotes. This schism deeply hurt the northern base of the FN but political scientists don't agree on the possible impact. Following the past schism of the FN in 1998, the party experienced its best presidential election at the time in 2002. It consolidated power for JMLP at the time and made him a more prominent figure on the national stage which led to a shocking first round victory in the presidential election of 2002. This was likely due to a unified electorate and a stronger message that was able to win the primary. In the short term, this schism definitely hurts their presence and unity in the national assembly as well as the senate. Unlike JMLP, Marine Le Pen also lost power within her party as she and Philippot reigned over the northern electorate. Now with her northern electorate being split, Marion Marechal, Le Pen and other members who are more prominent in the south gained more leverage over her. However, if there could be a similar impact on 2022 elections, Marine Le Pen could become president as it is likely that voters for Les Patriotes, would vote for Marine in the second round.

In 2018, the FN was renamed to the Rassemblement National. This name is a combination of Marine Le Pen's campaign slogan "Rassemblement Bleu Marine" and the previous name of Front National. Now the Front National refers to both parties; RN and Les Patriotes. Overall, these changes and reforms to the FN have led it to high electoral success. Their success can also be attributed to the implosion of the UMP (former republican party), and the creation of several parties on the right wing political landscape. Following several scandals of corruption, the UMP imploded into several parties and fractured the center right movement in France. However, the transition that the party has undergone with Marine at the helm was instrumental in getting the FN to the second round of the presidential election and their vast success in the cantonal elections. In 2011, following her election as president of the party she was able to retain the FN's 402 cantons and following the reform of the cantonal system in 2015 she was able to amass 22% of votes for the departmental election in 2015.

Party Policy

The original policy of the Front National under JMLP was to keep France pure, concerning the immigration from other European states like Italy and Portugal as well as post-colonial immigration. Today's FN kept faithful to this, but the rhetoric has shifted away from blatantly racist discourse to a more acceptable idea in the new political context. Especially under Marine Le Pen, the rhetoric shifted from "we don't want immigrants here" to "immigrants can't adapt to French society because of where they come from". Following her presidential campaign, there is a broader understanding of her policy and what she hopes to accomplish as a far-right party if elected as president.

All dysfunction of society is a result of mass immigration according to FN. This is a recurring theme in all of the FN's programs, where the issue of immigration is brought up when speaking about social, economic and political programs.¹⁶ This objective is to unify her base as there are disagreements regarding other policies, but all agree that the root of evil is immigration. The first step to solving all issues in France is protecting the border and elevating the level of security. This includes recruitment of 50,000 military, 15,000 policemen and the creation of 40,000 prison cells as she declared during her 2017 presidential campaign.

Marine Le Pen was elected to the EU parliament in 2014 as an openly anti-EU candidate. She became a roadblock to several pieces of legislation in the EU. As a president, she wanted to immediately conduct a referendum to leave the EU.¹⁷ This anti-EU position is natural within her party as regaining sovereignty and control of the borders and currency is quintessential to her party.

This leads to the question, if she's so antiimmigration, what is her proposed immigration policy? First, she hopes to limit, both legal and illegal immigration to 10,000 people per year. This is a really hard stance to take as in 2012 there were 229,600 legal immigrants. She wishes to limit this by abolishing the Schengen zone. This would stop Europeans from immigrating to France freely. It would also restrict people who get a Schengen visa from other countries from entering France. She also would like to end the right of soil for children born in France of foreign parents. This is a hard task to accomplish as it is unconstitutional, however, it does deal with the problem that many feel affects them as many second-generation immigrants are French. This hard line on immigration is what voters want to hear from the party and why its rise in popularity has a strong correlation with a rise of xenophobia in France.

She promotes the idea that the economy should be driven by decisions made by French people, but she explicitly stayed blurry on economic programs, instead focusing on a need to escape from the Euro to get rid of the ECB's pressure. "The ECB is more worried about inflation than unemployment" Marine Le Pen declared in a speech during the 2017 elections.¹⁸ The question of economic sovereignty is key to Marine Le Pen as it bolsters her position of leaving the EU as well as the Schengen zone. She's also made the case that France are being treated unfairly in comparison to countries with low salaries. She also criticizes the openness of borders that comes with the EU which according to her, lead to jobs leaving France and the deindustrialization of France. She also proposed a tax imposed on companies that hired outside of France, once again leveraging the economy as a way to return to the central question of immigration through protectionism. These ideas are highly debated among her party members as some hope for a more libertarian France, however, immigration remains the most important issue for most, so they align with her on most economic issues.

Gay marriage is a controversial issue within the party. The various groups that are traditional Christians are strongly opposed to gay marriage and still hold power within the party. For a long time, Marine Le Pen simply avoided the subject. However, in 2017, Marine Le Pen promised to protect the rights of the LGBTQ community from the threat of Islamism. She, however, still opposes same sex marriage as it is an important voter issue for some of her conservative Catholic electorate.

France is considered a hyper-secular country as they've passed many legislations to limit the role and impact of religion on daily life. This is exemplified by laws that ban all religious artifacts from French schools. This includes Muslim hijabs, Christian veils and signs, as well as the jewish kippa and other religious signs. The FN considers itself a protector of the secularity, especially against Islamism. Unlike the American republican party, the FN has a very different idea of family values. In 2016, Marine Le Pen vowed to "protect the French family and the traditions of secularity" and "to protect France from Islamism" in a rally at Rennes.¹⁹ This is a clear contrast to other nations as often conservative family traditions are closely tied to Christian or religious values.

Marine Le Pen has also criticized decisions made by NATO on several occasions. She feels that France would be better off outside of this alliance as she considers it a strain on French sovereignty. There is belief that she would align herself with Russia as she was a staunch supporter of the annexation of Crimea. Their interests also align as they are both anti-NATO and anti-EU; they have met on multiple occasions. There are also questions on the possible Russian funding of the Front National. Following a scandal with Nicolas Sarkozy's UMP being funded by Colonel Ghaddafi, campaign funds are being closely scrutinized in France. "In 2014, the National Front took Russian loans worth €11m (£9.4m). One of the loans, for €9m, came from a small bank, First Czech Russian Bank, with links to the Kremlin."²⁰ This loan was criticized by several political entities but since it was simply a loan and not a donation it is completely legal.²¹ In summary, the policy of the Front National always returns to their central question of immigration.

Xenophobia and Immigration

The reform of the FN and their electoral success was also aided by a rise in xenophobia in France. In the 2012 election, where the FN's electoral success began, an interesting trend was observed: "pro FN departments have seen a dehomogenization of society as second and third generation immigrants move out from main cities and to other cities".²² This means that first and second-generation immigrants started moving out from the great cities, like Bordeaux, Marseille, and Paris, to smaller towns and cities across France. This led to a dehomogenization of the population, which in turn motivated people to vote Front national.

Immigration as a whole has been stable in France over the past 15 years. It has steadily risen by 5% every year even through the refugee crisis. North African immigration makes up 30% of all immigration to France, while immigration from other European countries makes up 46% of all immigration to France. We can also observe that 46% of all immigrants live in the 'great urban areas' defined as big cities like Paris, Bordeaux, Lyon, and Marseille.²³ This number has decreased across the years dropping from 66% in 2000 to 46% in 2013.²⁴ This aligns with the idea that the spread of immigrants to smaller cities and their dehomogenization has helped the FN.

In 2015, France experienced several terrorist attacks. First in February there was an attack on Charlie Hebdo. This galvanized the world as an attack on free speech as seen through the "Je suis Charlie" campaign. Later on, that year there were several attacks on the 13th of November. These attacks have exacerbated how French people in general perceived Islam and North African immigration. Over 63% of French people view Islam as national security risk and 50% view the immigration of people from Muslim countries as dangerous. This number was analyzed in 2014 prior to these terrorist attacks and the number is only expected to increase.

Following the attacks on the Bataclan theater on the 13th of November, Marine Le Pen did constant media declarations for a week, denouncing the terrorist attack as the result of mass immigration. Similarly, during the attack of Charlie Hebdo leveraging the media helped her push forward her agenda. One of the greatest tools of the media is agenda setting and it has been used clearly as immigration is becoming a priority for many voters. Voters whose primary concern is immigration often vote for far-right parties. "The Radical Right stands to benefit from this since immigration, their core issue, is one of the values issues that voters are now treating as their primary concern in selecting a party."²⁵

Conclusion

Considering the rise of the RN to the center-stage it leaves many wondering what is next. Although the schism of the party is likely to hurt Marine Le Pen in the short run there are many things at play that are seeming to point us towards future success of the RN. First, this growing xenophobia and agenda setting only bolsters her position. She is seen as the leader who will take the hardest stance on immigration and as more people consider immigration a priority the more her party will be in a leading position. The multiple terrorist attacks help bolster the party and the ideas it is promoting. Another factor that is likely to make her a favorite in the 2022 presidential election is the rise of an anti-establishment perception. This anti-establishment sentiment was towards republicans in France who were considered corrupt and detached from the people's real issues following a series of scandals leading up to the 2017 election. This feeling has gained more steam since the start of Emmanuel Macron's presidency as he has reformed the tax code creating a wave of protests across France dubbed the yellow vest protest. Experts expect this protest to only accentuate the anti-establishment feeling which will help the far right and far left parties. In summary, all these factors will help Marine Le Pen advance her political agenda and become a strong candidate in the presidential election in 2022 despite the schism of her party. The reform of the party and the rise of an anti-immigration sentiment in France laid the path toward the consolidation of her political agenda. This brings up the question: will Marine Le Pen and her party continue to rise leading to her becoming the next French president?

