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Cover art by Darby Creegan and Elizabeth Culp

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Land, Labor, and the Railroad in Industrial Appalachia How the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Engineered Space, 1843-1872

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During the nineteenth century, the Baltimore and Ohio railroad reshaped the social, political, and physical environment of the mid-Atlantic around the needs of the industrial economy. The creation of industrial space, and the proliferation of communities to populate it, is seen retrospectively as an inevitable consequence of technological innovation, but engaging with contemporary corporate records reveals that this space, like the railroad, was engineered. In order to design a supply chain that would make industrialization economical, the railroad and coal industries engaged in political and social engineering to design the new locales of industrialism, exemplified in the Allegheny Mountains by the coal company town. As this new type of space was populated by the workers necessary to its function, the spatial practices of those workers and their families informed its evolution, defining its boundaries and informing the ways in which it transcended them. Using an environment as methodology, this paper explores the early history of American industrialism, the spatial inflection of corporate power, and the role of working class contestations in the construction of the built environment.

Introduction

When the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad reached Cumberland, Maryland in 1843, the eyes of its investors and engineers were fixed on the great rivers to the West. The B&O's mission was to connect Baltimore to the Ohio River, enabling the quick and cheap shipment of goods from America's growing frontier to the Atlantic Ocean. Like other civic boosters of this era, the B&O's cheerleaders emphasized Baltimore's natural advantages: its proximity to the Ohio River Valley and the warm waters of its year-round harbor. In the eyes of the city's boosters, its competitors had usurped Baltimore's natural preeminence with the power of railroad and canal technology, and this unnatural state of affairs could only be reconciled by the incorporation of those same technologies into its trade network. "To regain her former advantages," they argued, "Baltimore must resort to the same artificial power by which they have been superseded… she must unite the power of steam on land with that on water, from New Orleans to this city."[1] The railroad was called upon to conquer the natural environment, but in the process of doing so, it also changed the physical and conceptual nature of the spaces through which it passed. The advent of the B&O was also the advent of Maryland's bituminous coal industry, and the relationship between these two entities created novel industrial spaces.

For the purposes of this paper, I am defining industrial space as a physically and socially constructed environment centered around the needs of machines. Using the relationship between the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and the bituminous coal industry as my through-line, I examine the creation of this type of space in the Allegheny Mountains. I discuss the mechanical and social engineering that facilitated the emergence of the coal industry, and ways in which industrial

[1] McLane, Louis. *Seventeenth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1843. 12.

capitalists and politicians reorganized space around the needs of the railroad. Following this, I discuss working class resistances to industrial space, and the ways in which their spatial practices informed the evolution of industrial space. By centering the natural and built environment in the early history of industrialization, I produce a history of corporate power and working-class resistance rooted in the spatial relationships and practices of industrialism, and argue that the process of industrialization was defined by the tension between railroad's ability to warp space and the resistive spatial practices of the working class.

Contingencies Not at Present Foreseen: Engineering the Coal Trade

Commentators since the 19th century have heralded the railroad as an annihilator of space and time, but this conception divorces the railroad from its relationship with the land; it was prophesized that the B&O would "flatten" the Alleghenies, but it did not erase the mountains, but grow in relation to them. I therefore argue that the effect of the railroad on the environment is not to annihilate, but to reveal and reshape. The penetration of the railroad into the coal-rich mountain district created new paths around which people and capital were organized, and technological innovations birthed new economic incentives around which the conceived environment was structured. In retrospect, the developments wrought by the symbiotic relationship between the B&O and the Alleghany coal industry have been posited as inevitable, but studying the first decade of coal trade along the B&O reveals that they were anything but. The annual reports from the B&O Board meetings in the 1840s and 50s demonstrate that the supposedly inevitable transformation of the Alleghenies only became inevitable once technology revealed it to be so, and that the harnessing of the power of bituminous coal for the 19th century economic engine was as much a process of politics as it was one of nature.

The 1844 Annual Report captures a pivotal moment in the debate surrounding the coal trade in the B&O's early history. On one side, the State of Maryland, acting through the state legislature and its representatives on the B&O board, pushed for the railroad to offer favorable rates to Maryland coal dealers, while on the other, the executive leadership of the B&O argued that the coal trade was uneconomical. Through the 1844 Annual Report, the B&O leadership substantiated their argument against engagement in the coal trade by citing two economic considerations: the limited capacity of coal mines in Western Maryland, and the qualities of bituminous coal that made it less favorable than anthracite varieties. Influenced by the failure of the Maryland and New York Iron and Coal Company to follow through on a contract to provide 50,000 tons of coal for shipment to the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, B&O President Louis McLane issued an indicting assessment of the present state of the Cumberland coal industry:

> "[The C&O Canal Company] either greatly overrated the ability of the coal dealers, or the extent of demand; since from that time… less than four thousand tons of coal, and not any iron, has been offered for transportation in the manner contemplated by the arrangement… during the same period, no evidence was afforded that any capital had been obtained for working the mines, or any arrangements made towards the preparation of necessary transportation of the coal thence from Cumberland; except in the instance of a single company."[2]

McLane's comment highlighting the need for "capital" to work the mines explicated the factors limiting the coal industry. But what was required was not just capital, but networks of humans to work the capital that could transform the land into a commodity. Cumberland was sparsely populated, and the labor market limited: there simply was not enough manpower to furnish the contracts made by coal dealers with the railroad— workers needed to be impoerted. The project

[2] McLane, Louis. *Eighteenth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1844. 10.

of creating a coal industry in the mountain would require as much social engineering as it did mechanical engineering.

The second argument made in the 1844 Annual Report concerned the fundamental properties of the coal itself. Trade in Cumberland coal, a commodity that fetched a low price at market relative to its weight and bulkiness, was constrained by the generalities of 19th century railroad economics. Because of "the character of the machinery generally in use upon rail roads," a general impression prevailed that "for heavy articles… these roads would not be a desirable mode of transportation." Furthermore, Cumberland coal was a bituminous variety of the mineral: when burnt, it left behind residue, and created unpleasant smog.[34] Pennsylvania anthracite, Cumberland bituminous' primary competitor, also had the advantage of being earlier to arrive to the market. The Reading Railroad, in tandem with the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, had thoroughly established a niche for the article in the 1820s, and because of this, early industrial machinery had oriented to the usage of anthracite coal. Because of this early adopter advantage, in 1844, "the consumption of bituminous coal had been gradually and regularly diminishing," and McLane concluded that "the introduction of the Cumberland coal, in any considerable quantity, could only be effected by superseding, to nearly an equal extent, the use of the anthracite."[5]

In the 1844 Annual Report, the qualities of bituminous coal that would lead it to become the favored fuel source of the B&O, and of American steam engines generally, remained invisible to the B&O Board because the technological frameworks around which bituminous coal

[3] Schulman, Peter. *Coal & Empire: The Birth of Energy Security in Industrial America*. Baltimore: JHU Press, 2015. 47-48.
[4] *Eighteenth*, 10-11.
[5] *Eighteenth*, 13-14.

could be revealed as an industrial fuel source had not yet fully matured. Similarly, the second nature— the political geographies of human labor and capital— necessary to commodify the burning rock had not yet been implemented, because the built environment needed to be reorganized to retrofit the emerging technologies of industrial capitalism. It was not scientific constraints limiting the applicability of bituminous coal to the industrial sphere— there was no fundamental shift in the nature of steam power after 1844. The constraints that existed were engineered by people: the mechanical structure of the engines used by the B&O, and the political structures that organized people in space. And so, at the convergence of politics and technology, it was people that would engineer these constraints away.

This contextualizes the debate between the state of Maryland and the B&O leadership implicit throughout the 1844 Annual Report. Earlier in 1844, Benjamin Latrobe, the B&O's chief engineer, had been called before the Maryland State Senate to deliver a report on the lowest possible rate that could be offered to Maryland coal dealers on coal shipped from Cumberland. The actors representing the state institutions of Maryland, a significant stakeholder in the B&O, had a clear goal— the fostering of a domestic coal industry in the state's Western environs through the use of the railroad as a tool of state power. The B&O leadership, speaking through Latrobe, chafed under the subordination of the (largely publicly owned) business to state interests. Willing to engage in the coal trade purely under "experimental" terms, Latrobe claimed it was bad business, implicitly arguing that the B&O's obligations to its private shareholders should not be subordinated to the desires of the state. For the B&O's executive leadership, the prerequisite to any large-scale engagement in the coal trade were incentive structures that would make it advantageous. The state actors against whom the B&O executives argued were sympathetic to this, and, already committed to the railroad as a component of the built

environment, they were willing to further reorient geography in service of industry and prosperity.

Instead of a refusal to engage in the coal trade, President McLane's 1844 Annual Report was received as a call to action. McLane was, nominally, content to "[leave] the general trade in coals and iron from the Allegheny region, to others more ambitious of monopolising it," but the fallout of the B&O declaring that its dealings in the coal trade would only be profitable based upon "contingencies not at present foreseen," was the assemblage of those exact unforeseen contingencies.[6] And, while McLane's overt statements are politely dismissive of the coal industry, he did lean into the booster optimism surrounding Cumberland when it suited his purposes. In 1844, the B&O was not allowed to use steam engines in the city of Baltimore, transferring its freight to carriage by horses at the city limits. While the citizens of Baltimore saw this as a protection against the dangers and noise of the railroad, the B&O saw it as a massive cut into its profit margins. In this context, McLane argued that, "if the city authorities desire to … enjoy to any considerable extent the advantages of the transportation of coal, [the privilege to use steam power] will be indispensable."[7] Here, the implicit undercurrent of all McLane's denunciations of the coal trade is made explicit. To his audience of capitalist investors, state actors, and booster journalists, McLane is saying: if you want the coal trade to work, *make it work.* Every argument against the coal trade functioned also as a request: for stronger capital networks, for an environment oriented to the needs of the railroad, and for the social engineering of a machine, stretching from the coal pits of Mount Savage to the docks of the Inner Harbor, that could reveal the wealth of the Alleghenies.

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[6] *Eighteenth*, 20-21.
[7] *Eighteenth,* 8.

The shift in technological and social conditions that birthed the Cumberland coal industry from imagination to reality occurred in 1845. An innovation in engine construction by Ross Winans reoriented the B&O's economic calculations. In the 1845 Annual Report, McLane wrote: "The heavy engines, of 22 tons weight, built for the coal trade at the manufactory of Mr. Winans in this city, have proved themselves very valuable machines, of great power, and simplicity of construction, easily maintained in repair and burning the Cumberland coal in the most satisfactory manner; and, in this last particular, solving a question of much interest in the economy of the company's transportation."[8] Benjamin Latrobe, the B&O's chief engineer, who, in the previous year, had argued against the B&O's engagement in the coal trade before the Maryland State Senate, came around as well: "strange to say we commenced with anthracite at a time when people hardly thought it was stuff that would burn at all in anything." And it was not just the B&O that had come to this realization— experiments by the United States Navy showed that Cumberland bituminous evaporated 5.75 times more steam per volume than pine wood, the dominant fuel of the time, leading the Navy to propose contracts with Maryland coal dealers. Contextualized by the dominance of British coal in the international market, and the reliance of American steamers abroad on British coal dealers, the establishment of a supply chain for Cumberland coal became a matter of national security.[9]

The economic developments spurred by the Winans engine turned the rhetoric of Cumberland coal boosters into a self-fulfilling prophecy. The engine was designed to use Cumberland coal, revealing that the qualities which had made bituminous coal frustrating in previous engines could be morphed, through artifice, into economic power. By extension, the

[8] McLane, Louis. *Nineteenth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1845. 11.
[9] Schulman, 48-50.

Winans engine also revealed that the Allegheny Mountains, previously understood as an obstacle to be conquered, could be conscripted by the power of technology into a massive fuel source, providing the B&O with a constant source of chemical and economic energy, and granting American steamers the ability to cross the Atlantic. Coinciding with the reimagination of the natural environment was the assemblage of a human environment that could midwife this new industry. Coal companies prepared "lateral railways of their own to connect with [the B&O's main stem] at Cumberland," creating a mycelial network of railways directly connecting the B&O's primary line to the veins of coal in the mountains, economizing movement and enabling the constant flow of commodified coal. In the City of Baltimore, an April 1845 ordinance gave the B&O's engineers permission to begin surveying routes for a steam line through the city, further enabling "the transportation of this large tonnage… from the outer depot to tide water," and development began on the creation of a rail-to-water facility in South Baltimore.[10] The B&O was annihilating space in ways that it could only have dreamed before, turning Maryland, through public policy and capitalist infrastructure, into a gigantic proto-assembly line. It had taken millions of years for the decaying organic matter in the lightless depths of the earth to mature into bituminous coal, but only two decades for the B&O to turn that coal into fuel.