Notes

1. Alexandre Dézé, « La « dédiabolisation ». Une nouvelle stratégie ? ».

2. Merriam Webster Dictionary

3. Alexandre Dézé, « La « dédiabolisation ». Une nouvelle stratégie ? ».

4. Jean Yves Camus, Far Right Politics in Europe.

5. Tristan Quinault-Maupoil, « Jean-Marie Le Pen «maintient» que les chambres à gaz sont «un détail de l'histoire»

6. JMLP, Europe1 Interview Matinale

7. JMLP, Twitter

8. Marine Le Pen, Europe1

9. Jean Yves Camus, Vice interview

10. Jean Yves Camus, Far Right Politics in Europe.

11. Alexandre Dézé, « La « dédiabolisation ». Une nouvelle stratégie ? ».

12. Ibid.

13. Jerome Fourquet, IFOP.

14. Abel Mestre, "'Sudiste' Et 'Nordiste', Les Deux Électorats Du FN."

15. Ibid.

16. Aurelien Mondon, "The Front National in the Twenty-First Century: From Pariah to Republican Democratic Contender."

17. Ibid.

18. Marine Le Pen, BFMTV

19. Programme Présidentielle Le Pen, Le Monde

20. Gabriel Gatehouse, "Marine Le Pen: Who's Funding France's Far Right?"

21. Ibid.

22. Sylain Crépon, Les Faux-semblants du Front national: sociologie d'un parti politique.

23. INSEE, La localisation géographique des immigrés.

24. Ibid.

25. El Karoui, "The Fabric of Islamism."

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THINKING ETHICALLY



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THE FUTURE OF ANIMAL-FREE MEAT by Kaylee Tyner

Introduction

With the development of technology and the industrial agricultural complex over the past century, the average American's relationship with food has dramatically changed. Once, there was a time when food was locally grown and harvested. Now, Americans live in a society that mass produces agricultural products at minimal cost for a maximum profit (Pollan, 2010). Unfortunately, many people are ignorant about how the food they consume gets from the field to the store, and onto their plate. This leaves them ignorant about how the current food system inarguably hurts the environment, public health, and the welfare of animals. Developing countries around the world are also seeing a huge shift in the production of food, as they become more developed nations and their middle class grows. As this happens, the demand for meat-based products grows as well. It is predicted that by 2050, there will be 2 billion more people to feed and global food production may not be sufficient enough for the growing population (Barnhill, Budolfson, & Doggett, 2017). When considering how humans will go on to feed the growing population, the issues and solutions behind food production has become a hot topic. One solution to

combating the food system that currently hurts the environment, public health, and the welfare of animals as the world population grows is to invest in meat alternatives. "Clean meat" or "cultivated meat" can be defined as an alternative meat product that tastes and looks extremely similar to real meat, and is created through technology that grows the meat from animal cells in a lab (Specht, 2018). "Plant-based meat" is another alternative to real meat products, but is created through plant-based organisms, such as soy (Specht, 2018b). In order for the earth to be able to survive the food demands of the world's growing population, it is crucial that we as a society transition from eating traditionally produced meat to plant-based and clean meat.

Unsurprisingly, the argument behind the development of alternative meat products, specifically clean meat, is a complex ethical issue. One side of this issue argues that we as a society have no choice but to eliminate meat from our diets. This is argued because some believe that since humans are aware of the damages that are to come from climate change, and since the meat industry is a huge contributor to this issue, we ethically cannot continue to let industrial farming destroy our Earth (The Pew Foundation, 2010). Another side of this issue includes the horrific conditions animals endure while being raised and killed in slaughterhouses (Pachirat, 2013). The other side of this issue argues that clean meat is an ethical issue due to people finding the lab-grown, animal cell-based meat to be very unnatural, and debate whether it is ethically sound to grow meat (Fischer & Ozturk, 2017).

Problems: Why Animal-Based Meat Must Go

Unknown to many consumers, the industrial meat industry poses many threats to the future of the planet. From animal welfare, to the environment, public health risks, and a growing global population, there is clear and inarguable evidence that the current meat industry negatively affects the lives of people all over the world– directly and indirectly. The Pew Foundation (2010) conducted an extensive 2 ¹/₂ year study into the complexities of industrial farm animal production, also known as IFAP. As far as animal welfare goes, this study found that the intense confinement of animals within factory farms greatly increases the distress that the animals suffer (The Pew Foundation, 2010). Essentially, this means that the animals being raised for dairy and meat are living in conditions that completely inhibit them from functioning normally as animals. Not only does this physically hurt them, but this deprives them of every natural instinct they have which results in unimaginable suffering mentally. Therefore, even if a cow is producing a sufficient amount of milk and is not ridden with disease, it cannot be classified as experiencing a humane level of welfare.

As previously mentioned, the environment is also greatly impacted by industrial farm animal production-and not in a good way. Unfortunately, every aspect of the environment is negatively impacted from IFAP. The Pew Foundation (2010) reports that within factory farms and other animal confinement facilities, the production of manure by animals in this system annually is three times higher than that produced by humans. But, the issue is that instead of animal manure being controlled like human waste is in developed nations, it is often left on the ground with no treatment. This means that this sewage seeps into the ground and surrounding water sources, completely contaminating the land and water, resulting in the death of aquatic plants and animals. Expanding upon this, degradation of air quality from livestock is also a huge issue, as 18% of all greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to industrial farm animal production. This even exceeds the global emissions from the transportation sector (The Pew Foundation, 2010). This number was reported by the UN in 2006 and has only increased since then. With these negative effects and many more combined, it is no surprise that IFAP is a leading cause of climate change across the globe.

Although climate change is a serious issue, public health is also threatened by the current industrial animal agriculture complex. Some of the main health concerns posed by IFAP are: the communities that live closest to IFAP facilities often breathe in contaminated air and can be subject to toxins in their local water, slaughterhouse workers have a high risk of physical injury or death, and an increased risk of pathogen transmission from animals to humans, through working in IFAP to simply eating meat (Barnhill, Budolfson, & Doggett, 2017). More specifically, this pathogen transmission can be linked to the high amount of antibiotics that are fed to farm animals in order for them to be able to survive the horrific living conditions of animal confinement facilities. This is a complex issue within itself, as overuse of antibiotics leads to antibiotic resistant bacteria and viruses that can affect animals and humans. A high risk of pathogen transmission puts IFAP workers at an increased risk of having extreme health issues, and the communities that are closest to these facilities are often ones that are already treated unjustly anyway, therefore it is extremely hard for them to get the health care and help they need (Barnhill, Budolfson, & Doggett, 2017).

Despite the fact that industrial farm animal production negatively affects both animal welfare, the environment, and public health, the growing global population continues to be ignorant of the challenges that our future holds if humans across the world don't significantly change what they eat. By 2050, global meat demand is expected to increase by 70% (Specht, 2018b). Despite the fact that the world currently produces an adequate amount of food to feed seven billion people, millions of children and adults still die from starvation every year (Weiss, 2012). Unfortunately, as more countries continue to transition from impoverished, developing nations, to more stable, developed nations, there will be at least two billion more people to feed by 2050. In order to meet this demand by midcentury, it is predicted that farmers around the world will need to more than double their current day crop production (Weiss, 2012). This puts an extreme amount of pressure on farmers to produce more meat, which ultimately puts animal welfare, the environment, and public health at a higher risk. In order to sustainably feed the world's growing population by 2050, it is essential that meat alternatives are invested in.

Clean Meat is our Solution

Clean meat, which has recently been changed to be marketed as cultivated meat amongst the general public, is an idea that has been debated for nearly a century. It wasn't until the development of many unrelated technologies, such as tissue engineering, bio-pharma, and cell-based therapeutics, that animal cell culture transitioned from an idea to reality. It was previously explained above that clean meat can be defined as meat that tastes and looks exactly like real meat, but is grown from animal cells rather than produced from the slaughtering of animals. Expanding upon this definition,

> "meat is simply a collection of cells predominantly muscle cells, with fat cells and a handful of other types of cells, collectively called the connective tissue, contributing to its structure. All of these cells can be grown in controlled, sterile environments outside of the body of an animal, resulting in a product that replicates the sensory and nutritional profile of meat" (Specht, 2018).

This means that people would be eating real tasting and looking meat, without the negative downsides of IFAP, or the different tastes and textures of plant-based meat alternatives.

While there are many negative aspects to the IFAP, there are an overwhelming amount of benefits to the development of clean meat. Dr. Liz Specht, a leading scientist in much of the current research into new meat alternatives, claims that clean meat addresses all of the previously mentioned problems of IFAP. This includes worldwide benefits of greater food security, environmental and sustainability advantages, lower threats to global public health, and higher animal welfare as the need for animal slaughterhouses will diminish with clean meat (Specht, 2018). To expand upon these benefits, public health would be positively affected as meat would be able to be produced without the use of antibiotics, significantly decreasing the amount of antibiotics that consumers would be eating in meat products. The shelf life of clean meat has also been shown to last significantly longer due to the absence of antibiotic bacteria in the meat (Specht, 2018). Due to the meat being healthier and lasting longer, far less food would be wasted in the production of meat products. There would no longer be any need to keep cutting down forests to grow crops for livestock food, and there would be an overall reduction in water usage and greenhouse gas emissions when producing meat. Overall, Specht (2018) argues that clean meat is inherently more sustainable on all fronts than the current industrial agriculture complex. Therefore, it would be ethically irresponsible for people across the world to continue to avoid investing in the future of clean meat, as it is key to saving our planet.

Call to Action

In order to work through the ethical dilemmas within clean meat, there is a lot of change that must happen within society for this solution to be successful. The biggest thing that will have to happen is a shift in how clean meat is marketed. More education must be spread regarding the horrific realities of the meat industry and why it must be greatly reduced from people's diets. Then, the alternative meat industry must use this education to their advantage to market their products as the new definition of what "real" meat is—meat minus the animal. Once people are ethically comfortable with the concept behind clean meat and realize how much it tastes like meat from a slaughtered animal, it will naturally become the new way that meat is defined and thought of.

Moving forward, it is important to address the many issues that will come with ensuring that the production of clean meat is successful. According to Dr. Specht and a group of other biomedical scientists (2018b), the biggest challenges of clean meat production will be developing the bio-technology that can mass produce clean meat at an affordable cost (for companies and consumers). Fortunately, this doesn't seem to be a huge dilemma, as there are an overwhelming amount of opportunities within every aspect of clean meat technology that can be developed to increase the production and decrease the price of clean meat (Specht, Welch, Rees Clayton, & Lagally, 2018).

Once enough efforts are put into decreasing the current cost of clean meat and implementing ways to mass produce it, the last step will be to convince the public that animal-free meat is the new norm. In a study done by a group of scholars who advocate for animal rights, they observed differences between different messaging tactics and measured the rate of acceptance amongst those who took part in the survey. Although the study found that messaging focused on unnaturalness of conventional meat is currently most effective, the high rates of acceptance of clean meat found in the study bring light to another idea. Instead of focusing messaging on the naturalness of clean meat, providing potential consumers with messaging regarding all of the environmental, public health, and animal welfare benefits may be even more effective at motivating people to cease the consumption of un-clean meat (Bryant, Anderson, Asher, Green, & Gasteratos, 2019). This shows that education and further research into the messaging behind clean meat products will determine whether the general public will be able to become comfortable with the concept behind clean meat. Furthermore, it is essential for clean meat companies, which are typically based in the U.S., to look outside of the American market for clean meat consumers. Another study that Bryant and colleagues conducted found that well-educated people with high incomes in urban areas of India and China have a substantially higher rate of purchasing and consuming clean meat products than consumers in the United States (Bryant, Szejda, Parekh, Desphande, & Tse, 2019). This means that alongside effective message marketing, companies must invest in marketing their products to countries that will more easily be able to transition away from conventional meat to clean meat alternatives.

As of the beginning of 2018, there are currently no clean meat products available to the public to buy. But,

clean meat products are on the rise. Specht (2018) claims that within the next 3-5 years, many of the current clean meat start-up companies believe their products will be available for public consumption. The biggest challenges they currently face are developing the means to mass produce clean meat at an affordable cost, while also convincing consumers that clean meat is better in every aspect than traditionally produced meat (Specht, 2018). Unfortunately, the world does not have 3-5 years to wait to decrease its consumption of animal products. It is essential that people around the world take responsibility for changing how they eat in order to save the planet. Until clean meat is available, consumers have the choice of eating plant-based meat alternatives. This is a perfect solution to combating the negative effects of the IFAP while clean meat is further developed, as plant-based meat alternatives have all the same positive factors of clean meat (Bryant, et al., 2019). Plant-based meat is on the rise, as technology has improved its quality making the product more mainstream.

Although these are all complexities within the growing clean meat industry, it is important that we as consumers realize our own power in changing the way meat and the IFAP are perceived by the general public. As consumers, we have the power to change our food system through our choices we make and the money we spend on the food we eat. Therefore, if you don't agree with the horrific injustices of industrial farm animal production, it is your moral obligation to minimize your consumption of meat and animal products. Furthermore, educating yourself and others on the upcoming development of clean, cultivated meat is essential for its future success. As consumers, it is important to be aware of the indirect costs of the food we eat and how changing our diets to be more sustainably sound is the key to a healthy future for our planet.

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DIDO, A THREAT TO THE PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM by Mirna Galdamez Guevara

In the classical world, society held pessimistic standpoints about women. Aristotle said that "the male is by nature fitter for command than the female" (Reily). This notion of women's inferiority served as a justification for males to exclude women from holding authoritative positions. For this, they used strategic tactics to make women obedient and submissive. However, in his poem, Virgil depicts a woman who threatens the standard cultural norms of Ancient Rome, Dido, the queen of Carthage. Her character eradicates the ideology of females' incompetency to take positions in politics and warfare. To dissuade females from viewing themselves as more than a sexual object, Virgil cruelly punishes Dido for playing the role of a man. Regardless of that, Dido exhibits the feminist inside each woman and man today because it is the patriarchy system that has always hindered women from fully achieving their potential.

The *Aeneid* reflects many of the dominant cultural norms and beliefs that existed at the time, such as portraying women as the weaker sex as they exhibited little physical strength in comparison to males. Interestingly, Virgil notes women's inner strength and their sense of patriotism. But he neglects their contributions in society, since his poem is primarily written to unify the Roman and Italians, to make the "Romans loyal, to encourage patriotism, to praise Augustus, to give the Romans a vision of peace and to glorify Rome" (Shoko). Another reason that Virgil wrote this poem is due to his eagerness to surpass Homer, another Greek poet.

In her article, "Women in the Aeneid: Foreign, Female, and a Threat to Traditional Roman Society or Examples of Male Citizens," Colleen Reilly provides the public with detailed information describing "the ideal Roman woman," someone who dutifully sits at home, cares for the children, and spends her days weaving at the loom and tending the household tasks. Reilly describes women who perform these tasks as possessing "feminine traits" meaning that those were the primary jobs that women were capable of performing. Not only that, but she also introduces some of the aspects that women confront in contemporary times. Because society assumed that women were not interested in higher callings such as holding public office or command in war, they were kept in an unrealistic world where ideas like "elegance, finery and beautiful clothes..." formed part of their priorities where they found "... joy and pride" (Livy). But there were those women who possessed not feminine traits but traits and characteristics of a prominent male citizen.

Initially, Dido is greatly admired by Virgil's audience for her ability to rule a nation as she demonstrates that she is Aeneas's equal and feminine counterpart. Admired for her unique personality, Virgil compares her to goddess Diana, the goddess of the hunt, also known for her virginity – an aspect that all women had to possess before marriage. "Like Diana urging her dancing troupes along the Eurotas' banks or up Mount Cynthus ridge" (Virgil Book I). Although Dido is compared to the goddess Diana for living in a wild place taking care of her people, she is dishonored the moment she allows her lust for Aeneas to distract her from her duties as a leader. Just like many philosophers, Virgil is referring to the idea of women's inability to control their emotions. He tries to make the scene less painful for women by involving divine forces. In this case, Venus convinces her son, Cupid to make Dido fall in love with

Aeneas to ensure the Trojans were welcomed in Carthage. As a result, Dido is consumed by this love for Aeneas that influences her to give up on everything she has built: "too long she has suffered the pain of love" (Virgil, Book IV). She imagines herself sharing her kingdom with Aeneas, a powerful leader, and possibly stepping down so she can perform the duties of a virtuous Roman woman. More than an illusion, her ideas of forming the perfect world for both, she threatens the Roman structure of marriage as she is involved in fornication before marriage. "Dido cares no more for appearances, nor for her reputation, either. She longer thinks to keep the affair secret, no she calls it a marriage, using the word to cloak her sense of guilt." (Virgil, Book IV). Here Virgil does not only address that fornication is not tolerated, but that women are driven by their passions and emotions which cannot be attributes of a leader. Instead, a leader should know how to control every aspect of their lives without letting their emotions intrude in their work. Ultimately, Dido fails to stand back up as a virtuous woman. She acknowledged that her people felt insulted by her existence, forcing her to commit suicide, letting Virgil's audience know that even after she committed suicide she still had a sense of pride, self-respect, and dignity. She preferred to die instead of confronting publicly being insulted and she was. To this day, she is known as a conflictive character who is forced to deal with the expectations of society. Even in contemporary times, women still struggle to say "NO!" to irrational expectations of society.

Emma Watson, Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi, and Anne Hathway are some of the women who have stood up for women's rights by categorizing themselves as feminists. Each of them has a unique message for the public: "End gender inequality," which revolves around the political, economic and social equality of all sexes. At the HeForShe Campaign, Emma Watson clarified that being a feminist is not about hating men and that the concept of identifying as feminist is now misinterpreted as being "too aggressive, isolating, anti-men and even unattractive" (Watson). Regardless of that, she expresses that women should be capable of making their own decisions about their own body, and socially be afforded the same respect as males. Similarly, Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi, a Nigerian woman, demands equality as women confront gender stereotypes that pressure women to believe that they are incompetent to perform male-dominated jobs. But her gender is not the only factor that hinders her from performing her full potential, she is also an African woman. Her color and gender act as forces that continuously influence the way many women like her view themselves and their capability of striving. Another woman that strengthens women with her speech is Anne Hathway. A mother herself, she expresses the mortification she experienced after her child was born, by informing people that laws structured for employees are inhumane, especially for females as they are deprived of nursing or taking care of their newborn children. At the United Nations, Anne Hathway stood for paid parental leave to create " the freedom to define roles, to choose how to invest time and to establish new positive cycles of behaviors" (Hathaway). With this speech, Anne Hathaway challenges the American culture by persisting for full equality for women and the need to redefine the role of men as caregivers. Just like these women, many others more are indignant of letting the patriarchal system determine the jobs they should perform, how to dress, including how they treat or what they do with "their" bodies.

Even in the ancient world, women were starting to oppose ideologies imposed by males. This is reflected in how many young females preferred to remain virgins as they acknowledged that losing their virginity would mean they accepted being viewed as someone else's property even though they already belonged to their fathers. Their rejection of the unjust cycle of women opens a new ideology that consisted of establishing virginity as a virtue. But Dido violates every aspect of the traditional Roman woman. She opens a new perspective of virtuous women which does not consist of one's virginity but the capability to establish themselves independently. Just like Dido, many feminists encourage women today to seek political rights and eliminate gender inequality as it prevents women from performing male-dominated jobs.

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ALGORITHMIC BIAS AND ITS PROBLEM, SOLUTION, AND IMPLICATIONS by Heera Kaur Dhalimal

Over the years, internet usage has progressed globally, and this has made collecting information far more accessible than ever before. It becomes hard to process such large volumes of information due to its easy accessibility, which is why algorithms are used to organize the information in an understandable way. Algorithms are "a formula [used] for processing information or performing a task" (Ingersoll). An algorithm works by analyzing data input behavior to guide itself to carry out a function. While algorithms are supposed to be neutral, when large quantities of data are involved, these systems "will pick up on social categories and trace evidence associated with them" (Williams et al.). This can be unintentional or it may not be. Despite that, "it does not matter if the algorithm intentionally or unintentionally engages in discrimination; the outcome on the people who are affected is the same" (Datta et al.). The complex issue of algorithmic bias needs to be solved, and from my readings, I discovered some of the challenges, solutions, and implications. Of the multiple solutions I have learned about, it is my opinion that including a diverse group of people in the creation of algorithms will minimize the biases that occur.