The endpoint of the B&O's coal supply chain was formally established in 1844 by a decree from the Baltimore City Council, in response to that year's Annual Report, that permitted the usage of steam engines by the B&O in a designated area outside the population center to tidewater at the south side of the Inner Harbor. The result was the creation of a branch line extending to a rocky peninsula formerly used only for pasture, renamed Locust Point in 1846, for the locust trees that grew there. While, for the remainder of the 1840s, the B&O fought pitched

[10] *Nineteenth*, 11.

battles with the citizenry and government of Baltimore over the privilege to use steam engines in the urban core, it simultaneously developed Locust Point into a new type of place: the coal pier. In 1848, the B&O completed tracks to the water, and Locust Point opened for business. Historian David Schley writes: "The B&O purchased much of the land in and around Locust Point, scooping up large lots for use as wharves, depots, and water stations. When extant acreage could not serve the company's needs, it reclaimed land on the waterfront to make room for shipping infrastructure. Developers added slim rowhouses to accommodate the area's growing workforce."[11] Locust Point was a neighborhood built for industry first and people second. It was a space for the rapid transshipment of freight, primarily coal, from rail to water, where trains ran at all times of day, much to the consternation of local residents— primarily B&O employees. It was the culmination of the B&O's desires to engineer an environment for their machinery, and by its creation, it inaugurated the built environment of industrial capitalism.

The consequences of the B&O's innovations in the economy of coal touched every part of life along the railroad. In 1843, the B&O shipped fewer than five thousand tons of coal. By 1845, this tripled. In 1848, the year Locust Point became active, the B&O moved 67,280 tons of coal. By 1850, this number increased to 132,534 tons. Ten years after the line to Cumberland opened, in 1853, the B&O was moving more than 300,000 tons of coal annually, a greater quantity than every other good, excluding flour, combined.[12] A third of this coal stayed in Baltimore, used at manufacturing facilities, to heat homes, and to create the gas that illuminated the city at night. Plumes of black smoke shooting into the air changed the color of the sky and

[11] Schley, David. *Steam City: Railroads, Urban Space, and Corporate Capitalism in Nineteenth Century Baltimore.* Chicago: UChicago Press. 2020. 118.
[12]Harrison, William G. *Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1854. Table C.

taste of the air.[13] At every stop on the B&O's line, mines and coaling stations sprung up to feed the railroad's hungry engines, the tracks of industry reaching like tendrils into the mountains.[14] In 1852, President Thomas Swann, who would later go on to become Mayor of Baltimore and Governor of Maryland, declared: "No subject which has heretofore occupied the attention of this board, is of graver interest than that of the coal trade at the present time… The mineral region of Alleghany belongs to the State of Maryland; and the development of its wealth and resources is a matter which can never be lost sight of by those representing her interest in this road."[15] As the coal trade had grown, the reorientation of the environment around it had allowed the B&O to eclipse its city and state of origin in power and influence, creating, through social and mechanical engineering, a spatial basis for the power of industry.

***Steady Work and Comfortable Homes*: Cultivating Industrial Communities**

In the early 1870s, a child wakes up in the town of Piedmont, West Virginia. He is awoken not by the sunlight pouring through his window, or the sound of a rooster crowing, but by the ringing of the town's church bells. It is winter, and the darkness and chill tell him it is still night, but the clock tells him it is time for work. For breakfast, his mother is cooking cakes of flour and water on the griddle, served with a side of beans grown in the small garden of their company-owned house. Like his father, this boy is a coal miner. He is barely a man, but already he has been going into the mines for a year, and, before that, performing odd jobs around the mines to augment his family's meager income. His parents emigrated to America from Wales,

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[13] Schley, 120.
[14] Swann, Thomas. *Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1851. 21.
[15] Swann, Thomas. *Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1852. 13-14.

but this boy has never left the county he was born in: his life is structured around the mine, his family's home owned by the company, and his time dictated by the clockwork of the railroad. Excepting a brief return home on his lunch break, the boy will spend every hour until dusk in the mines, sweating to earn his keep. But even when confronted by the limits of his environment, the boy still forges his own path. At night, he sings, dances, even drinks, despite the town's morality codes. On Sunday, he goes to church— most of the time— and steals away moments in the woods, hunting and shooting with his friends, trying to impress the town's girls. His ways of existing in industrial space are not ancillary to its historical construction, but critical to understanding its development and evolution.

Until now, I have discussed the conception of industrial space as it was engineered in the minds of politicians and capitalists. But what of the coal miners, the firemen, the conductors, the stevedores, the porters, the steel drivers, and those countless others whose labor constituted the spatial practices of this new type of space? The 1840s saw the B&O marshal its clout to reorient geography around the needs of the coal supply chain, but even though these spaces were designed to meet the needs of machines first and people second, human labor remained essential to their function, and so the construction of industrial space also entailed the cultivation of human communities. The increased demand for labor that accompanied the growth of industry was a problem solved by the technology of the railroad, and its ability to move people to the places it created—but these laborers were not static economic inputs, but autonomous subjects. Even as the coal supply chain conscripted the bourgeoning proletariat into the network of the railroad, these laborers managed their own interactions with the natural and built environments, creating counterhegemonic spatial practices that defined the evolution of industrial space. Through this interaction, industrial space discovered its boundaries and expanded beyond them,

and by analyzing the resistances of the working class to the strictures of industrial space, we can better understand how industrial communities and industrial space grew in conversation with one another.

The tension between industrial space centered around the railroad and the usages of rural space that emerged in resistance to it is documented from early in the B&O's history. As the railroad worked its way towards the Ohio River in the 1850s, concerns of labor were paramount, and so managers called upon the power of the steam engine to move migrant workers from urban ports of entry to rural Appalachia. To their great frustration, though, these workers were not always willing to honor the terms of their contract. An 1853 document from the engineer's office gives an exasperated progress report:

> "The sparse native population, and the numerous body of foreigners introduced among them, with their old country feuds and intemperate habits, made necessary the early establishment of an armed police; and in the fall of 1850, when the extension of the work on this and other lines carried the demand for labor beyond the supply, it became requisite to strengthen the police for the protection of new hands, whose introduction upon the line was violently resisted by the factions then in possession. Upwards of 2,500 men were brought from New York in the winter of 1850-51, and distributed among the several contracts as far West as the Cheat River, 75 miles from Cumberland; and although every proper inducement was offered to retain them, more than half soon dispersed."[16]

The existence of this dispersed group of men in the historical record, and the persistent irritation that this caused B&O managers opens a line of inquiry. Who were these people, and where did they go? If the demographics of these vagabonds corresponded to those of the typical B&O laborer, it is easy to imagine them as recent Irish immigrants seeking escape from English

[16] Harrison, William G. *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the President and Directors to the Stockholders of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-Road Company.* Baltimore: James Lucas, 1853. Appendix, 5.

colonialism and state-induced famine. It is unlikely that they would have joined with the existing "sparse native population" unless they had established familial connections, but Western Virginia was remote, and the mountains provided food: ramps, chicken of the woods, local game, and invasive species like wineberries or onion grass. B&O workers worked hard and were paid little, and for some group of young men, eking out survival in the mountains may simply have been preferable to industrial wage-work. The insertion of the railroad into the Allegheny Mountains dialectically constructed the surrounding rurality as a space where workers could escape from the tendrils of industry, necessitating the innovation of private security.

Private security functioned as a marker for the borders of industrial space, and reveals the social dimension in which this space had to be constructed. The labor economics of industry required its managers ability to determine how and when people could enter and exit. The addition of new hands, imported to drive down wages and break nascent strikes, met violent resistance, and so private security functioned to re-establish corporate authority over the space. Conversely, the issue of absconding workers revealed the practical limits of authority in the mountains, and the ways in which rural space could be used resistively by workers. The poor soil quality and geographic obstacles to movement entailed a dispersed lifestyle contradictory to the railroad logic that funneled goods and people along discreet pathways. When the B&O confronted this, it required the imposition of violent force, via private security, to counteract. Company towns that formed around the railroads, dense and discreet in comparison to their surrounding environs, evolved similar practices, similarly formed relationships with local sheriffs or maintained private security, à la B&O. The movement of the working class was shaped around the railroad, but also beyond its power to control, so, in order to define the limits

of rurality and maintain authority within industry, corporations of the 19th century adopted force as a spatial tool.

The B&O's policy of transporting exclusively male laborers is another noteworthy aspect of its strategy, especially in the contrast it draws with the contemporary practices of coal companies. Alongside the physical limits insinuated by private security, the sex of the laborers formed a temporal limit on the durability of their community and entailed the role of female labor in industrial communities. Through her surveillance of census records from this period, historian Katherine Harvey has excavated aspects of mining communities from this period. Groups of miners were "often related by ties of blood," and that the nucleus of the growing coal-mining class was formed by distinct ethnic communities— "Scots, Welsh, English, Irish, Germans, and Cornishmen,"[17] The relevance of blood ties and ethnicity to community formation in company towns reveals that, as coal miners came to the Alleghenies, they brought their families with them. Harvey interprets this texture of miners' migratory movement as a consequence of their specialized skills giving established workers greater priority, but, contextualized by the labor concerns of the B&O, it must also be understood as a policy choice on the part of mining companies to engineer a temporally durable workforce. At the nexus of intimate connection and labor economics, women and their labor were woven into the fabric of the industrial community.

The project of cultivating human communities for industrial space, and the necessity of women to the functionality of industry, is made explicit in an 1873 report from Consolidation Coal Co.:

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[17] Harvey, Katherine. *The Best Dressed Miners: Life and Labor in the Maryland Coal Region, 1835-1910.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969. 19.

> "In order to secure and retain good miners (men of family) it will be necessary to erect fifteen or twenty small tenements at one of our principal mines, the total cost of which will be from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars… By furnishing such tenements, skilled miners are secured, who become permanent residents of the region, while their sons as they grow up, become the faithful employees of the company which has given steady work and comfortable homes to their parents."[18]

In a town where a coal corporation claimed a monopoly on space, women who worked in the home, which was owned by the corporation, in essence, worked for the company. Women, as homemakers, were conscripted to provide reproductive and domestic labor essential to the maintenance of a community, creating future generations of coal miners and transforming their husbands' "tenements" into "comfortable homes." In doing so, women's labor became essential to the social production of a mining class, and the cross-generational collection of art, traditions, and ways of being that coagulated into miner culture. The gendered labor of women, knowingly deployed by mining corporations in the company town, ended the era of the itinerant miner and the seasonal miner-farmer that endured until the 1840s, and facilitated the formation of industrial communities in industrial space, creating a rural proletariat rooted to the locality of the company town.

The mining communities that emerged on the border between industrial and rural space were governed by the tension between the two. A microcosm of this conflict can be evinced from the competing foodways presented by the opposing visions of local geography. In the early history of Maryland coal towns, company stores were a constant source of consternation for coal miners, who correctly perceived them as a scam that allowed the company to recoup its wages. Even after the passage of an 1868 act by the Maryland General Assembly that forbade railroad

[18] Harvey, 79.

and mining companies from engaging in the practice, corporations simply found loopholes. An 1872 poem entitled "'Foolish Joe,' the Miner," succinctly captures how miners felt about these enterprises: "But now those licensed skinners look // Around with watchful eye, // And guard our little income so // No copper can go by."[19] As women in the mining town took charge of the domestic, it was they who had the most interactions with the "licensed skinners" at the company store, and who therefor had to pioneer alternate methods of finding or growing food. The most prevalent among these was the cultivation of a garden on one's plot, where one could grow staples like wheat, rye, or oats, or produce, in the form of "vegetables, grapes, pears, and small fruits," and sometimes even keep animals: a cow, a pig, or chickens.[20] Whereas the company store represented a discreet, centralized flow of goods and currency (or scrip), the garden was dispersed, and reliant on local ecology; but in the battle over space, no position was static.