Algorithmic biases due to the lack of diversity of individuals that took part in the system's creation could lead to systems being fed inadequately diverse data, and could also lead to the amplification of pre-existing bias. For these algorithms to do their jobs mutually, they must get all the data they need to make the best output of the data. Specifically, the lack of data can impact fields that are dependent on algorithms, as inclusion is needed to minimize the effects of social biases such as, racial and gender biases (Williams). Sometimes the "[biases] in algorithms can emanate from unrepresentative or incomplete training data or the reliance on flawed information that reflects historical inequalities" (Turner-Lee et al.). Algorithmic biases can be connected to their creators. In "The Approaches To Ethical Considerations In The Design of Behavior Change Support Systems" by Karppinen and Oinas-Kukkonen, the authors state that the vast majority of individuals who build algorithms are white and male; consequently the creations of these systems are not done by a diverse group and often their biases, values, and assumptions tend to form the algorithm they are making (Karppinen et al.). Given that, these "algorithms run the risk of replicating and even amplifying human biases, particularly those affecting particular groups" (Chodosh). This indicates that an algorithm that is not made by a diverse group of people will most likely contain some bias in it. The lack of a diverse group of people working on the system can also lead the systems to "be tainted in the same manner as our assumptions and may reinforce, rather than override, existing biases" (Jackson).

As stated before, some of the biases exist due to the lack of information. A solution to minimize these biases is to input the missing data. However, the problem with collecting sensitive information are the privacy implications. "Privacy implications will arise when more humans are engaged in algorithm management, particularly if more sensitive information is involved in the model's creation or in testing the algorithm's predictions for bias" (Turner-Lee et al.). This can lead to an abuse of information and can also potentially lead to an enhancement of biases if the wrong person with ill intention gets a hold of this information. For this, "we must change the data we feed the algorithmspecifically, the labels we give it," as that can minimize the need for sensitive information to solve the biases (Obermeyer et al.). This can be a good step in detecting biases, but there needs to be an adoption of effective algorithmic hygiene. This can be hard for some companies to admit or even notice it as their workplace may not be as diverse and open to conversations of such kind. Ricardo Baeza-Yates, one of the participants from NTENT stated that, "[companies] will continue to have a problem discussing algorithmic bias if they don't refer to the actual bias itself' meaning that companies will have to work within the creators of these systems to minimize their own biases so that the systems don't reflect the biases (Turner-Lee et al.).

The second solution in solving algorithmic biases is examining algorithms before launching them. "When detecting bias, computer programmers normally examine the set of outputs that the algorithm produces to check for anomalous results. Comparing outcomes for different groups can be a useful first step. This could even be done through simulations" (Turner-Lee et al.). However, this process of recognizing bias usually occurs after reports of biases in a system. This process can be helpful to identify any biases the system displays if used before launching the algorithm. Furthermore, " [algorithmic] self-reports provide insights that may not be captured from an examination of the big data itself. However, self-reports may fail to capture the invisible influences of algorithms" (Jackson). Consequently, there remains room for biases: that is why it is important to have human involvement. Moreover, algorithms cannot "fully replace human judgment" as computers don't have the same understanding as humans (Turner-Lee et al.). Nevertheless, human involvement would be an effective method to use if individuals involved in the production of algorithms can detect one another's biases.

Changing the data input of these systems seems like an easy solution, but it can be hard to pinpoint what

data input needs to be changed if everyone working on the algorithm were of the same demographic. That is why diversity is needed. To fully uncover the impact of human biases, we should begin by exploring the "consequences" and people" rather than "the processes and technical details" as these biases are amplified pre-existing human biases that are often shown in these systems (Gangadharan et al.). To minimize the effects of biases, and "to increase the likelihood of creating more bias-sensitive models," Joni Jackson suggests that "we should seek to bring more diverse voices to the design of algorithms," as it would make it easier to detect algorithmic decisions which uncover potential harms that may vulnerable populations (Jackson). A diverse group of individuals coming together could fill gaps in underrepresented data. Furthermore, that group could study the information from a different perspective, which could make it easier to detect and prevent biases.

As explained, the causes of algorithmic biases can be the lack of data and underrepresentation or the lack of diversity. Some suggestions to minimize the causes have been to input potentially sensitive information, to test out algorithms before launching them, or to add a more diverse group of people in the creation of the systems. Adding information is not as effective a way, as there are privacy implications involved, and there is not enough data supporting the effectiveness of the solution. Another reason for the ineffectiveness of other solutions, such as algorithmic testing is due to the lack of understanding of prejudices. When surrounded by people who share the same demographics as yourself, taking into consideration other differences, particularly of those who are different from you, is difficult. This is partly because you all share common experiences. If there is diversity there are always different perspectives and experiences that bring something new or make it easier to uncover something old because everyone has something unique to provide. In other words, diversity is the key to solving these biases, as it could make it easier to recognize and understand biases as different people can come together and share a variety of data, perspectives, and

experiences, and could lead to different outputs that are fed into these systems to make assumptions off.

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YOU GOT TO KNOW WHEN TO SCARE THEM: A BRIEF STUDY ON THE USAGE OF HORROR ELEMENTS IN YA AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE by Christos Antonaros

Ron is lying unconscious on a floor shaped like a giant chessboard after having sacrificed his life for his friends in a deathmatch. Hermione is flying back after having solved a riddle that could have poisoned her dead. Harry stands before a man he thought was a mentor, who is carrying the evilest necromancer in the world, cursed to strive for survival like a parasite on his disciples' bodies (Rowling 283-95). If Harry Potter was not one of the most famous Young Adult book series in the world, an unsuspecting reader could have speculated that the scene narrated above belonged to a darker genre of literature, such as horror. Horror stories tend to focus on creating the feeling of fear through tales of ancient origin and by forming a substantial part of folk literature. Horror stories usually feature supernatural elements such as villainous wizards-whose name we shall not pronounce-or they might focus on more realistic psychological fears such as claustrophobia or fear of poisoning (Encyclopeadia Britannica). However, if we take a quick trip to the past, we will find out that the horror genre began as an artistic expression which in later centuries influenced literature, called the grotesque. Anegbe Endurance specifies that the

word grotesque was known by the Latin word "grotto," which originated from Greek krypte (hidden place, a small cave or hollow). Per Endurance, Grotesque was used in French as early as 1532 and in English in 1640. Additionally, Endurance mentions that Grotesque "was widely used in English and Germany in the 18th century. Grotesque swivels into a wider meaning, especially to a topic widely discussed during the 19th century by aesthetic caricatures" (Anegbe Endurance). Sooner or later, though, the grotesque would be equivalent to the bizarre, or the horrifying, and along with other critical elements of fiction, it would create the foundations of a genre that brings out the monsters hidden in our closet. Let us not deny it, everyone has something of which they are afraid. Either it is a monster, or an animal, or a supernatural entity, or even an idea such as failure. As McCort points out, "our cultures' monsters tend to represent our obsessions and anxieties, even in what seems to be the most innocuous of texts" (McCort 42). What is considered an "innocuous text," though? Do books that belong in the Young Adult and Children Literature genre belong in this type of texts? Let us go back to the grotesque for a second. Endurance argues that among the elements of the grotesque, four stand out: fear or horror, strange characters, degradation through death, and mysterious and the inexplicable events (Anegbe Endurance). From the first fairy tales of Brothers Grimm to the latest worldwide phenomena such as Harry Potter, it would seem like Young Adult and Children Literature authors use the above elements to create suspense and stimulate a reader's interest.

Fear is a misunderstood emotion. Many people visit professional therapists to face their childhood fears, while others grow up coping or avoid anything that will cause them to fear. However, fear and horror in the form of a literary text can be didactic. Horror fiction will not "make everyone stable and save society from the ills" it depicts, but "it can offer a safe forum for examining, and maybe lightening, the dark. Horror stories provide a playground in which children (and adults) can play at fear. And in the end, they'll be safe and, hopefully, reassured. Overall, it seems better than repression" (McCort 42). Suppressing our fears has been proven harmful for our mental health. The earlier an individual is gradually exposed to his fears, the faster he or she will reduce or even eliminate them (Jones). Literature of Childhood started with a similar goal. Fairy tales were designed to teach children to avoid dangerous places and strangers. They were preparing children, "who faced death, real and tangible, almost each and every day" (Ruth). That was when fear of losing one's life was overpowering arachnophobia. In our modern world, fear or horror is used to raise suspense through the agony of what is going to happen to a protagonist. Endurance argues that "Some of the motifs of grotesque are darkness, horror scenes, stories or scenes of this nature that capture our understanding and excite us or give us a thrill of horror to savor" (Anegbe Endurance). For example, in *A Wrinkle in Time* when Meg and her gang are about to meet "The Man with the Red Eyes," the reader has the premature feeling that something terrible is about to happen (L'Engle 127-46). At that moment, the reader is concerned about the protagonists' future, and soon, the concern will become fear. The transition from mystery (Meg and the rest being on a new "strange" planet) to concern and then to fear, creates suspense.

Another example would be the scene in *The Hate U Give*, when Starr, Seven and her white boyfriend Chris, infiltrate the house of King, an evil drug lord, to help their friend DeVante (Thomas 447-52). The readers' fear of what is going to happen to Starr, since it is known that King plans to harm her, raises the suspense and makes it impossible to turn eyes from what is about to happen. The element of fear in these two examples prepares young readers to face the unexpected, coming from a character they do not know either at all, or as much as they would like.

Society has created ways to protect us from strange characters. Parents teach their children, "do not talk to strangers." Many schools have a program called "stranger danger," where they teach young students how to act if someone they do not know approaches them. The antagonist usually represents the role of "stranger danger" in literature. Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, for example, had a monstrous villain in almost every story, either it was human with cruel intention or an animal with lethal appetite. McCort points out examples such as, "Little Snow White's evil stepmother wants to consume the heart of her innocent stepdaughter for dinner (or her lungs and liver, depending on the version you've read); Little Red Riding Hood is devoured by a wolf for straying from the path and, in the Grimm's rendition, is cut from his stomach by the huntsman; Bluebeard's slaughtered wives are ranged along the walls of his secret chamber ... " (43). A monster will always create fear and stimulate the reader's concern on the protagonist's fate. The moral behind strange characters, though, was nothing but "don't talk to a stranger, or the worse may happen." After all, Brother Grimm's fairy tales and any other later adaptation or repackaging function as "morality machines" (McCort 43). In modern Young Adult and Children literature, the villains have supporters. From Darth Vader to Lord Voldemort, thousands of readers have been touched by their dark side. A question arises: has the "big bad world" lost his dreadfulness? The difference between 19th century's fairy tales and modern literature for young readers is that the latter emphasizes giving a background in every character. Readers are different, and each one perceives the context of a story uniquely. Some may see Darth Vader as Anakin Skywalker, an orphan who got played by the evil Senator Palpatine (a stranger he should not have trusted), and a Voldemort who fears death so much that he plans endless schemes to remain alive using dark arts. If the villains above had appeared in the story like the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, then the reader's reaction would be different. The background creates sympathetic characters because it exposes motivation and purpose.