In *Ramp Hollow*, historian Steven Stoll demonstrates that coal companies came to support these individual gardens as a form of "political ecology" that allowed them to enclose the commons. In West Virginia, mining companies would forgo charging rent on garden plots, or offer incentives for the most visually appealing or productive plots. In doing so, women's domestic labor and local ecology was conscripted in the web of the railroad. Through the garden "the entire family became deputized workers, contributing their labor without compensation to subsidize the male wage."[21] While the practice may have begun as a subaltern way by which miners' wives could produce their own food, by the 1880s, mine operators had caught onto the financial benefits that an enclosed garden could reap for the company and incorporated it into their schemes. The contestation over the garden plot provides an outline for the evolution of

[19] Harvey, 104.
[20] Harvey, 95.
[21] Stoll, Steven. *Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia*. New York: Hill & Wang, 2017. 222.

industrial space along the B&O: the practices of workers made the limits of corporate power visible, and in doing so outlined paths for its expansion and the further conscription of humans and environment into its web.

In 1872, the B&O commissioned a visual survey of their network, resulting in a group of photos dubbed the *Lakes to Sea* collection. As the collection's name implies, its photos depict the path of the B&O like a mechanical river, its headwaters trickling out of mines in the mountains and meeting the harbor at Locust Point. There is a consistent starkness, emphasized by the black and white medium, to the way the railroad cuts through the mountains, its tracks hugged by fallen trees and towns growing around its stops and deltas. It is both alien and integral to its environment. Working class people are depicted as part of the landscape, standing silently by the capital they worked, almost blending into the background of the mountain. For the photographer, these subjects were a component of the infrastructure, but reading the workers as in relation to their surroundings, we can peek into their lives.

Figure 1. Photographer unknown, "Piedmont Coal Mine," Lakes to Sea collection. 1872. Courtesy of B&O Archive.

In this collection of photographs, we return to the boy coal miner. A photo (*Figure 1*) of a boy riding a pony out of a coal mine captures a moment in the life of a miner; in this photo, we see industrial space, natural space, and the subject who straddling both. He is around twelve or thirteen, his face covered in soot, and expression dour. The mine itself is barely more than a burrow, framed by the trees and brush and supported by a scant apparatus of wood beams. Extending directly into the mine is minecart track, the mycelial appendage of the B&O's industrial network. On top of it, the biological capital, horses and children, that made it function.

Central to *Fig. 1* is the juxtaposition between the desultory, organic vegetation of the mountainside and mechanical guiding lines of the railroad, simultaneously reliant upon and in tension with the features of the mountain. The structures, human and mechanical, that turned the mountains into fuel, are made visible.

The contested history of industrial space contextualizes labor actions that used this space as a battleground. The mid-19th century saw the conception of industrial space and its evolution in conversation with the spatial practices of the working class, with the resistances of the proletariat revealing new ways in which the Allegheny Mountains could be conscripted into industrialization. The railroad's ability to orient economic geography could only be manifested as long as there was a working class for the railroad to organize, but the resistances of this class required social engineering to complement the physical structure of the railroad. Via armed security, reproductive labor, and enclosed commons, the managers of industrial space subdued subaltern uses of the mountain environment. The consolidation of power in the hands of industrialists at the end of the 19th century must be viewed as the culmination of their ability to organize geography around the needs of industrial space, and the contemporary built environment must be understood as their legacy. But the ultimate victory of industrial space as the dominant mode of social organization is not absolute. Grace Jackson, a survivor of the Matewan Mine Wars of the early 20th century, remembers the railroad being used to import strikebreakers, and the women of the community going to the train tracks and tearing them up.[22] As recently as 2019, miners in Kentucky blocked train tracks to prevent the shipment of coal

[22] Jackson, Grace. *Oral History Interview* by Anne T. Lawrence, July 25 1973. Mine Workers Oral History Collection. Via archive.org.

during a strike.[23] As long as industrial space exists, the spatial practices of workers will find the edges and weak points by which this space is defined.

Conclusion

When the B&O was first constructed, it burned pine wood and used horses to pull its rolling stock, and saw the Allegheny Mountains that stood between it and the Ohio River as its greatest obstacle. But after it reached the coal fields of the mountainous west, developments in technology shifted its economic calculations, and through the intervention of state power and construction of infrastructure capital, it became the center of an emerging trade in bituminous coal. The birth of the coal trade inaugurated industrial space, and the emergence of this new type of space warped existing physical and social environments, conscripting land and labor into a paradigm of transience and efficiency. The warping of the environment entailed the insertion of capital into rural space, but this capital required people to make it work, and so the creation of industrial space was also the creation of the industrial community. While the conceptual shifts that reoriented space around the railroad were imagined by the ruling class, it was working people who made up the quotidian spatial practices of the railroad and the coal mine. These workers who existed on the edge of industrialism and rurality used the geography of the mountains to resist the oppressive practices of their managers, and in doing so, prompted innovations in industrial space that allowed it to expand, conscripting the labor of women and the ecology of the mountainside into the network of industrial feudalism. The process of spatial industrialization around the B&O was a conversation between the warping effect of the railroad and the spatial practice of the working class.

[23] Michael Sainato. “Laid off and owed pay: the Kentucky miners blocking coal trains.” The Guardian, 18 September 2019. theguardian.com.

Connecting the history of industrialization in the city to its history in the countryside reveals that space was never annihilated, but reshaped; the spaces and communities that the railroad touched, created, passed through being conscripted into its logics. The downstream consequences of this process remain visible in the post-industrial gothic of Baltimore, and the hollowed-out coal towns of West Virginia. Like Chronos, the B&O was devoured by its own children: the railroad bought out by CSX, and Baltimore diminished to a branch town, increasingly warped around expanding industrial facilities, and left empty-handed after de-industrialization. But industrial space remains the governing mode of social and physical organization, and through this, the legacy of the B&O lives on in the warped environments of modernity.

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Figure 2. Photographer unknown, "Piedmont Coal Mine," Lakes to Sea collection. 1872. Courtesy of B&O Archive.

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The "Burden of Blame": Coalition-Building In the Transgender Movement from the 1970s through the 1990s

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Coalition-building within the transgender movement has received scant attention from scholars in transgender history. The vulnerable period after the Stonewall Riots in 1969 was one of extreme growth in the transgender movement, as trans people came together to challenge injustices they experienced, such as employment discrimination, cross-dressing laws, police brutality, and equal access to medical care. This essay documents not only the extent of these injustices, but also the ways in which trans people united to educate and support one another in the face of injustice. Trans activists also sought to educate cisgender people and reform the prejudices of people in power. Through the examination of how trans people built coalitions in their nascent movement, this essay illuminates the power of alliances for minority groups seeking to reform society and build a movement.

Introduction

"If you think I can be harassed until I leave town, you're wrong" was Houston pre-operative transgender woman Rachelle Annette Mayes's response to her seventh arrest for violating Houston's anti-cross-dressing law.[1] The arrest occurred as she exited the courtroom in which one of her previous cross-dressing charges had been dismissed on a technicality in 1972.[2] When confronted by the claim that she was a publicity seeker, Mayes argued that "the only publicity involved was in trying to inform the public of the plight of transvestites [*sic*]."[3] In 1974, the Supreme Court declined to rule on Mayes's appeal to have Houston's anti-cross-dressing law declared unconstitutional, after she sued the city. While not the victory transgender activists had hoped for, Mayes's case drew attention to the impediments cross-dressing laws presented to transgender people. Cross-dressing ordinances embodied the inherently unjust nature of issues plaguing transgender individuals, as daily cross-dressing was deemed necessary by medical practitioners for transitioning even as the behavior was outlawed in most states. Cross-dressing in everyday life forced trans people to come out at their places of work, leading to possible employment discrimination. Despite these difficulties, trans activists persisted in challenging both laws and social norms. As the trans rights movement moved into a new phase in the 1970s, grassroots activists such as Mayes were willing to face intense discrimination and be out in society as they worked to expand legal rights, gain access to improved medical care, and build solidarity with fellow trans people.[4]

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[1] "City's Report on Transvestism Almost Ready," *Nuntius*, October 1972.
[2] "City's Report on Transvestism Almost Ready," *Nuntius*, October 1972.
[3] "City's Report on Transvestism Almost Ready," *Nuntius*, October 1972.
[4] Challenging cross-dressing laws became a central focus of the transgender movement in the 1970s through the 1990s. Activists lobbied judges and state legislatures to end cross-dressing laws and challenged these ordinances in the court. Ordinary people like Mayes, who may not have otherwise been greatly involved in the movement, were crucial in the fight to abolish cross-dressing laws.

The battles against cross-dressing were just one part of a larger movement. Equal access to medical care, access to employment, fair treatment by the police, and eliminating discrimination were the major goals of the movement from the 1970s into the 1990s. This essay analyzes the distinctly transgender issues trans people faced together and how trans people responded by banding together to build a movement.[5] Trans activists sought to challenge the prejudices of people in power; in particular, activists sought to confront medical practitioners, police, and judges who were in positions to perpetuate or mitigate discrimination. As transgender activists increasingly worked together in a larger movement, they focused their efforts on reforming their relationship with the medical community and their position before the law. These goals led to the rise of transgender support groups and educational organizations to teach other trans people how to navigate these challenges.[6]

While trans people had long worked to improve their individual experiences, what was new in this period was a movement that connected activists across the nation and the newly visible attempts to build community networks. Trans activists clearly detailed their goals for the movement to advocate for change. In an article in the *Detroit Gay Liberator*, Queens Liberation

[5] This essay analyzes the distinctly transgender issues trans people faced together and how trans people responded by banding together to build a movement. I explore trans activism with members of the women's movements and the LGBT movement in other essays. For a fuller discussion of this activism, see my senior thesis, "Alienation and Alliances: Transgender Coalition-Building from the 1970s through the 1990s," available by contacting author.

[6] The vocabulary of the transgender movement has evolved immensely over the past fifty years to become more inclusive and sensitive to the terms it applies to people. This essay uses the most sensitive and accurate terminology; however, original language has been maintained when citing primary sources from the past. In cases that may present confusion, explanatory notes are included. For example, the terms "transsexual" and "transgender" were interchangeable in the 1970s and 1980s, but, as they are no longer, "transsexual" is only used in direct quotations. Using "transgender" and "trans" to encompass the gender diversity we associate with them today became popularized in the 1990s; thus, these are the terms I employ in my aim to be maximally inclusive. Using the gender-neutral pronouns they/their/themselves has also become a powerful way to not only refer to someone whose gender is unknown or cannot be classified but also to acknowledge that "gender is "a set of practices" that contains and defines what is possible for any given individual," as historian Jen Manion declared. Aaron Devor, Ardel Haefele-Thomas, *Transgender: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2019), 4. Jen Manion, *Female Husbands* (New York City: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 14.

Front, a transgender activist group, succinctly framed the demands of the transgender movement as pertaining to the abolition of all cross-dressing laws, an end to exploitation and discrimination within the gay world, an end to "exploitative practices of doctors and psychiatrists," free hormone treatment and gender-affirming care, trans assistance centers created in highly populated cities, "equal rights on all levels of society," the ability to obtain legal documents consistent with their gender identities, and the release of all person in mental hospitals or prisons being held for "transsexualism [*sic*]."[7] After Stonewall, trans activists focused on securing independence from the medical community and the freedom to express themselves however they wished. The abolition of cross-dressing laws, free and on-demand gender-affirming care without having to appeal to or rely on doctors and psychiatrists, and the depathologization of the transgender identity were central to these desires because they were inherently connected to the ease with which trans people could access care and have autonomy over their gender expression. By increasing the number of trans assistance centers, activists would be able to disseminate information on the areas of importance to other trans people, including how to respond to employment discrimination or secure health insurance coverage for gender-affirming care. The medical community had long created stigmas around transgender identity by labelling it as a mental illness; while it is unclear if this led to some trans people being imprisoned for "transsexualism [*sic*]" based on available sources, this was a concern for trans people, as evidenced by imprisonment for "transsexualism [*sic*]" being on the QLF's list of demands.

Activism in this period took many forms. While transactivists sometimes worked in coalition with like-minded people in the women's rights and gay and lesbian communities, they also found that it was necessary to organize separately as trans people. Even when they recognized

[7] Pat Maxwell, "The Emperor's New Clothes," *Detroit Gay Liberator*, January 1, 1971.

shared challenges (such as the psychiatric profession's pathologizing of identity and behavior), trans activists articulated a desire to carve out spaces of their own. Thus, in this era, trans activists worked in solidarity with one another to develop a movement that could address their specific needs. The very act of identifying trans-specific political issues allowed the community to build bonds and to recognize that coalitional work with gays and lesbians need not be the sole method of organization.

Trans Activism with the Medical Community

As the Queer Liberation Front document suggests, many trans activists felt that working to reform the relationship they had with the medical profession was among the most critical needs of the community. By the 1970s, the relationship between the medical community and trans people was changing. The movement became infused with a depathologization message, as it experienced a shift toward a second wave of trans activism, which, as historian Joanne Meyerowitz explained, no longer emphasized or relied on "the medical model that defined "transsexualism" as a disease and gave doctors the sole authority to diagnose and treat it."[8] In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a number of transgender community health organizations arose to allow trans people to get support and advice without interacting with the medical community.[9] These groups, which included the National Transsexual Counseling Unit and the Erickson Educational Foundation (EEF), provided counseling, gave medical referrals, and focused on outreach and education. While many groups were short-lived, their presence indicated the transgender community's recognition of a shared experience and the value of relying on one another for support. Trans people were more

[8] Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 234.
[9] Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Liberal Moment," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 237. Genny Beemyn's chapter "Transgender History in the United States," in the book *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* examined how transgender organizations and the transgender identity changed over time.

autonomous because they no longer had to rely solely on the medical community for connection with other trans people or assistance. Such organizations also provided peer mentorship on living as a transgender person by giving tips on what clothes or makeup to wear and how to legally change one's name.[10] In the mid-1970s, activists founded new groups to replace the early ones– which had mostly died out due to internal conflicts– and to reflect the movement's new goal of changing policy in addition to providing counseling and referrals.[11] For example, transgender activists Joanna Clark and Jude Patton founded Renaissance: Gender Identity Services in 1976 in Santa Ana, California to advocate for policy changes, educate cis and transgender communities on transgender issues, and supply medical referrals.[12] Similarly, in 1977 Marsha Botzer founded Ingersoll Gender Center in Seattle, Washington to supply trans people with medical referrals and connect trans people through a support group.[13] Their support group has met every week since the organization's conception. The movement's new objectives represented trans people's desire to take control of their identities and how society perceived them, as cisgender people's perceptions of trans people were heavily influenced by the pathologization message the medical community perpetuated. These types of services also expanded knowledge in the community and fostered relationships between trans people, paving the way for the development of a collective minority identity.

Independence from the medical community did not occur overnight, as physicians continued to exert control over trans people throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In the 1970s

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[10] *Cross-Talk* no. 25, June 1991.
[11] Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Next Generation," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 274.
[12] Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Next Generation," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 275.
[13] "Our History," About Us, Ingersoll Gender Center, https://ingersollgendercenter.org/who-we-are/about-us/. See also Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Next Generation," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 275.

and 1980s, private doctors began to specialize in gender affirmation surgery, making surgery more accessible and increasing the number of people receiving medical treatment.[14] In 1979, members of the medical community who worked with trans people created the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, which released its *Standards of Care* at its founding. These guidelines were meant to introduce uniformity to the treatment of transgender people as private surgeons accrued more trans patients.[15] The *Standards of Care* renounced surgery "on demand" and encouraged recommendations for surgery by a psychiatrist or psychologist whom the patient had seen for at least three months. Another prerequisite was that the patient lived full-time in "the social role of the other sex" for three months prior to receiving hormonal therapy, six months prior to receiving nongenital surgery, and twelve months prior to receiving genital surgery. The written recommendations for the procedure from two behavioral scientists were also required before the patient could undergo surgery.[16]

Although the standards tried to be cognizant of the circumstances of many trans people by including a requirement that fees must be "reasonable," the prerequisite of living as a member of the "genetically other sex" did not show an understanding of how difficult it was for trans people to live as a member of the sex with which they identified full-time. These recommendations were physician-centered, not developed by trans people. At the second International Conference on Transgender Law Employment Policy (ICTLEP), which was transgender-run, the Health Law Committee discussed the irrationality of forcing someone to live as a member of the sex with which they identified because "coming out is more visible to the outside world" and forcing people to

[14] Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Liberal Moment," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 256.
[15] Joanne Meyerowitz, "The Next Generation," in *How Sex Changed* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 273.
[16] Vern Bullough, Bonnie Bullough, "Transsexualism," in *Crossdressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, 1993), 261.

come out to secure surgery "often puts transsexuals [*sic*] in a cruel situation of being neither male nor female, having to look one sex and use the toilets of the other."[17] The *Standards of Care* forced trans people into dangerous situations by effectually mandating they come out as transgender in order to secure gender-affirming care. People were arrested for crossdressing or fired from their jobs since discrimination based on gender expression did not begin to be outlawed until 1975, which was the year Minneapolis passed an anti-discrimination law based on gender expression. This made maintaining employment difficult for people who were preparing for gender-affirming care. Trans activists banded together to focus on increasing cisgender people's, especially medical practitioners', understanding of the difficulties these requirements presented, as healthcare standards became a central topic of discussion at community events for decades following the imposition of the *Standards of Care.*

In a related vein, trans activists sought to challenge the psychiatric profession's conception of gender identity. Psychiatrists viewed trans people as having an illness, which was cemented by the addition of "transsexualism [*sic*]" to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual's* list of "gender identity disorders" in 1980. The monograph "Transvestites: Deviant or Minority Group?" by John Talamini, a scholar of cross-dressing trends in the United States, explained how psychiatrists labeling "transvestitism [*sic*]" as a disease placed the "burden of blame… solely upon a group which experiences social prejudice… relegating transvestites to an inferior status."[18] Doctors rooted their understanding of being trans in the idea that being transgender and cross-dressing were defects caused by lack of self-esteem or being brought up in a "feminine way," and decided it was something to be cured. Talamini asserted that "considering that many males come to believe…

[17] Martine Aliana Rothblatt, "Appendix C: Health Law Standards," Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, August 1993, 7.
[18] John Talamini, "Transvestites: Deviant or Minority Group?" (Boston: Outreach Institute Inc., 1981), 1.

that females are second class citizens, it's understandable that any imitative admiration of the female would be labeled 'pathological.'"[19] Talamini suggested that because men were valued more than women in American society, psychiatrists labeled any male who "imitated" or otherwise presented himself as female as ill and requiring a cure. His assertion illustrated the underlying cause for the pathologization of trans people as the categorical sexism in the medical community. The addition of "transsexualism [*sic*]" to the DSM justified the great measures doctors went to to "cure" people of being transgender. The treatments psychiatrists and physicians utilized enforced sexual and gender norms.[20] Electric shock therapy and the drug apomorphine, which caused nausea, were dominant treatments of the time; psychiatrists used them to create a negative association with people's transgender identities.[21] For example, cross-dresser patients may have been administered an electric shock while being shown a picture of themselves while cross-dressing. When these treatments did not work, many psychiatrists recommended gender-affirmation surgery.[22]

Psychiatrists ultimately decided the best way to "cure" this "illness" was by encouraging heterosexual trans women assigned male at birth to transition to become anatomical women. But they aimed to preserve heteronormative gender norms by choosing only the most stereotypically feminine trans women to transition. They decided that if patients who came to them for gender-affirming care did not present themselves as stereotypical women, then they were not "real" trans

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[19] John Talamini, "Transvestites: Deviant or Minority Group?" (Boston: Outreach Institute Inc., 1981), 3.
[20] This paralleled how the medical establishment treated lesbian and gay people, who were similarly "treated" for the disease of homosexuality. Thus, getting homosexuality removed from the DSM was also a priority for gay and lesbian activists. Marc Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 2012), 176.
[21] John Talamini, "Transvestites: Deviant or Minority Group?" (Boston: Outreach Institute Inc., 1981), 4.
[22] While surgery had been the norm and continued to be promoted by certain psychiatrists, in the 1970s some psychiatrists came to believe that surgery helped few individuals and could not cure a psychiatric disorder. This led to the closure of several gender clinics, validated insurance companies' beliefs that they did not have to cover gender affirmation surgery, and discredited surgeons who conducted and/or recommended gender affirming surgery. Meyerowitz, "The Next Generation," 268.

people. “I only perform this operation on people with marked feminine characteristics,” revealed Dr. Georges Burou, a doctor who performed many gender affirmation surgeries. He elaborated on his selection process: “I turn away many people if I am not satisfied they have a feminine aspect and appearance.”[23] Whether or not people had a “feminine appearance” was subjective, and could vary from doctor to doctor. Doctors, thus, created a pathology of gender dysphoria only to use heteronormative gender norms to decide which of those “afflicted” deserved to be “cured.” Dr. Burou explained that “even nature makes mistakes sometimes. We human beings must do our best to put them right. If necessary with surgery.”[24] His statement encapsulated the view of many doctors who worked with trans people. They adopted the attitude that they knew what was best for trans people and acted as gods in choosing whom they offered surgery. Such attitudes demonstrate why reforming the relationships with the medical community was central to trans activism in the 1970s and 1980s.

Surgical intervention had implications beyond the physical, which made trans health organizations indispensable resources. According to the EEF’s *Legal Aspects of Transexualism* [*sic*] handbook, some states required proof that the person requesting a change in sex identity could no longer “function as a male” or female. This meant seeing that such persons could no longer play a role in having or bearing children and that they appeared to be a member of the sex with which they identified.[25] Thus, physical appearance was inherently tied to identity through the medical model of being transgender that doctors promoted, which emphasized the importance of acquiring surgery. According to the transgender rights advocate Martine Aliana Rothblatt, the transgender movement desired to “free transsexual [*sic*] expression from mental health

[23] Paul Hughes, “The Surgeon Who Changes Men into Women,” *Sunday Mirror*, February 22, 1976.
[24] Paul Hughes, “The Surgeon Who Changes Men into Women,” *Sunday Mirror*, February 22, 1976.
[25] “Health Insurance Benefits,” in *Legal Aspects of Transexualism and Information on Administrative Procedures*, 1971, 6.

professionals" because psychiatrists' holding the power to decide if they should grant surgery meant some people were able to change their birth certificates to reflect their gender identity or had greater access to care, giving them immense power over trans people.[26] Finding an understanding doctor was imperative to securing care, which made the transgender health organizations crucial resources. In its handbook *Guidelines for Transexuals*, the EEF offered to provide a list of physicians and psychotherapists experienced in working with trans people in the reader's locality to anyone who inquired so trans people could get the best care possible and have an advocate in the medical community to help them through the process of acquiring gender-affirming care. This was a key resource for trans people, as they relied on trans activists who had experience with the medical community to guide them in their medical journey, illustrating the necessity of trans people's relationships with other trans people.

Funding gender-affirming care was extremely difficult due to its high cost, workplace discrimination, and the difficulty of obtaining health insurance coverage. Workplace discrimination made finding and maintaining steady employment challenging, which, in turn, made it difficult for people to procure the funds to pay for gender-affirming care.[27] According to an article in the *Berkeley Barb*, a quality gender affirmation surgery cost $4,000 in January of 1974, which was equivalent to $26,330 in December 2023.[28] Considering minimum wage was $2.00 an hour in 1974, $4,000 was a hefty sum to come by without assistance.[29] As of July 1971, subscribers to Blue Cross were covered for gender affirmation surgery, although an eleven-month

[26] Martine Aliana Rothblatt, "Appendix C: Health Law Standards," Second International Conference for Transgender Law and Policy, 1993, 9.
[27] Jessica Xavier, "So You Wanna Be in Politics: A Realistic Assessment of Transgender Political Involvement," *AEGIS News*, April 1996, 6.
[28] "Inflation Calculator," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Jennifer L. Thompson, "Transexual's Dilemma," *Berkeley Barb,* July 12, 1974.
[29] "History of Federal Minimum Wage Rates Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 1938-2009," U.S. Department of Labor.

waiting period was required to qualify for treatment benefits for a pre-existing condition, the pre-operative work-up had to be performed on an outpatient basis, and hospitalization coverage did not include the recuperation period. The Erickson Educational Foundation published a handbook that asserted that veterans affairs hospitals frequently helped with post-operative problems, but did not cover the gender-affirming surgery itself.[30] Several prerequisites to surgery were detailed in the EEF's book, such as electrolysis to stifle beard growth and hormone injections for at least six months prior to surgery, both of which made post-surgery adjustment easier.[31] Although these prerequisites made sense, funding all of these treatments could be extremely difficult, making health insurance coverage necessary.