Strangers might be scary, but the fear of death is as old as life itself. Every time a protagonist in a book is in a life-threatening situation, readers forget that they had to do homework, or cook, or even where they are at the moment. The threat of death holds their eyes on the page and the next one and the next until they will feel relief or sadness. In the case of the grotesque, "death was used as a medium through which degradation and humiliation were expressed" (Anegbe Endurance). However, although the threat of dying is used widely in Young Adult and Children literature today, humiliation has been replaced by suspense and hope.

An example would be Harry Potter's final encounter with Professor Quirrell and Voldemort. Rowling raises the suspense with a life-threatening situation, which once is over-and Dumbledore has come to the rescue-it offers relief and a momentary catharsis to all Potter fans (Rowling 295). Another example with the opposite outcome would be the beginning of The Two Towers, and the death of Boromir. When Boromir found Merry and Pippin surrounded by dozens of Orcs, he chose to protect his allies despite the danger (Tolkien Chapter 1). At that moment, Boromir was the hero, and the reader demands he survives. Tolkien, though, had a different idea about the fate of Boromir, causing sadness and disappointment for the readers, but at the same time a rage against the antagonist of the book. The threat of death is also used as a bringer of hope. If we go back to Red Riding Hood and think of the first time we read the story, we would recall that when the wolf ate Red, most of us considered her dead. However, hope arises when the huntsman comes in scene and frees Red and her grandmother brutally.

A modern example would be *The Colour of Magic*, the first novel of the Discworld series by Terry Pratchett. Death—who is probably the most humorous and interesting character in the series—visits Rincewind, the protagonist, during every life-threatening situation, foreshadowing that the former is about to die (Pratchett). By using death ingeniously, Pratchett creates suspense and at the same time sends a message of hope, uttering, "if it did not happen the first time, it might not happen now."

The anticipation of an event to happen is not as suspenseful as the occurrence of a mysterious and the inexplicable event. "This feeling of excitement," the one that suspense through the exposure to unexpected brings, "is arguably one of the main reasons some readers and viewers become so enthralled with horror at a young age" (McCort). The unexpected makes a reader who sits comfortably in his couch, chair, or lays on the bed, to jump up and shout, sometimes in excitement other time to protest. Anyhow, the unexpected made finishing the story the reader's life goal. In Alice in Wonderland, Carroll creates a mood of continuous suspense by placing Alice in a mysterious world where animals speak, cats vanish, and a queen threatens everyone she meets with beheading. The entire mystery of Wonderland is solved at the end when Alice wakes up from her dream on her sister's lap (Caroll). Alice in Wonderland has all four elements of a horror story: the threat of dying, strange characters, a sense of fear on Alice's fate, and an unexpected event. However, it is considered one of the most significant books of Children's literature.

The horror genre cannot claim ownership of the elements of fear, death, strange characters, and inexplicable events. The rule of "dips" does not work for literature. The difference, however, between the genres of Horror and Literature of Childhood and Adolescence is the purpose. Horror stories use these elements to create excitement through fear and sometimes repulsion. Literature of Childhood and Adolescence uses these elements to create suspense and send a message of hope through the promise that the protagonist has a pretty good chance to survive. The occurrence of these elements in both genres, however, utters the beauty of literature. There is no "bad" literature, or "great" literature. There is a list of tools, ready to be used wisely by an author to make readers concerned, laugh, cry, and turn the next page.

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SHAKESPEARE IN MODERN MEDIA by Grace Tammaro

Shakespeare's plays, although complex, still are relevant and are highly regarded. The complex themes and prose are unique to those of anything before Shakespeare's time. Through his plays, he transports his audience into another land filled with intrigue, culture and romance. This way ordinary people are able to experience a life polar opposite to their own. Romeo and Juliet displayed key themes in love and romance that cultures would later adapt to their social norms. The modern film displays these norms in a Shakespearean light. Contemporary adolescence romance uses the recycled plotline of Romeo and Juliet reimaged for a new audience. Movies such as Titanic and Twilight inspire a new generation of fandom surrounding the tragic love story. Thus, Shakespearean ideologies transpire centuries after his plays were written. The key themes in Romeo and *Juliet,* such as disapproval, young love and couple relationships affect both film and cultural ideologies. Exploration of primary literary sources will highlight ideas that support this concept. A final podcast will be presented highlighting points while incorporating themes from both movies, as comparison material. The research topic will prove further and demonstrate the great work that is Romeo and Juliet. The themes and concepts of Romeo and Juliet are so influential, they have inspired both the modern concepts of love and the film industry basis for movie adaptations.

Romeo and Juliet is a play that, for most, is all too familiar. People can remember practicing the lines in high school; the themes and concepts still ringing in our ears. The play is a classic example of lustful first love. With the many adaptations, the plotline is widely known to those that have never read the original work. Although the play seems simple, Shakespeare takes the time to make every character complex and multidimensional. The love that some call juvenile can be identified in every generational love story that followed it. For young adults, the thrilling adventure that love brings inspires a cinema industry of relatable characters.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo is introduced as a lovesick teenager. He is just getting over Rosaline, a girl that broke his heart by taking a sacred vow (1.1, 202-210). He mourns his true love to his friends Mercutio and Benvolio, who comfort this display of frivolous affection (1.1, 219, 222). Later that evening he lays eyes on the fair Juliet, and in an instant, his heart is swayed and he's forgot about his lustful encounter with Rosaline. This shifting affection is a remnant of naive children; this is why the story resonates with generation after generation of angsty adolescence. Lyman remarks that "We still think of Romeo and Juliet as a great love story."

However, what draws the modern world to the Shakespearean play? The very plotline of the tragic lovers fuels the interest of an audience, yet the fatal ending surely makes the play memorable. *Romeo and Juliet* is widely known, with its many adaptations and spinoffs, it has inspired a category of film. Teen love stories are an essential part of the developmental process of a young person's ideal love. Through movies such as *Titanic* and *Twilight*, the tragic romance is pressed on to the next generation of young adults, emphasizing lustful encounters as a right of passage to adulthood romance. On a deeper level, themes in *Romeo and Juliet* affect the social context of love and romance. Through the influence of *Romeo and Juliet* and subsequently the many spinoffs, the idea that tragic romance is a culturally accepted norm is solidified.

The play focuses on the forbidden love of two young people from rival families. The passionate affair leads to a series of events, that includes the death of family members, the secret marriage of the two forbidden lovers, and their double suicide in the name of absolute passion. Romeo is a Montague and Juliet is from the rivaling Capulets. They lock eyes and instantly fall into an epic love. This leads to the secret marriage of the two, and consequently the death of the two lovers from a series of events leading from that first glance. This idea of a fatal attraction is fundamental to the plotline of the play. Lovers from two different families and two different worlds must overcome the odds for a love that was meant to be. After analysis, the play is not the only sentiment to a tragic love affair; it has immense themes on a love that are repeated throughout modern culture. The idea of people from two different worlds and a love that was "Meant to be" are what is copied across the cinematic industry. Young girls have often fantasized the idea of an epic first love; those represented in Romeo and Juliet are a prime example. Very much so that the film industry has noticed this affliction and subsequently profited off the lust of adolescents. In the twenty-first century, those themes are repeated in the media. Both Titanic and Twilight received immense profit and success from the fan-based audience. This is primarily due to the repetition of tragic love initially displayed in Romeo and Juliet.

The "Two different worlds" concept is displayed through different social classes in *Titanic* rather than feuding families such in *Romeo and Juliet*. This historical tragedy of the sinking of the SSR. Titanic will forever haunt the world with its mass tragedy. The 1994 adaption by James Cameron profits in that tragedy by incorporating a love aspect amongst the disaster (Alleva). Along with the historical elements, the story is told through the eyes of Jack and Rose, the two lovers that are the focus of the adaptations. Rose is a high-class woman about to be married to an oil tycoon, while Jack is a low-class passenger that won his ticket through a lucky hand in poker (Alleva). Their love blooms throughout the last fatal days of the SSR. Titanic. The reaction of her family when the two grow closer is similar to that of the rivalry of the Capulets and the Montagues. The movie displays of the ill-fated love is the remnant of a Shakespearean drama. A similar love affair is depicted in Stephenie Myers' *Twilight*.

Twilight takes Romeo and Juliet's love affair and transforms it into a sci-fi tale revolving around vampires and werewolves. The story follows the life of Bella, a loner girl who recently moved to Forks, Seattle. She falls in love with the undead vampire Edward Cullen. From his mysterious nature and glittering skin to his ability to read minds, Bella is instantly drawn in. In many ways, this nature is similar to that of Romeo; Edward's demeanor tends to draw women into his path. From Edward's devilishly good looks and "tortured" nature, he lures women to lustful encounters. The story's plot line follows the two's struggles to be in love. The inner workings of the tragic love affair span four books and five movies. The idea of "lovers from two different worlds" takes a quite literal meaning in this series, Bella being human and Edward being the predator to humans. The disapproval of Bella and Edward from those around them, makes the story thrilling to watch. From Edward's family's concern that he might eat Bella, to Bella's friend's caution towards vampires it seems as though these two are loving against all the odds . This disapproval is vital to the destructive nature of the plotline.

Movies such as *Titanic* and *Twilight* display traditional Shakespearean themes adapted for a new generation. In both stories, a couple experiences a sad first love that results in a thrilling plot line to protect such connection (Lyman). The idea of the "people from different worlds" is a repeated notion. The idea is similar to that from the rivalry/disapproval from the Capulets and Montagues that led to the union of *Romeo and Juliet*. In both *Titanic* and *Twilight*, the families / communities adopt this role of disapproval. Nevertheless, this adds to the ongoing story just as it did in the original play. The fighting families are an antagonist of sorts; without this obstacle, the love could flourish without disapproval.

For Romeo and Juliet that disapproval resulted in the secretive marriage of the two lovers. In Titanic, this can be compared to Rose defying her family to share intimate moments with Jack. The root of the disapproval inevitably affects the plotline of the characters. In Twilight, the disapproval stemmed from Bella's friend Jacob, who mistrusted Edward. In Titanic the disapproval was represented by Rose's family, who disliked Jack based on his inferior social status, and his "corruption" of their daughter. This element of disapproval is essential for both storylines. Without this "rivalry" so to speak the need for a tragic love affair would be mute. The need for tragic lifealtering love would not be present if not for the disapproval of external factors such as families and communities. Thus the connection between the Montagues and Capulets is translated into the families of modern romance dances. Also, the relationship structure of each pair has common roots.

Wisam Mansour deeply analyses a scene in *Romeo* and Juliet. Many are familiar with the "balcony" scene in Act two Scene two of the play. In this scene, both Romeo and Juliet profess their love for each other. However, Mansour remarks that their encounter reveals the relationship structure of the pair. He relates Juliet to Petruchio in *Taming* of the Shrew. Just like Petruccio has to tame Kate into a "good" woman, Juliet must transform Romeo in that same way (Mansour). Mansour analyses an encounter between the two for the basis of his argument. The below excerpt is quoted in Mansour's analysis, being the basis for his topic about the nature of the two lovers' relationship.

JULIET. [to Romeo after Midnight]...I would have thee gone,

And yet no farther than a wanton's bird, That lets it hop a little from her hand, Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves, And with a silk thread plucks it back again, So jealous of his liberty. (2.2,176-181) Mansour explains that in this portion of the text, Juliet is almost referring to herself as a bird trainer, and Romeo is her bird that must be trained. He remarks that "Juliet endeavors to train and discipline Romeo and turn him into a "manned" Falcon the way Petruchio, the falconer in the *Taming of the Shrew*, trains and disciplines Katherine, his figurative bird." This ultimately suggests that the male characters have a character flaw that the female lead must ultimately fix. In this way, all the female characters in every adaptation are the "Falconers" and their lovers are their "Bird" that must be trained to submit.

In *Titanic* Rose displays qualities of the "falconer" (Mansour). Through her romance with Jack elements of "training" are seen (Mansour). She takes a low-class boy, shows him finer things and "tames" his demeanor when in the presence of her family. Although she does not drastically change him, she shows him a different world, transforming his "gutter-boy" habits and opening a world unbeknownst to him previously. In *Twilight*, such taming takes a more literal sense (Mansour).

Bella is often displayed as a tamer of Edward's more animalistic nature. She must keep him at bay and limit his anger driven behavior, "taming" his more aggressive nature (Mansour). Often throughout the movie, Bella is reassuring him that he is a "good person" and convincing him he is not a monster. She is thus pushing him towards a reformed demeanour. In a literal sense, Bella acts as a "falconer." She tames Edward's animal-like behavior, proving the dynamic that Mansour proposes. Just as Juliet acts as a tamer of Romeo's affection, Bella and Rose both are prime examples of this viewpoint. In a tragic romance, a reform of the male character seems to be a repeating occurrence. These demonstrated points have been seen across the media industry, thus unintentionally influencing the cultural ideals of romance.

As Juliet would say "what is in a name?" Romeo and Juliet are names that travel across centuries as the symbol of eternal love. The play's lustful interactions inspired generations of adolescents to fight for their version of the tragic love affair. The plot and themes, although seeming superficial, have immense meaning and insight into the human condition. These ideas have manifested in the form of teenage romance movies - both Twilight and Titanic display the same points originally performed in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. Although the plotline is different, (bloodthirsty vampires and tragic wreckage opposed to the backdrop of Verona) the same commonalities exist in both. The disapproval of the Montagues and Capulets is essential to the tragic element of the play. Without the disapproval of the families, the series of events would not have merit to occur. In Twilight, the disapproval occurs through the friends of Bella, fearing Edward's animalistic tendencies. In Titanic, it occurs through Rose's family's disapproval of Jack's social status. In addition, the idea of "lovers from different worlds" is repeated in both movies as it is in Romeo and Juliet. One is that of social class, and one takes the form of vampire and human. Both show the differing roles of Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare initially affected the romance ideals of centuries to follow. Not only did he inspire poetry and music, but new film adaptations copy his original ideas. Thus Shakespeare's love tragedies are prominent in every part of society, from cultural norms to the box office. Through adaptations such as *Twilight* and *Titanic*, Shakespeare's works are identifiable for the world lacking Shakespearean literary training (Lenhoff). The ideas Shakespeare constructed nearly 400 years ago are prevalent in the performing and media arts that followed his original work. If you were to walk into a movie theater, it is more than likely that the romance movie you are watching is based on Shakespeare's ideals of love.

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Guilty, Never Proven by Kaylee Tyner

"Or maybe," she said, "it's just gone. Sometimes things disappear and there's no getting them back. That's just how it is," the Mother said to her two children. The three of them had just left everything they knew behindtheir house, their pets, their friends, their entire lives-while their Father had been taken into custody months before. When the Emperor Was Divine, written by Julie Otsuka, gives readers an insight into the lives of Japanese Americans living during World War II, specifically after Pearl Harbor. Otsuka details the experiences of watching a loved one be arrested for a crime they didn't commit, and later be forced to leave their own home and live in an internment camp. Otsuka writes through varying perspectives of a simple Japanese family that once had normal, American lives before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Her writing teaches about different aspects of life such as the strength of family, injustice based on race and stereotypes, but most importantly, the complexities of the loss of innocence. While most think the loss of innocence is an inevitable aspect of growing up, there are different forms of innocence that can be lost during one's lifetime. This is exemplified through Otsuka's writing, as the different perspectives of a Japanese family ripped from their home and each other, showcase the traumatizing realities of when

one's lack of guilt fails to protect people from the powers of the government.

MOTHER

Otsuka's book begins from the perspective of the children's Mother. At this point, the Father had already been arrested and the family is in the process of learning how to live without him. Through the entire first chapter, the Mother is characterized as a strong, fearless woman. This is exemplified when she has to make a hard sacrifice killing their family dog: "She lifted [the shovel] high in the air with both hands and brought the blade down swiftly on his head. White Dog's body shuddered twice and his hind legs kicked out into the air, as though he were trying to run. Then he grew still... The shovel had been the right choice. Better, she thought, than a hammer" (11). The description of the Mother killing their family dog is unsettling, but when one looks into the complexities of this moment, it is clear why Otsuka put this in the early stages of her novel. For most people, it is hard to even think of a pet dving, let alone killing them yourself. Yet, the Mother was able to do this rather easily, showing little emotion as she "brought the blade down swiftly on [White Dog's] head." This is because she knew it had to be done in order for her children to have an easier time leaving their house for the internment camps. The killing of White Dog is also significant as it can be inferred that Otsuka names the pet "White Dog" as a way to emphasize the purity of the animal through the connotations of the color white. White represents purity and innocence, and Mother killing the dog is the act of destroying the little innocence she has left as a forty-one year old woman.

The night before the family left for the camps, the Mother "lay awake worrying about the leaky roof. Her husband had meant to fix it but he never had" (17). As her children sleep beside her not knowing the reality of the last moments of living in their house before everything changes, the Mother already knew her life would never be the same. Her "worry," which is preventing her from falling asleep,

exemplifies her lack of innocence and how she has to be strong for her children. But, as time goes on, even the Mother begins to wear down from the traumas of her husband being taken away and her family being forced to live in internment camps. The reader gets a closer insight to how the Mother is really feeling when Otsuka details a moment she shares with her son at the camp. The mother shows him a wrinkle on her face and says: "Your father won't know who I am," her son replies, "I'll remind him." The Mother responds: "Tell him ...' she said, and then her voice drifted off, and she was somewhere far away, and outside a hot dry wind was blowing up from the south and across the high desert plains" (40). The imagery of her voice "drifting off" into the "hot dry wind" of the "desert plains" that Otsuka describes showcases to the reader how lonely and barren the Mother feels without her husband. The new wrinkles on her face are also an indicator of age and stress brought on by all the change her and her family had recently undergone. Although the Mother is characterized as the strong provider of the family, even she becomes worn down and loses the little bit of innocence she once had to the traumatizing realities of the internment camps and her husband being taken away from her.

DAUGHTER

While the loss of innocence isn't as obvious in the Mother due to her age and pressure to be strong for her children, her daughter has a whole different perspective of what her family is living through. Before they left for the internment camps, "she was ten years old and she knew what she liked. Boys and black licorice and Dorothy Lamour" (12). She is described as a typical ten year old girl—one who thinks she has the world all figured out. Otsuka introduces the Daughter to the reader in this way in order to be able to easily juxtapose the description of the girl later in the book. After they leave for the internment camps, Otsuka tells that now the daughter "was eleven and her hair was black and straight and tied back in a ponytail with an old pink ribbon. Her dress was pale yellow with wide puffy sleeves and a hem that was beginning to unravel. Pinned to her collar was an identification number and around her throat she wore a faded silk scarf' (19). When compared to the earlier description of the Daughter, the change she has undergone speaks louder than the words Otsuka uses to characterize her. Her "old pink ribbon," "pale yellow" dress, and "faded silk scarf" are all used to exemplify the beginning of the girl's loss of innocence, as the descriptions of the clothes she wears make her seem old and worn down. The "pale yellow" dress is especially significant as yellow can be seen as a dirty version of white, which is the color of innocence. The yellow she wears signifies the innocence she has lost and will continue to lose. Otsuka extends this idea as she details a moment that ties the Daughter to her brother as "he laid his head down on his sister's lap and drifted off to sleep.