Nevertheless, the ways that physicians and trans people interacted were complicated. Many trans people wanted surgical or hormonal intervention, thus requiring engagement with medical professionals. Just as critical was finding a sympathetic physician who could help patients navigate the challenges of the insurance system that too often limited coverage for gender-affirming care. Trans activist organizations created legal guidebooks in response to the difficulties of having to obtain and pay for surgery in order to help other trans people successfully navigate these processes. Doctors played an important role in trans people acquiring gender-affirming care, as their description of their patient's needs could be the deciding factor in access to health insurance coverage for procedures. The attending physician determined the medical necessity of an operation, and, according to the handbook *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism*, the governing "federal standard for payment benefits in the Medicaid program is one of 'medical necessity.'"[32] An EEF

[30] "Health Insurance Benefits," in *Legal Aspects of Transexualism and Information on Administrative Procedures*, 1971, 10.
[31] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976.
[32] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 35.

booklet titled "Guidelines for Transexuals" explained that no private foundation offered financial assistance for gender affirmation surgery, underscoring the importance to some trans people of health insurance companies covering gender-affirming care. Some health insurance companies explicitly excluded gender-affirming care. The booklet went on to list only seven insurance companies that had paid full or partial coverage for gender affirmation surgery. It claimed that applications for coverage under "cosmetic surgery" or "transexual [*sic*] surgery" were consistently rejected, but the companies responded well when the "condition" was presented as "a neuroendocrinological or psychohormonal disorder" that required and was responsive to surgical and hormonal treatment. Classifying it as "gender dysphoria" also led to successful claims. The booklet advised that the description of the surgery should be framed based on the wording of the health insurance policy. "In choosing a surgeon," the booklet urged the patient to assure himself "as far as possible that he will be interested in vigorously pursuing your insurance claim."[33] An understanding doctor was important in not only recommending surgery but also in being able to pay for it. In their *LA Free Press* article, activists from the Transsexual [*sic*] Activist Organization argued that surgeons should have assisted trans people as opposed to supporting a system with many obstacles that offers surgery "as a final reward to "deserving" and financially well-off transsexuals [*sic*]."[34] The powerful position of doctors created a great deal of tension between them and trans activists, who desired greater control over their ability to secure surgery, and demonstrated the necessity of reforming doctors' prejudices about trans people.

The transgender community demonstrated their desire for autonomy by consistently demanding that gender-affirming care be available on-demand and that doctors be transparent

[33] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976, 29.
[34] Anita Douglas, Brandy Elliott, Tisha Goudie, "Transsexual Liberation: Confronting Suppression," *Los Angeles Free Press*, September 1975, 10.

about their level of expertise and experience with trans people. The Health Law Standards of Care in the second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy were written based on the principles of "persons [having] the right to express their gender identity through changes to their physical appearance" and "persons denied the ability to exercise control over their own bodies in terms of gender expression, through informed access to medical services, may experience significant distress and suffer a diminished capacity to function socially, economically and sexually."[35] By first establishing these principles, the committee signified the shift they desired from the medical model created for transgender people to emphasize the patient's right to care and autonomous decision-making. Based on these principles, the committee created standards that physicians and surgeons participating in transgender health care must provide gender-affirming care to any patient requesting it, subject only to denial based on the belief that pre-existing conditions would not be aggravated. Granting gender-affirming care was also contingent upon the patient having undergone one year of hormonal therapy (which was used as a sort of trial period for someone desiring to obtain gender affirmation surgery) and the patient's signature of informed consent.[36] Another standard was that surgeons and physicians "collect and publish on an annual basis the number of sex reassignment surgeries [*sic*] they performed and the number and general nature of any complications and complaints involved."[37] This informed consent model would ensure that all trans people dealt with credible doctors who understood the risks of what they were going to do. This information also allowed trans patients to make an educated decision about whether or not they wanted gender-affirming care instead of relying on physicians to make the

[35] "Proceedings from the Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy," August 1993, 10.
[36] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976, 32. "Proceedings from the Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy," August 1993, 10.
[37] "Proceedings from the Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy," August 1993, 10.

decision for them. The second ICTLEP's Health Law committee proposed on demand access to hormones and other forms of gender-affirming care, as "health law must concern itself with a consistent, rational and fair approach to medical treatment" for trans people; "the fact that the part of the body that the transsexual [*sic*] wants to change is sexual in nature must remain an irrelevant factor in a secular body of law," to report explained.[38] Trans people felt that the only role doctors should play concerning access to care was explaining whether or not the care was safe. If patients had an underlying medical condition, then the doctor could tell them that hormones, for example, were not a safe option; otherwise, trans activists claimed, trans people should have been able to decide whether or not they wanted gender-affirming care. These aspects of the Health Law Committee's recommendations remained in their standards of care through all six ICTLEP conferences, illustrating their longevity in application to the state of trans people's relationship with the medical community.

Trans activists did more than articulate these core beliefs. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, they launched lawsuits and published advice in legal guidebooks to make accessing gender-affirming care easier. The influx of lawsuits and the emergence of published advice also marked a new era of strategies trans activists employed to reach the goals of the trans movement and create a trans community. In February 1978, the Minneapolis Supreme Court ruled that the state's Department of Public Welfare could not categorically exclude gender-affirming surgery from Medicaid. In 1977, the Federal District Court in Georgia made a similar ruling.[39] In the 1980 handbook, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism,* influential transgender activist Joanna Clark listed six court decisions that required states to fund gender affirmation surgery through Medicaid,

[38] "Appendix 5: Second Report of the Health Law Project," Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, October, 1993.
[39] "Here and There," *Gay Peoples Union News*, February, 1978, 37.

including the Georgia and Minneapolis cases. Thus, states were becoming more amenable to funding gender-affirming care, which trans activists capitalized on to encourage trans people to take advantage of the new routes to care. Clark claimed that the majority of private health insurance companies did not provide coverage for preoperative evaluation, gender affirmation surgery, or hospital costs, but, like the EEF, encouraged patients to utilize the loophole in Medicaid, which did not explicitly exclude gender affirming care from its covered health services. Clark also stressed that benefits were often denied if the procedure was not medically necessary. Many private companies used the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association standards of care to judge whether the applicant's surgery was medically necessary.[40] Because the surgeries and related care were so expensive and trans people experienced brutal employment discrimination, many trans people relied on health insurance to fund their gender-affirming care. Activist organizations' legal guidebooks were imperative aids for trans people who desired to obtain insurance coverage for gender-affirming care. These legal guidebooks were integral in educating trans people about how to best finance gender-affirming care, as they detailed loopholes and tips that fewer people would have known about otherwise. They were an effective way to disseminate information to a large network of people. Navigating such distinctly trans issues required the help of other trans people, thus illustrating how imperative intra-community relationships were not only in informing other trans people, but also in educating medical professionals about the plight of trans people and how they were affected by their interactions with and the prejudices of those in the medical establishment.

[40] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 35.

Transgender Activism in the Legal System

The stigma marking the transgender identity perpetuated by the medical establishment manifested in cisgender society in the form of intense discrimination. Transgender activists' largest target in the area of discrimination was employment discrimination, which was central to many facets of the transgender experience, including access to gender-affirming care and the movement's capacity to organize. Trans people unified to tackle these uniquely trans issues and educate people whose biases resulted in an uninviting and distressing workplace environment. As previously stated, gender-affirming care was expensive; without steady employment, it was difficult to fund. In a 1973 EEF booklet, the author claimed that "from a patient's point of view, the time and money consumed during [the trial period before surgery] presents a severe burden, if not a prohibitive one."[41] Employment was further tied to gender-affirming care because, during the trial period, it was incredibly difficult to maintain employment. Employers commonly used pre-operative trans people's lack of gender-affirming surgery as an excuse to not accommodate their needs. For example, one trans woman's manager denied her the right to change her name and dress as a female at work because she "didn't have proof from [her] doctor that the surgery [had] been completed."[42] Despite having been issued new cards reflecting her "new identity" by the State of Illinois and the Social Security Administration and having a signed note from her doctor, the manager denied her request because "personnel said no."[43] Thus, employment discrimination was largely the result of cisgender people's prejudices.

[41] *An Outline of Medical Management of the Transexual*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1973, 3.
[42] "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995, 16.
[43] "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995, 16.

For post-operative trans people, securing employment could be challenging, yet the emergence of guidebooks helped trans people navigate workplace obstacles. The EEF's 1976 handbook *Guidelines For Transexuals* illustrated the careful thought that trans people must put into employment after undergoing gender affirmation surgery. "In some cases, where your employer is sympathetic and the work you do is appropriate to your new gender role," the booklet explained, vocational plans post-surgery would not be a problem.[44] The book expanded on the complications surgery may present in a hostile environment, advising that the person getting surgery should draw all sick leave and other benefits in order to protect oneself during a period of "cross-gender" testing, when the person may be short on funds. The EEF's guidebook *Legal Aspects of Transexualism and Information on Administrative Procedures* detailed the option for trans people recovering from surgery to utilize the grants the federal government made to state vocational rehabilitation agencies to "help them serve persons with a physical or mental disability who need help in obtaining and holding an appropriate job." These services included "evaluation of rehabilitation potential, counseling and guidance, personal and vocational adjustment" and other services, and were often open to trans people.[45] The road to assimilation after surgery could be uncertain, so utilizing all available resources was best. The booklet also claimed that "petitions for correction of work licenses usually are routinely granted by trade associations and the accrediting boards of most professions," although school boards often presented resistance to this because of fear of moral endangerment of their students.[46] The willingness of institutions to change work licenses indicated that post-operative trans people likely encountered resistance at the personal level of their work, as opposed to from the agencies which were changing their legal

[44] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976, 23.
[45] "Employment and Job Training," in *Legal Aspects of Transexualism and Information on Administrative Procedures*, 1971, 11.
[46] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976, 24.

documentation. Despite any opportunities they were granted by the agencies, they were severely limited by the personal prejudices of those they worked with or for.

The experience of Alison, a transgender woman, was typical of many employment discrimination cases. Alison was going to start transitioning but had not done so yet and had worked at the same company for many years. Her employers discovered her intentions to transition and claimed they could give her another job in a different department, all she needed to do was produce a letter of resignation from her current job as a mechanic and another letter requesting a position in a different department. She wrote both letters, but when the time came for her meeting with the company owner, he claimed they could not give her a job in a different department. Alison remembered when she asked if they could let her continue in her current position, the company owner said "no, I don't think that's feasible either, I think you should leave here and go find a job where you can deal with it and get out of here."[47] The ordeal surrounding the status of Alison's employment after her employers discovered her intent to transition took three to four weeks. Alison's experience of implicit discrimination characterized a great deal of other trans people's discrimination experiences. Many people were terminated shortly after being found out to be a trans person or after their intent to transition was discovered, yet their employers did not always say outright that they were let go because of their transgender identity. Many trans people were used as scapegoats for problems or let go for other, sometimes fabricated, reasons.[48]

Trans people had immense difficulty finding or keeping jobs when they were open about their intentions to obtain gender-affirming surgery. A great deal of tension came from the question

[47] "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995, 11.
[48] See Appendix I of the fourth ICTLEP for a variety of trans experiences with discrimination, including employment discrimination and hate crimes. "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995.

of which bathroom a pre-operative trans person may use, the one associated with the sex they were assigned at birth or the one associated with their gender expression. Some employers were willing to accommodate the trans person, who was usually mid-transition in this situation, and allow them to lock the door or put up a note when it was in use. Many employers did not invest the time in finding a suitable solution for the period of time before the trans person was set to have gender affirmation surgery and the trans person was let go. This happened to one unidentified trans woman who was in the trial period of her transition before surgery. She was recently hired as a telephone interviewer, but when her employers discovered she was a pre-operative trans woman, they did not allow her to use the women's restroom or the men's restroom because she was "not female" and the "male employees would be uncomfortable."[49] She then asked if she could keep her job if she did not use the restroom at all, but the employers claimed other employees would be too uncomfortable with her and only offered to maintain her employment if she came to work dressed as a man. After refusing this offer because not only was it "part of [her] treatment to dress as a woman," but she identified as a woman, the woman was terminated and filed a discrimination complaint with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations.[50] Finding work for trans people could also be troublesome because many employers did not want to risk having a problem while trying to incorporate a new employee. "As a result," Phyllis Frye, a practicing attorney and dedicated transgender activist, explained, "most transgenders [*sic*] apply and interview by hiding as much of their past as possible."[51] If that person's identification did not fully match their gender expression, then it was not likely they would get the job. Thus, finding employment was difficult

[49] "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995, 16.
[50] "Appendix I: Case Studies: Discrimination Against the Transgendered," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, June 1995, 17.
[51] Phyllis Frye, "Facing Discrimination, Organizing for Freedom: The Transgender Community," in *Creating Change: Public Policy, and Civil Rights*, ed. by John D'Emilio, William Turner, Urvashi Vaid (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 4.

and required knowledge about one's rights and possible solutions to make transitioning easier at work.