The girl was still too exhausted to sleep" (22). For her younger brother, he still doesn't know the weight of the time they are living in, allowing him to still fall asleep relatively easy. But, for the Daughter, she has now become like her Mother in the first chapter when she lay awake with worry. Otsuka says she is "too exhausted to sleep" which is ironic because when one is extremely tired they usually fall asleep easily. This is important because Otsuka is hinting to the reader that she is not exhausted from lack of sleep, but rather exhausted from the amount of change she is living through. This is a significant indicator of her gradual loss of innocence.

As time moves through the novel, the Daughter's innocence is almost completely worn out when Otsuka describes: "NOW WHEN THE GIRL UNDRESSED — always, the quick flick of the wrists and then the criss-crossing arms and the yellow dress billowing up over her head like a parachute in reverse—she asked him to turn away. She told him about the seasons and hibernation. She said that any day now she'd be bleeding. It'll be red,' she said" (50). In this moment with her brother, it is evident that the Daughter has begun to change from a child to a young woman, hence why "she asked him to turn away" when she changed. The clothes she wears have also gone

from a pale yellow dress to just a "yellow" dress, signifying that her innocence has continued to be lost as she grew up in the camps. Otsuka's final narration of the girl talking about how she will be "bleeding" soon and it will be "red," alludes to the time during puberty when a girl begins to menstruate, which is seen as a transition from childhood to womanhood. As the story moves through the young girl's perspective, it is evident through Otsuka's writing how the girl's loss of innocence is at times natural, but more significantly caused by the changes of the government forcing her family to move away from everything they knew.

SON

Although the perspective of the Daughter showcases her own loss of innocence, the narrative of her brother, exemplifies how the loss of innocence stemming from trauma has an effect on one's life. Similar to his sister, the Son is described by Otsuka in the beginning of the novel: "He was seven and a small black fedora was tilted to one side of his head" (12). Through this passage, the reader is not given many details of the son, but it is revealed that he is only seven years old, a very young and innocent time in a boy's life. The night before the Son and his family left for the camps, "the boy crawled into [his Mother's] bed and asked her, over and over again, What is that funny noise? What is that funny noise?' The woman smoothed down his black hair. 'Rain,' she whispered. The boy understood. He fell asleep at once" (17). This moment truly shows the reality of how innocent the Son really is, as he is startled by the noise of rain and goes to his Mother for comfort. It doesn't take much after this for him to be able to fall asleep. This interaction between the Mother and Son is important as it gives the reader a better understanding of what the boy is like and his capability of understanding what is happening in the world around him is like at only seven years old.

In chapter three, the boy's innocence is emphasized through Otsuka's writing style and grammar choice as the story is told through the Son's perspective. This is when the children's Father is also being brought into the storyline more. Otsuka explains that "in the beginning the boy thought he saw his father everywhere. Outside the latrines. Underneath the showers. Leaning against barrack doorways... Above them blue skies. The hot midday sun. No trees. No shade. Birds." (33). The fact that the boy saw his "father everywhere" when they first moved into one of the camps shows how much of an effect his Father being taken away had on his brain and innocence. Instead of thinking about things that most children dream of during the days of their childhood, he is stuck thinking about his father who was ripped away from him. Otsuka juxtaposes this sad reality with her usage of short sentences and easy grammar in this passage as a way to emphasize how young and truly innocent the Son still is. It is important for the reader to understand that the Son's loss of innocence is not from naturally growing up, but rather from the traumatizing experience of the government arresting and taking his father away without reason. As time moves on, the Son is tied to his Mother's lack of innocence and his sister's loss of innocence when it is "THREE IN THE MORNING. The dead time. Empty of dreams. He lay awake in the darkness worrying about the bicycle he'd left behind, chained to the trunk of the persimmon tree." (55). Unlike his ability to fall asleep quickly earlier in the novel, Otsuka accounts how the boy too now "lies awake" kept up by his "worrying." This is a significant moment in the novel as it signifies a true loss of the boy's innocence. He no longer can fall asleep without worry, as he is kept awake from the nightmares of his reality and the trauma he has endured.

Three years and five months after the family was forced into internment camps, they finally are allowed to return to their home. The Daughter and Son share the similar experience of loneliness when they return, as their old friends at school pretend like they don't even exist when they return. Otsuka writes: "And so we mostly kept to ourselves. We moved silently through the halls with our eyes fixed on some imaginary point far off in the distance." (71). In this moment, the narration of the Daughter and Son becomes one voice. This emphasizes that even though they are different ages and have grown up with a different perspective during the time of war, they now have reached the same level of loss of their innocence. This is sad for the boy especially as he is younger than his sister and should feel younger. Instead, his life is completely altered after the government stole his father, his house, his friends, his childhood, and his innocence.

FATHER

While the Father does not have a voice until the very end of the book, his characterization plays a significant role in the overall novel and the lives of his family. Going back to when the man was taken away, the Son recounts that "THEY HAD COME for [his father] just after midnight. Three men in suits and ties and black fedoras with FBI badges under their coats. 'Grab your toothbrush,' they'd said. This was back in December, right after Pearl Harbor, when they were still living in the white house... and from his window the boy had watched as they led his father out across the lawn in his bathrobe and slippers to the black car that was parked at the curb" (46). While this memory is traumatic for the boy, this moment for his Father was even more life changing. He was taken against his own will for no reason and the neighborhood and his family watched as he was taken away in a "black car" from their white house. Otsuka uses the dark, blackness of the vehicle that separates the Father from his family to foreshadow that in that moment, his little bit of adult innocence is now gone forever, as their "white house" represents innocence and the "black car" represents the death of that innocence.

Although the family was able to send letters in the years they were separated from each other, they essentially had no contact. And they definitely couldn't talk about the government's wrongdoings in the letters they wrote. But even when the Father finally returned to his family and his home, "he never said a word to [them] about the years he'd been away. Not one word. He never talked about politics, or his arrest, or how he had lost all his teeth. He never mentioned his loyalty hearing before the Alien Enemy Control Unit. He never told us what it was, exactly, he'd been accused of. Sabotage? Selling secrets to the enemy? Conspiring to overthrow the government? Was he guilty as charged? Was he innocent? (Was he even there at all?) We didn't know. We didn't want to know. We never asked. All we wanted to do, now that we were back in the world, was forget" (77). The family's desire to put their past behind them signifies how traumatic the entire experience was. It was so terrible for the father that he could not even speak about his experiences with his own family that he missed so dearly. Otsuka asks "was he innocent?" and then emphasizes this by immediately asking "was he even there at all?" as a way to hint to the reader that even years later, the children still didn't know why their Father had been taken away. At this moment it can be inferred that he was taken away for no reason besides the fact that he is Japanese, as he was able to return once the war was over. This means that no crime was actually committed by him, yet his innocence-in the sense that he wasn't responsible for Pearl Harbor-still couldn't protect him from being taken away by the government.

The children further describe their Father on the last few pages of the novel as a man they truly didn't recognize anymore. Otsuka writes that "as the days grew longer our father began spending more and more time alone in his room. He stopped reading the newspaper. He no longer listened to Dr. I.Q. with us on the radio. 'There's already enough noise in my head,' he explained. The handwriting in his notebook grew smaller and fainter and then disappeared from the page altogether. Now whenever we passed by his door we saw him sitting on the edge of his bed with his hands in his lap, staring out through the window as though he were waiting for something to happen. Sometimes he'd get dressed and put on his coat but he could not make himself walk out the front door" (79). This passage shows how much of their Father's innocence and soul was stolen when he was taken from his family. Even years later he struggles with the trauma of his experiences, and eventually his innocence "grew smaller and

fainter then disappeared from [his life] altogether" just like his thoughts in his notebook. The unknown of what the Father experienced at the hands of the government is unsettling and is upsetting to know that he can never get back what was stolen from him.

Oftentimes people believe that the loss of innocence is confined to the change of when one grows from a child to an adult. But through Otsuka's writing, she shows that the greatest loss of innocence looks much different than this. It happens completely out of one's control and steals every part of one's being and happiness. In the end it was not the Mother or the children that lost the most innocence from being forced to be strong and grow up in their experiences after Pearl Harbor. It was their Father who lost everything. America's ideology that you are innocent until proven guilty failed to protect him and the trauma the Father experienced completely destroyed his soul.

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ON AIRPORTS AND GUILT by Allison Beresford

1

I was the daughter who boarded the plane that wintery day on December 27, 2017. It was my birthday, and I boarded as a breathing, walking mixture of emotions. Thanks to my earlier actions in the weeks prior, I would not be with my family for New Year's—or my brother's 18th birthday milestone. Instead, I would be over a thousand miles away, coexisting with strangers I barely knew. My relationship with my current partner had only just started the month prior and remained long distance for the time being. Our journey began online as a simple gaming duo, naturally learning more about each other as time went by. We both believed we could not fully commit ourselves to the relationship until we met in person–and I aimed for the first chance I could travel, given my academically-loaded calendar.

I was the daughter who shattered the norms of my small community. It was conservative and immensely religious—themes that were deeply intertwined with the most mundane aspects of small-town living. It was fiercely frowned upon for females to have anything to do with males they weren't betrothed to beyond that of holding hands. I felt yet another twinge of guilt at the acknowledgment that not only would I be shattering those rules—I'd be doing it during one of the most religious times of the year.

I was the daughter who steeled myself earlier in that same month of December, preparing for the highly emotional responses I knew my mother would exhibit. She was known to swing quickly from one emotion to another following the breaking of any kind of change in plans or news; I knew firsthand that the only response even remotely helpful was one of patience and deep silence. Yet, here I was—just a few weeks later, boarding that aluminum, winged, statistically possible coffin of a plane. Amidst the excitement and internal peals of "will he like me?" I continued onward and did not turn to look behind as I'm sure my mother would have liked. I instead focused on what was to come, finding my way to seat 9A on the tiny little plane whose journey would eventually lead to the introduction of my lover's arms.

2

I was the loved one who a year and several boarding calls later, walked through the terminal yet again on December 24th, 2018. My local airport in Beaumont, Texas was so small, I knew the names and faces of each crew member who worked there. Excitedly, I bee-lined for the check-in kiosk, struggling to remain stoic to the rainstorm that was my mother. She would wake that Christmas morning without her daughter sleeping peacefully in her own bed. The cycle would continue yet again for both her childrens' birthdays, with frowning hyper-religious family members no doubt casting questions and judgments they had no business pondering.