Education became central to trans activists' crusades against employment discrimination. The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) published a 1992 guidebook for employers of trans people titled "Why Is S/He Doing This To Us?"[52] This handbook addressed what it meant to be transgender and common questions posed by employers about trans people, such as "What do we do about the bathroom issue?" The International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP) praised IFGE's handbook, claiming "it's no wonder that many employers have opted to discharge the employee rather than try to reinvent the wheel, a wheel they don't even understand."[53] Employers gained practical advice from this book, which enabled them to find solutions to problems many employers claimed to have because they employed trans people. ICTLEP published a sister book to IFGE's called "What Is S/He Doing?" that was aimed at helping other employees understand the transgender identity and become more sympathetic. ICTLEP argued that "through education and cooperation a transsexual [*sic*] stands a better chance of retaining her job than trying to win it back through litigation."[54] When these preemptive strategies did not work, psychologist and transgender support specialist Gianna Eveling Israel encouraged trans people to file a complaint with their State's Labor Discrimination Agency and bring a discrimination suit against the company if they had "the emotional, legal, and financial resources."[55] Transgender activists concentrated on education as the first avenue for

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[52] JoAnna McNamara, "Appendix E: Employment Discrimination and the Transsexual," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1995, 20.
[53] JoAnna McNamara, "Appendix E: Employment Discrimination and the Transsexual," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1995, 20.
[54] JoAnna McNamara, "Appendix E: Employment Discrimination and the Transsexual," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1995, 21.
[55] Gianna Eveling Israel, "Being Transgendered and Dealing with Harassment, Confrontation and Violence," *The TV-TS Tapestry Journal* 72 (Summer 1995), 12.

resolving issues, publishing many handbooks for trans people and people who employed or worked with trans people in order to prevent discrimination.

The intense discrimination trans people experienced, in employment and other areas, facilitated a need for a discourse within the trans community on how to navigate it. Transgender activist Phyllis Frye noticed the difficulties many trans people had finding employment and otherwise engaging with the law and the medical community and also recognized the knowledge gap that everyday trans folk had, which led her to found the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy in 1991. The International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy was the first conference centered around how the law applied to trans people and how it could be used for progressive change. The event grew out of Frye's frustration with transgender legal issues being excluded from gay and lesbian legal organizations and conferences, and she sought to find a way to educate people on transgender issues as well as to create a forum for discussing and researching said issues. The conference addressed housing, employment, health, anti-discrimination, and criminal and family law as they applied to trans people. Over fifty people attended the first conference. Over time, the conferences grew in size and expanded the range of topics they covered, notably adding sections on female-to-male trans people, trans people of color, and trans people who were not going to get an operation. The conference spawned It's Time America, a prominent transgender activist organization with chapters across the country. The sixth annual conference in 1997 was the last, but the conference had already succeeded in affecting great change by fostering relationships with other organizations and creating political momentum in the transgender community.[56]

[56] Phyllis Frye, "History of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Inc.," in *Creating Change: Public Policy, and Civil Rights*, ed. by John D'Emilio, William Turner, Urvashi Vaid (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

Trans people also attempted to navigate the discrimination they faced by changing the law and bringing anti-discrimination cases to court, but the courts were hesitant to bar discrimination based on gender expression. In the handbook *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism*, Clark claimed that discrimination against trans employees was generally overt, as discrimination based on gender expression or "change of sex" was not prohibited by Title VII as of 1980.[57] In the 1975 case *Smith v. Liberty Mutual Insurance Co*., Bennie Smith, a man, was interviewed for employment in Liberty Mutual Insurance Co.'s mail room in 1969, but his interviewer, the Supervisor for the mail room, recommended against hiring him because he was effeminate. Liberty Mutual admitted they did not hire Mr. Smith for this reason.[58] In its decision, the Georgia District Court held that Title VII did not protect from discrimination based on the "affectional or sexual preference" of the job applicant, despite the plaintiff being characterized as "effeminate" and not as a homosexual.[59] This distinction revealed the ignorance of the court, which combined transgender and homosexual into a single identity for its decision. Later in 1975 in *Voyles v. Ralph K. Davies Medical Center*, a District Court in California expanded the non-applicability of Title VII to include "transsexuals [*sic*] and bisexuals," which was affirmed on appeal.[60] Ralph K. Davies Medical Center employed Carol Voyles as a hemodialysis technician. When Voyles told her employer she intended to undergo gender affirmation surgery, she was let go from the company because her transition would have "a potentially adverse effect on both patients receiving treatment at the dialysis unit and on plaintiff's co-workers caring for those patients."[61] Voyles sued the medical center for back pay

[57] Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender expression were added to Title VII in the case *Bostock v. Clayton County* in June 2020. Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia, 590 U.S., 140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020) Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 5.
[58] Smith v. Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., 569 F.2d 325, (5th Cir. 1978).
[59] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980),
[60] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980),
[61] Voyles v. Ralph K. Davies Medical Center, 403 F.2d 456, (9th Cir. 1978).

and the restoration of her job because "things became tricky when I try to explain "Charles" and my five years of work as a male."[62] The court denied her claim on the basis that Congress had no intention of including discrimination based on "affectional or sexual preference" in Title VII.[63] Voyles experienced two-fold employment discrimination, as her employment was terminated at the medical center because she was going to transition and she could not obtain new employment without having to explain her experience at the medical center as Charles. The court's unwillingness to expand Title VII to include gender identity thus harmed her ability to secure new employment and meant she could have been fired at any time based on transgender identity. *Kirkpatrick v. Seligman & Latz, Inc*. was a 1981 court case in which the court ruled that Kirkpatrick being fired for wearing women's clothes to work did not count as discrimination against Kirkpatrick as a woman because Kirkpatrick was anatomically male at the time they started wearing female clothes. The court based their idea of sex solely on the anatomy of the trans person without regard for their gender expression, often only seeing sex as based on chromosomes and anatomy.[64] The court also rejected the definitions of sex that scientists offered when testifying in a case, arguing that new definitions of sex must come from Congress.[65] The courts were obstinate in their denial of barring gender identity based discrimination, which meant transgender activists had to find other ways to eliminate discrimination based on gender identity.[66]

Three notable examples of transgender employment discrimination in the 1970s served as high-profile opportunities to increase transgender visibility and eliminate discrimination by the

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[62] "She Sues for His Job," *Drag* 6, no. 21, 1976, 3.
[63] Voyles v. Ralph K. Davies Medical Center, 403 F.2d 456, (9th Cir. 1978).
[64] Marla Aspen, "Health Law Project," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, August 1992, 250.
[65] JoAnna McNamara, "Appendix E: Employment Discrimination and the Transsexual," Fourth International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1995, 6.
[66] In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that employment discrimination based on gender expression or sexual orientation violated Title VII in *Bostock v. Clayton County*. Bostock v. Clayton County, 590 U.S. (2020).

courts. Paula Grossman was a fifty-two-year-old music teacher in New Jersey who underwent gender affirmation surgery over spring break in 1971 and wanted to return to school the following September expressing herself as a female teacher. The school board sought to dismiss Grossman, a tenured teacher, but did not reveal the grounds for this dismissal. This decision came after the board requested that Mrs. Grossman resign her tenured position held under her previous name and obtain a new teaching certificate under "Paula Grossman" and accept a one-year contract as a new teacher with the same salary.[67] Mrs. Grossman refused because she did not want to give up her tenured position and because incompetence, the usual grounds for dismissing a tenured teacher, had not been proven. Mrs. Grossman had taught at the school for fourteen years, and the loss of income was hard for her family, who had to go on food stamps for six months.[68] She took her case against the school board to court, arguing that there were no grounds for dismissal, but was denied in the 1978 ruling. The court argued that Mrs. Grossman lacked the capacity to teach because of her "physical condition," which would have a "psychological impact" on her pupils.[69]

Steve Dain was the second in a series of high-profile transgender employment discrimination cases. A beloved physical education teacher for ten years at Emery High School in California, Dain was suspended because he returned to school after six months of sick leave as a transgender man. The school district claimed they suspended Dain on grounds of "unfitness, immoral conduct, and dishonest use of sick leave."[70] Dain, one of the first highly visible FTMs, vowed to fight the suspension because he "cared about kids, education and human rights."[71] Despite his visibility as an out trans man, Dain was not on a quest for trans rights during this fight.

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[67] "Teacher Barred Over Sex Change," *New York Times*, August 13, 1971.
[68] Judy Klemesrud, "A Transsexual and Her Family: An Attempt at Life as Usual," *New York Times*, October 23, 1973.
[69] "In Re Grossman," Justia US Law.
[70] Bella Stumbo, "Transsexual Teacher, Broke, Disillusioned, Tires of Fighting," *Los Angeles Times*, 1978.
[71] Bella Stumbo, "Transsexual Teacher, Broke, Disillusioned, Tires of Fighting," *Los Angeles Times*, 1978.

He explained that he was "fighting as an American citizen for my life, not as a transsexual [*sic*] for other transsexuals [*sic*]."[72] Although he did not become actively involved with the transgender movement after his case, he served as a mentor for struggling trans people, including influential FTM activist Lou Sullivan.[73] The long and arduous court battle drained Dain's savings after dragging on for two years. Ultimately, an Oakland Superior Court judge upheld his suspension on the grounds of misusing sick leave but ruled that Dain should be given the choice of accepting dismissal and getting back pay or carrying out a three-year suspension.[74] He chose to be officially dismissed in order to collect his back pay and pension.[75] Although the court did partially rule in his favor, Dain's life was put on hold as he was wrapped in a legal battle and exhausted his savings.

Renée Richards's was the most public case of employment discrimination, as she was barred from competing in the U.S. Open after failing to pass a chromosome test. In 1976, Richards sued the U.S. Tennis Association, which mandated that she must pass a chromosomal test to compete in the tournament as a woman. As a trans woman, Richards had just won a match at the La Jolla tournament weeks before the U.S. Open conflict.[76] After she was linked to her birth name "Richard Raskind," controversy stirred about whether she would be allowed to compete in other matches. One referee claimed that he would not take formal action against Richards and that "if in fact Raskind has had a sex operation, and we knew that beyond a shadow of a doubt, then I would allow the match."[77] The referee's statement illustrated society's view that a trans person was only truly a member of the sex with which they identified if they had undergone gender affirmation surgery. Robin Harris, who lost the La Jolla finals to Richards, argued that "even if she's had a sex

[72] Ray Riegert, "A Prisoner of Sex Escapes into Society's Cage," *Berkeley Barb*, November 1976.
[73] Lou Sullivan to Jude Patton, June 26, 1985, Lou Sullivan Collection, GLBT Historical Society.
[74] Bella Stumbo, "Transsexual Teacher, Broke, Disillusioned, Tires of Fighting," *Los Angeles Times*, 1978.
[75] Rob Arias, "District Issues Official Apology to Trans-Rights Pioneer Steve Dain, Emeryville Street Renamed in his Honor," The E'ville Eye, March 24, 2021.
[76] "Robin Harris in Response to Renee Richards Controversy," *The San Diego Union*, August 2, 1976.
[77] Michael Grant, "Richards' Identity Confirmed," *The San Diego Union*, July 25, 1976.

change, she shouldn't be able to compete with women" because being assigned male at birth gave Richards an advantage in the competition.[78] The New York State Supreme Court sided with Richards in her case against the USTA, ruling that requiring Richards to pass a chromosome test to qualify for the U.S. Open was "grossly unfair, discriminatory and inequitable, and violative of her rights under the Human Rights Law of this state."[79] Furthermore, the judge wrote that when a "successful physician, husband and father, finds it necessary for his own mental sanity to undergo a sex reassignment [*sic*], the unfounded fears and misconceptions of the defendants must give way to the overwhelming medical evidence that this person is now female."[80] His opinion was not only quite progressive for this time, but also demonstrated a level of understanding, if elementary, of being transgender inconsistent with other, mostly unsympathetic, court rulings such as those in which Steve Dain, Paula Grossman and so many others had been involved.

Although Grossman, Dain, and Richards did not get deeply involved with the transgender movement after their cases, these early pioneers' court cases provided grounds for other trans activists to challenge discrimination and encouraged trans people to stand up against the discrimination they faced. Richards, for example, did not desire to be in the spotlight, but declared that if "by being in the public eye playing tennis I can show [other members of minority communities] that hope is not dead then it is well worth all the stress I suffer."[81] Richards did not continue to become an outspoken transgender activist, but her courage to publicly seek justice for the discrimination she faced inspired others to do the same. Similarly, Grossman and Dain's stories brought the question of transgender teachers to the national stage and created precedent for other

[78] Michael Grant, "Richards' Identity Confirmed," *The San Diego Union*, July 25, 1976.
[79] Neil Amdur, "Renee Richards Ruled Eligible for U.S. Open," *The New York Times*, August 17, 1977.
[80] Neil Amdur, "Renee Richards Ruled Eligible for U.S. Open," *The New York Times*, August 17, 1977.
[81] Laurie Pignon, "Sex-Change Tennis: The Big Money Factor," *Daily Mail*, October 19, 1976.

trans teachers to challenge the discrimination they endured.[82] These examples of trans people fighting their employers' biases and shedding light on the injustices trans people suffered also furthered cisgender people's understanding of the trans experience and decreased the stigma around being trans gender for both trans and cis people.

In addition to employment discrimination, transgender activists focused on eliminating another facet of discrimination in the legal system: deliberate and systemic discrimination at the hands of police officers and prison officials. Police and prison officials' prejudices translated to unfair treatment in prisons and making arrests, and these actions were justified by the lack of anti-discrimination laws pertaining to gender identity and the vague and discriminatory cross-dressing ordinances in place in many cities across America. Cross-dressing laws epitomized the contradictory nature of society's ideas of being transgender, and their abuse by police officers became a key focus of transgender activism in the 1970s through the 1990s. As previously mentioned, the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's standards of care recommended a person interested in gender-affirming surgery lived full-time in "the social role of the other sex" for varying amounts of time based on the gender-affirming care they sought, i.e. for three months before hormonal therapy, twelve months prior to genital surgery, etc.[83] This "trial period" entailed living, working, and dressing in a cross-gender role, while also "[developing] and [expressing] the habit patterns that will cause other people to respond to him as they normally would to a woman," according to the EEF's handbook *An Outline of Medical Management of the Transexual* [*sic*].[84] These recommendations, which many gender clinics and doctors followed,

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[82] Jen Gilbert, "Ambivalent Legacies: A Response to Harper Keenan," *Occasional Paper Series* 2021, no. 45 (April 2021): https://doi.org/10.58295/2375-3668.1411.

[83] Vern Bullough, Bonnie Bullough, "Transsexualism," in *Crossdressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, 1993), 261.

[84] *An Outline of Medical Management of the Transexual*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1973, 12.

failed to recognize the legal complications of cross-dressing laws and how they impacted the ability of trans people to live in "the social role of the other sex." By the 1960s, cross-dressing regulations abounded in every region of the United States.[85] Aimed at policing gender nonconformity, these laws criminalized people who appeared in public "in a dress not belonging to his or her sex" or sought to "disguise" him or herself as a member of the opposite sex.[86] Police utilized cross-dressing ordinances to regulate morality and sex work, as they often assumed male effeminacy was tied directly to prostitution.[87] In an advice column in the *TV-TS Tapestry*, Rupert Raj, the executive director of the transgender organization the Metamorphosis Medical Research Foundation and executive editor of Metamorphosis Newsletter, warned against visiting bars while cross-dressed, especially while unaccompanied, because there were serious threats of sexual harassment and they would be "victims with no recourse to protection from the law."[88] No detectable trans men, drag kings, or cross-dressing women were reported to have been arrested for violating cross-dressing ordinances; most of the reported cases centered around trans women, drag queens, and male cross-dressers.[89] Thus, trans people were in a unique position to be discriminated against with no form of recourse.

Although the legal consequences were relatively minor, including fines of $1 to $100 and a relatively short amount of time in jail, the arrest experience and subsequent abuse perpetrated by the police made the experience a horrific one, as police frequently humiliated and degraded those

[85] Kate Redburn, "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86," *Law and History Review*, 2023, 1-45.
[86] Kate Redburn, "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86," *Law and History Review*, 2023, 1-45.
[87] In the 1970s and 1980s, the law treated cross-dressers and trans people as the same. Thus, police were able to arrest trans people cross-dressing for medical purposes and cross-dressers who did not identify as transgender for the same reason. Kate Redburn, "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86," *Law and History Review, 2023, 1-45.*
[88] Rupert Raj, "Places to Go and Not to Go When Dressed," *TV-TS Tapestry*, 1984, 44.
[89] Kate Redburn, "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86," *Law and History Review, 2023, 1-45.*

they arrested. In the early 1960s, for example, a traveling salesman was arrested while cross-dressing after eating dinner in a local restaurant. After spending the night in jail, the assistant chief of police forced him to "dress" again, "took gratuitous mug shots of him, and proceeded to "lead various men into the room and tell each one, 'I'll give you fifty bucks if you mount her.'" Another particularly appalling case was that of a trans person named Linda Sue Jackson. In 1977, police officers arrested Jackson several times. On one occasion, they forced Jackson to appear naked in the Malvern City Jail while police "taunted and beat them [*sic*]." During a subsequent arrest, officers drove Jackson to a remote location and beat them with "nightsticks and flashlights, had turpentine poured into [their] anus, and was set upon by two Doberman pinschers.[90] One of the officers poured alcohol on [Jackson's] wounds" and asked them to perform sexual acts. In "Horror in Arkansas," a reporter for *Drag* magazine claimed, "a physician at the trial described [Jackson] as the most severely beaten patient he had ever treated."[91]

Encounters with the criminal justice system, thus, posed dangers to trans people that were compounded by police officers' biases. In *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism*, Clark asserted that "to cross-dress without running afoul of the law involves avoiding compromising situations, securing proper identification and authorization, and learning to dress appropriately… if you are going to cross-dress, don't be obvious about it."[92] Even when they were allowed to cross-dress and more adequately express themselves, a trans person's gender expression was severely limited by the normative gender roles society enforced both through law and violence. Pre-operative trans people could be given letters from their attending physicians verifying that cross-dressing was a

[90] Redburn referred to Jackson using they/them pronouns.
[91] Kate Redburn, "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86," *Law and History Review, 2023, 1-45.*
[92] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 12.

required part of therapy for "transsexualism [*sic*]," which could be presented to police but was not a guarantee that they would not be arrested. Phyllis Frye claimed that even the full-time pre-operative trans people holding these cards were often arrested.[93] Clark further urged cross-dressers to use "common sense" when cross-dressing in public and be mindful of the situations they put themselves in, despite the cross-dressing being mandated by physicians.[94] It was the horrific experiences at the hands of police and the desire to not be limited in their gender expression that spurred trans activists to repeal cross-dressing ordinances.

Challenging cross-dressing laws became a central concern of many trans activist organizations because violations of these ordinances so often entangled trans people with the criminal justice system.[95] By 1980, people arrested for cross-dressing had successfully challenged their arrests in at least sixteen cities. This was partially the work of transgender activists, who focused on overturning these laws in the courts and by lobbying city councils and state legislatures.[96] In Columbus, Ohio, for example, Kravitz, a public defender, took the case of a pre-operative trans woman who was arrested for cross-dressing. Kravitz took the case to the Ohio Supreme Court, which struck down Columbus's anti-cross-dressing law in 1975 because it violated the 14th Amendment Due Process Clause. Kravitz took up several cases of transgender people who were arrested for cross-dressing because he "wanted to get at least one cross-dressing decision on the law books as a precedent," as these laws had been used against trans women and male cross-

[93] Phyllis Frye, Facing Discrimination, 9.
[94] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 13.
[95] Kate Redburn's article "Before Equal Protection: The Fall of Cross-Dressing Bans and the Transgender Legal Movement, 1963-86" detailed how the transgender legal movement developed in tandem with challenges to cross-dressing laws. Vern Bullough and Bonnie Bullough's book *Crossdressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, 1993) analyzed the phenomenon of cross-dressing and its relation to being transgender. Clare Sears's *Arresting Dress: Cross-Dressing, Law, and Fascination in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015) examined the origins and purposes of anti-cross-dressing laws, explaining how the law both defined and policed gender.
[96] Phyllis Frye, Facing Discrimination, 9.

dressers.[97] Phyllis Frye's work against the Houston cross-dressing law was among the best-documented examples of a transgender activist successfully repealing a cross-dressing ordinance. In the early 1970s, police used the Houston cross-dressing ordinance to arrest pre-operative transgender woman Rachelle Annette (birth name Anthony, previously known as Toni Rochelle) Mayes at least seven times. Mayes reportedly asked the police chief for some form of identification to prevent other officers from arresting her until she could undergo gender affirmation surgery, to which the police chief responded "if 'it' breaks the law, 'it' will be arrested."[98] Not only did the police disregard the medical basis for cross-dressing that Mayes presented, but they disregarded Mayes's and other cross-dressers humanity, viewing them as undeserving of any type of understanding. The anti-cross-dressing laws perpetuated an already difficult financial situation for many trans people who faced challenges holding jobs and paying for expensive gender-affirming care. Arrests for violating dress ordinances left trans people to pay legal fees and fines for violating the law. "I've probably spent $1000 in legal fees and bonds since I've began taking the hormones," reflected an exasperated Mayes, "if this keeps up I won't have any money for the operation."[99] Mayes attempted to strike down the Houston bill through the courts, but in 1974 the Supreme Court rejected Mayes's appeal. The justices held the lower court's ruling that the ordinance was constitutional because the "disguise ordinance" protected "a valid state interest by helping protect the survival of the race by banning homosexual disguises" and keeping peace because "an ineffective disguise may engender catcalls and slurring remarks," while an "effective disguise" could lead to trouble if someone has romantic relations with the trans person and finds out the person was not cisgender.[100] The law was essentially to protect cisgender people's comfort at the

[97] "Ohio Court Kills Anti-Drag Law," *Contact*, May 7, 1975, 7.
[98] "If 'It' Breaks the Law, 'It' Gets Arrested," *Brownwood Bulletin,* August 27, 1972.
[99] "If 'It' Breaks the Law, 'It' Gets Arrested," *Brownwood Bulletin,* August 27, 1972.
[100] "Transvestite Laws Upheld by Court," *Lubbock Avalanche Journal*, April 2, 1974.

detriment of trans people's rights. Then, in late 1976 along came Phyllis Frye, who decided to lobby to have the ordinance repealed because she had just started her transition and was "terrified of arrest."[101] She started by contacting each member of the Houston City Council and for several years lectured at universities and lobbied to "municipal judges, to council members, anyone who would listen."[102] She was spurred on by her personal experience: "each and every day however for those four years when I left the house in the morning, I never knew if I'd be back that night or instead in jail. And each and every day for four years, my spouse, Trish, left the house not knowing whether I'd be back at home or in jail."[103] In 1977, Frye's efforts gained traction, as the mayor declared support for repealing the law and seven trans people filed suit to have the cross-dressing law declared unconstitutional.[104] Finally, on August 12th, 1980, Frye's efforts came to fruition and the City Council repealed the cross-dressing ordinance; two of the men who would have voted 'no' were on telephone calls, so their votes were counted in favor of repealing the law.[105]

The revocation of the law, however, did not mean police lost their power to enforce heteronormative gender norms because they could still arrest people for dressing "in lewd fashion."[106] The First ICTLEP's Criminal Law and Practice Report created in 1992 urged citizens arrested for cross-dressing to hire a "competent and sensitive" lawyer to challenge the constitutionality of the law and provided several other routes that could be taken to decriminalize cross-dressing, such as identifying sympathetic medical and legal professionals who could help

[101] Phyllis Frye, "Repeal of the Houston Crossdressing Ordinance," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1992, 105.
[102] Phyllis Frye, "Repeal of the Houston Crossdressing Ordinance," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1992, 105.
[103] Phyllis Frye, "Repeal of the Houston Crossdressing Ordinance," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1992, 105.
[104] "Dress Law Repealed Favored," *Houston Chronicle*, January 25, 1977.
[105] Phyllis Frye, "Repeal of the Houston Crossdressing Ordinance," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, 1992, 106.
[106] "Cross-dressing Law Struck Down," *This Week in Texas*, August 22-28, 1980.

strike down the laws and collecting and sharing information about which localities had cross-dressing ordinances and their enforcement.[107] Thus, cross-dressing laws remained an issue for the transgender community. Even so, the successful repeals of the Houston and Columbus cross-dressing laws were wins for transgender activists and provided examples of successful campaigns to strike down cross-dressing laws, empowering trans activists across the country to pursue abolishing these laws.