I was the loved one who strolled along, outwardly confident—beaming even, as I boarded that plane with a single suitcase on that afternoon of Christmas Eve, steady and calm as my mother sobbed beside me. I bargained with our small airport to allow my mother to come with me into the terminal—a freebie sometimes given to those with disabilities. She would not be allowed to board, but it would give us more time together and would ease my stress of being unable to hear the boarding call. I kept the song "I'll Be Home for Christmas" flowing through the Bluetooth device connected to my cochlear implants, even as I found my place in the same single seat I had superstitiously reserved, known to everyone else as 9A.

I was the loved one, who for the next portions of the day, dared myself to think only of the possibility of snow. I did not, could not, allow myself to consider my mother's crying face. I reveled in the joy of those around me—a major benefit to last minute, before-the-holidayactually-occurs travel. I could not let the emotions of my mother have any control; I could not allow the smallmindedness of my background to possibly override any decisions I may have made. My arrival time at Reagan National Airport would be at 11PM on the night of Christmas Eve. My appearance would be a last-minute gift for my partner, slipping into his arms as the clock chimed midnight somewhere nearby.

3

I was the girlfriend, who at the end of winter break in early January 2019, cried myself to sleep. The next day, I would be departing for my return to Texas. I would be facing another semester at my college there—alone and without my partner for over four months. My suitcase had been quietly packed the day before, intentionally completed while my partner was still at work.

I was the girlfriend who dragged myself out of bed on that dreaded morning, headed for the airport, cursedly bright and early. I found myself sitting in the passenger seat, openly sobbing as I tried—and failed to gather my external resolve. My boyfriend in full joking manner, put our parting song on. I said nothing, save for the chorus of the song "*see you later, see you soon, / see you later alligator and I will see you in the moon...*". Stephen Kellogg and his bandmates had nothing on us and the difficulty of leaving the person you cared most about.

I was the girlfriend who as we pulled up to Reagan National Airport and unloaded my solitary suitcase from the trunk, hugged my partner one last time for the next 180 days. For the first time in all the time I've known him, he broke. At first, I wasn't sure if what I physically felt was true, but his muscles failed to disguise the telltale signs. The man I had fallen in love with, who rarely cried-was sobbing into my shoulder. Everything inside melted, all at once. I wanted so badly to call my mom-to say there had been some godforsaken, undefinable delay-that I magically, mercifully wouldn't be returning-but I knew this was not the time. I clung to whatever parts of me that happened to still be even remotely standing and forced myself to move onward, to brave the shortage of TSA agents during the shutdown, to brave the flights back home-crying or not. I believed more than any other time than before that I surely was the worst partner in the world-that any other would have run screaming back to their person, tossing over whatever mountain of rocks they had to until something gave and they could stay. I was the worst girlfriend in all of human history, bar none. And on the flip side? The worst daughter. I knew then that it couldn't be long before I'd leave my hometown for good. But my family? They had zero clue of these developments; they were somewhere in my tiny hometown-blissfully and utterly unaware. If anything, it was the complete opposite of what was yet to come; my loved ones had belatedly prepared for my return. I was the girlfriend who also understood that if I wanted to truly remain with him that my education must come first for the time being. Change would come, just not then.

4

I am a college kid breaking all the rules. It's May 18, 2019, and my mother. is. *furious.* She swings by the house to pick me up, still in her nursing scrubs from working the graveyard shift. In a matter of minutes and an embarrassingly large amount of effort, my suitcases are loaded into the backseat—haphazardly resting on newspapers and magazines that we swear we'll recycle but keep forgetting to. I don't talk to her about my partner; she doesn't say what she thinks of me. Instead, we go from location to location, robotic last-call journeys to our favorite restaurants and family-owned shops that I may never lay eyes on again. *She. Is. Angry.* Her boss did this, the phone company is doing that—my ditzy neighbor is pulling her usual shenanigans again and my aunt is dragging her privileged heels into territory she knows *nothing* about; but I know all too well that these aren't the actual reasons why my mother won't look me in the eye this morning.

I am a college kid breaking all the rules as we make our way to our favorite boutique, the last stop planned before I check in at the airport. Everyone outside of our three-person family unit talks about how proud they are: the chance at a better education, the courage it takes to move, the joy that being with my partner each day will bring...there is no anger, no judgment to be found here. Each of our stops seems to echo this; the many animated responses usually asking to keep up with my travels and life over social media, proud to see a promising spirit go out into the unknown world. In contrast, just the night before, one of my mother's coworkers *just* couldn't resist warning me about trusting men-weaving tired tales of Jeffrey Dahmer and other monstrous figures into their dry speeches given drunkenly and without care. This boutique is a breath of fresh air, somewhere public yet intimate, where my mother's disappointment and rage mingle harmlessly into the snarky mugs and graphic tees hanging from the wall.

I am a college kid undoubtedly breaking all the rules. All throughout my childhood and teenage years, I was laboriously lectured about men—fingers wagging as they preached about must-do's like graduating college before committing, lest they interrupt your education for good; how choices were important—but priorities even more so. I relentlessly heard about men who couldn't be trusted in a storm, of men who irreparably destroyed a woman's place in the devout community—leaving her somehow tarnished and less than in a region where minds and potential took a backseat to human anatomy and outdated societal whims. These patterns and harmful beliefs echoed in the pasts of my elder female family members, cautionary tales bantered around at even the slightest hint of wavering or unconventionality.

I am a college kid breaking all the rules—doing the very thing I'd been warned and lectured about. My bags were packed, and the tickets bought; I had meticulously planned my transfer in secret. In late March, I carefully revealed my intentions proportioned into bite-sized parts until my family was ready to hear it in full. My partner and I had spoken extensively as a team and he wholeheartedly supported the move; I know from others around him that it was all he would ever speak of as the time drew closer.

I am a college kid breaking all the rules as I stand exuberantly in the airport, my chin up and smile wide. *My. mother. is. angry.* I wish I could feel the guilt that I know will come later, but I can't. She is furious, yet scared—struggling to process her emotions while I remain stubbornly clearheaded and steady. We make small talk; the topics so mundane, we sound like strangers stuck in the same elevator ride. She talks of her seats needing to be reserved for the crowning gem of small-town living—legendary Friday night football, before suddenly asking again about my new university. Gently, warmly, each of her questions are answered before I am wrapped in her embrace without warning.

I am a college kid breaking all the rules, tears falling as my mother turns to go, her heel pivoting and back turned as she pushes off with amazing finality. My strong external front has hidden the pain of not knowing when she will see or hug me again, of not doing our late-night conversational drives, or raiding the boutique together for their latest batch of stock. My brave face was for both of us—to assure, to be ramrod straight and strong. Yes, my partner and future awaited me from seat 9A; consequently, I would be leaving my own world behind. I hold this thought mentally and do not let her know. Quietly, I acknowledge the judgment I know we as a family will no doubt face and whisper gentle apologies that she's left without hearing. Bittersweetly, I turn to pass through the nitpicky TSA station, striding onward, each step taking me further from everyone and everything I've ever known. I am a college kid, breaking all of the rules.

AUTHOR AND EDITOR BIOGRAPHIES

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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 writing her fiction novel that will be published soon. Her interests include reading books, writing short stories, watching classical and old movies, and being around her lively, exuberant family. She is graduating this SPRING 2020!

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.

Allison Beresford is a Special Education major from Texas with a focus on the intersection of special education and English language learners. Following her graduation in 2021, she hopes to begin teaching in the local area. Her interests include reading, participating in deaf advocacy events, relaxing, online gaming, and discovering new music to enjoy with her significant other.

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Heera Kaur Dhaliwal is a Biology major continuing her education on the pre-med path, with aspirations to advance her career in healthcare, to focus on underrepresented groups, and to look into the possible setbacks present in healthcare systems. When Heera is not studying, she enjoys cooking, traveling, and hanging out with friends and family.

Gina Fendley is a senior studying philosophy and statistics. Her interests include dental hygiene, 90 Day Fiancé, and reading the ingredient labels on cosmetic products. If she were an animal, she would want to be an anthropomorphic dinosaur. She hopes that readers will enjoy this year's publication of Magnificat!

Mirna Galdamez is a Sociology major with a minor in law. After graduating in 2022, she plans to attend Law school to become an immigration attorney. Her dreams and aspirations are strongly shaped by her childhood in El Salvador and her immigration to the U.S. By advocating and supporting those who, as immigrants, have no voice, would make her feel proud of her work.

Ava Gonzalez is a sophomore philosophy and psychology major. After graduating, she'd like to pursue research and is excited to be publishing her first work soon. She is from Norfolk, Virginia.

Catherine Kenol is a Communication major who completed her degree in May 2019. Since graduating, she began her first job in her field as a communications consultant for a nonprofit organization, with aspirations to continue writing, both as a career and as a pastime. Some of her other interests include art, music, travel, keeping up her Japanese studies, baking, and spending quality time with her cat, Molly.

Waïl Saher is a senior at Marymount University with a double major in Political Science and Economics. Waïl is an international student who grew up in Morocco, in North Africa. He is passionate about development, politics and international relations, and hopes to one day use the knowledge gained in Marymount to improve the material conditions of the people of his country.

Kiana Spearman is an English major, specializing in writing.

Grace Tammaro is a Biology major with aspirations to continue her career in science journalism. When she's not busy in a biology lab, she loves to study classic literature, and attempt to unravel the puzzle that is Shakespeare's writing. Grace is set to Graduate from Marymount University in Spring 2021 with a BA in Biology with a minor in writing.

Kaylee Tyner is an honors program student studying Political Science with a minor in Sustainability. She is from Colorado and came to Marymount to expand her gun violence prevention activism in Washington D.C. Kaylee has dreams of one day working for a non-profit or government agency that works towards combating climate change. In her free time she enjoys snowboarding, hiking, hammocking, and spending time with friends.

Madeline Vazquez-Pena is a senior at Marymount University majoring in politics with a minor in writing. She is excited to graduate as she is the first in her family to graduate from college. Post grad, her goal is to attend law school and become an immigration lawyer. In her spare time, she likes to write, read, and hang out with her family.