Police abuse of trans people extended into imprisonment, prompting trans inmates to utilize the media to shed light on their struggles and elicit a response from transgender activists. Many trans people were imprisoned based on their physical anatomy at the time of incarceration, not how they identified, leading to harassment by other inmates, especially if someone was in the process of transitioning or wanted to start transitioning while in prison. Evidence from around the country revealed the difficulties of pre-operative trans people who were mid-transition while being incarcerated, as these people were often in the most dire situations in prisons. The stories often detailed sexual abuse, physical violence by inmates and prison guards, and extended solitary confinement.[108] The article "She Who was He Awarded 25G" chronicled the case of Jackie Farrell, a trans woman described in court as "busty" who received a $25,000 settlement and the right to serve her remaining jail time in a women's prison in a suit against New York State in 1988 because of "fears for her safety."[109] Farrell was convicted of a prostitution-related charge and, despite wanting to serve her time in a women's prison, was shuttled among five men's prisons where she was sexually abused by guards. Farrell's situation was perhaps only unique because she was able

[107] Clyde Williams, "Criminal Law and Practice Report," First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, August 26-August 30, 1992, 9.
[108] Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 16.
[109] Alex Michelini, "She Who Was He Awarded 25G," *Twenty Minutes*, May 1991, 13.

to obtain a settlement from the state and transfer to a women's prison.[110] A prison spokesperson explained that "although she presented the appearance of a female… the experts determined that Farrell was most suited for a male prison." He elaborated that "if officials determine transgendered inmates are "victim-prone," they can be placed in voluntary or involuntary segregation to protect them from other inmates."[111] Farrell's short stays in various men's prisons were not unusual. Trans woman and inmate Evie Grewell attested that "the system 'hides' a prisoner by means of transfers designed to keep the prisoner 'moving' so that their head and their relationships are never stable long enough for significant court action, media contact or organizing activity to get going."[112] Discrimination and harassment of transgendered and gender non-conforming individuals permeated all levels of the law enforcement system, was often deliberately carried out, was systematic, and, although based on personal biases, was mostly justified by vague policies.

As with many other transgender issues, transgender activists focused their efforts on educating the public and drawing attention to the issue of discrimination in the prison system, as well as educating trans people on their rights. Frye contended that prisons were "doubly hard on transgenders [*sic*]," as prison officials often refused to allow transgender inmates to continue their hormones.[113] At the Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, a committee published the "Policy for the Imprisoned, Transgendered," which outlined standards of care and rights of transgender inmates. Included on the list was access to counseling and peer support group participation, the initiation or continuance of gender-affirming care, access to clothing and other personal items in accordance with their gender expression, and the

[110] Alex Michelini, "She Who Was He Awarded 25G," *Twenty Minutes*, May 1991, 13.
[111] "Transsexual Inmate Settles Lawsuit with New York State," *Cross-Talk*, June 1991, 3.
[112] Evie Grewell, "Confusing Times," *Gay Community News*, May 5, 1984, 15.
[113] Phyllis Frye, "Facing Discrimination, Organizing for Freedom: The Transgender Community," in *Creating Change: Public Policy, and Civil Rights*, ed. by John D'Emilio, William Turner, Urvashi Vaid (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 6.

elimination of harassment, verbal or physical, of trans inmates.[114] ICTLEP official encouraged people to distribute the list to "jailers and sheriffs, and prison officials," who they hoped would become better educated or prompted to educate themselves about trans issues after reading the list.[115] The EEF's 1976 *Guidelines for Transexuals* claimed "hormone therapy may be available to you, or not, depending solely on the attitudes and the discretion of prison authorities and medical personnel," but Clark's handbook explained that a pre-operative trans person who had been receiving treatment prior to incarceration may have had grounds for continued treatment based on the constitutional right to mental health treatment.[116] The prison officials often had a say in who was able to obtain gender-affirming care. Since trans inmates were placed at the whims of people who might be uneducated about and biased about transgender rights, it was imperative to educate these people and secure their support to change how trans inmates were treated.

In this context of intense police discrimination, transgender activists sought allies in the police force to who were sympathetic individuals and could help foster an improved relationship with the police force. Elliot Blackstone emerged as a powerful ally in the San Francisco Police Department; he was an early advocate for social services for trans people and was instrumental in creating the plethora of services available to Bay Area trans people in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Blackstone was appointed liaison between the police department and the people living in the impoverished Central City area. San Francisco was a hub for gay, lesbian, and transgender activism; many of these activists worked with Blackstone over the course of his decade-long career as the head of an anti-poverty crime abatement program in San Francisco to establish programs

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[114] "Policy for the Imprisoned, Transgendered," Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, October, 1993.
[115] "Policy for the Imprisoned, Transgendered," Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, October, 1993.
[116] *Guidelines for Transexuals*, Erickson Educational Foundation, 1976, 22. Joanna M. Clark, *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism: A Handbook for Transsexuals*, (United States of America: 1980), 15.

for their groups and improve relations with the police. When a group of female transgender sex workers approached him to help stop police harassment of trans women, Blackstone helped create the first peer-run support group for trans people in 1967. Blackstone worked closely with the EEF, which funded the National Transsexual Counseling Unit (NTCU) he oversaw until his retirement. He was also instrumental in halting arrests of pre-operative trans women who used female restrooms. Thus, he became an indispensable resource for trans activists, for whom police discrimination imposed significant impediments to organizing and securing care. Although he worked closely with trans activists and did a lot for the community, Blackstone perpetuated the idea that transgender people were not an apt group for coalition building because their concerns were extremely different from the goals of other activist movements. He described them as "more selfish about their concerns" than gay and lesbian people because they desired to obtain something tangible, while the other groups desired acceptance, and trans people were committed to advancing their crusade for access to gender-affirming care.[117] Blackstone's partnership with trans activists illustrated the difficulty with which trans activists found allies, since he was still susceptible to negative stereotypes about trans people. Even so, Blackstone was instrumental in educating police officers and increasing acceptance of transgender people and organizations, allowing trans activists to advance the movement and draw the community together.

Not all police officers were receptive to Blackstone's close relationships with trans people. In an interview with trans activist and historian Susan Stryker, Blackstone recalled an incident in which two trans women who were working with him at the NTCU were arrested for narcotics sales the morning before they were going to speak to the police academy class. One of the women had obtained drugs for her boyfriend, at his request, and sold the narcotics to an undercover officer.

[117] Elliot Blackstone, "Elliot Blackstone Interview," interview by Susan Stryker, GLBT Historical Society, November 6, 1996, 32.

She was arrested for dealing. Blackstone claimed the same officer who arrested the women planted narcotics in his desk. One of these women, Suzan Cooke, reflected in an interview with Susan Stryker that other police officers did not like what Blackstone was doing. "You've got to understand," she elaborated, "that these were cops who were four years before, five years, six years before, were 'busting for being.' Now, they were no longer even supposed to take you in and bust you for impersonation?... And not only were they losing control, but we were gaining in respectability."[118] The San Francisco Police Department was notoriously corrupt, as many officers were suspected of taking kickbacks from the gay bars they monitored, and they were displeased that Blackstone was helping the transgender community organize and gain access to care. The whole drug case against the women working for the NTCU was orchestrated, Cooke claimed, to "bust the center, and to bust Elliot."[119] After the bust, Blackstone was demoted by being reassigned to a foot beat and retired a year later, in 1975. While he accomplished a great deal of good things with the trans community, it would be many years until relations with the police improved.

Trans people faced discrimination at every level of their care and in many aspects of their lives and were often reliant on the whims of people in power to be able to express themselves how they saw fit. They could not rely on the law to seek recourse after employment discrimination or police harassment because gender expression was often excluded from federal and state anti-discrimination laws. Activists, however, remained undeterred. They tirelessly worked to repeal cross-dressing laws, formed relationships with understanding police officers, and worked to educate both cisgender people and members of the trans community on the discrimination they

[118] Suzan Cooke, "Suzan Cooke Interview," interview by Susan Stryker, GLBT Historical Society, January 10, 1998, 57.
[119] Suzan Cooke, "Suzan Cooke Interview," interview by Susan Stryker, GLBT Historical Society, January 10, 1998, 58.

endured and how to best navigate it. Rupert Raj summarized the position from which they attacked their issues best when he said that trans people were "tragic victims of a medical mystery… who deserve at least the same measure of minimal respect that is due any other human being."[120] It was this desire for respect and equal treatment that spurred the trans response to the injustices they experienced. The emergence of an organized and cohesive trans rights movement between the 1970s and 1990s was a milestone in LGBTQ history that built new relationships of trans solidarity.

[120] Rupert Raj, "On Transsexualism," *TV-TS Tapestry*, 1984, 44.

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“Students find corporate reforms absurd”: Bryn Mawr Student’s Mobilization for Divestment from Apartheid South Africa

Madeline R. Kessler
Bryn Mawr College

In 1986, Bryn Mawr College’s endowment held $8 million or 8.33% of its $96 million endowment in investments tied to Apartheid in South Africa. In line with other major US institutions who believed they must act moral in the face of violent and exploitative system of racial discrimination, the Board of Trustees, the governing body that oversees college operations and finances, proposed a plan in 1985 to divest from subsidiaries of their stock in South Africa if Apartheid was still in place 24 months later in 1987. This came at the tail end of the international movement to oppose and end Apartheid through economic pressures. Bryn Mawr students would reject this plan, occupying buildings and mobilizing campus to disrupt Board meetings. Students said they would not rest until full divestment. Their movement held a shared commitment to ending Apartheid in South Africa and to ending racism in the United States.

This paper narrates how the social and economic movements against Apartheid panned out at Bryn Mawr College in the 1980s. Based on my original primary source research at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges’ special collections, I uncover the tactics and frameworks of the student movement to divest as well as the college’s response. Inevitably, the administration took partial measures to accommodate some of the demands of the student movement for divestment. The nexus between the student movement for divestment and the college administration took new heights in 1986. In this year, the students rejected the college’s newly presented plan for divestment, as they understood it as a mere palliative measure in the face of the violence and racism of Apartheid. To understand the student zeitgeist at the time , I illuminate the historical context of the movement against Apartheid by situating it in relation to the preceding anti-War and Civil Rights movements. The later era of activism precipitated into the New Left movement, which was a radical student movement grounded in ideas of political and economic democracy. I provide readers with a primer on the foundations of ethical investment in South Africa. The college’s plan embodied the corporate responsibility ethos of the 80s, which sought to maintain capitalism and pacify very popular alternatives through modest reforms. These principles undergirded Bryn Mawr College’s eventual divestment strategy, which sought to maintain profit and to make a statement about their opposition to the political system of Apartheid. To make this argument, I draw on archival discussions of corporate responsibility politics and the theory of change they espouse which forwarded reform through pressuring the companies they held stock in. I engage in an analysis of discourses emerging from a school-sponsored trip to South Africa in the winter of 1986, which was dubbed a “Peace Mission Fact Finding Trip.” This analysis is essential to understanding student and faculty perspectives, as there was not a consensus on the subject. In the end, Bryn Mawr adopted a divestment plan that was in the name of corporate responsibility. They wrote letters to the corporations they held stock in who had subsidiaries in South Africa, and asked what they were going to do to end Apartheid. The school sold $651,558 in 1986 of stock from the 5 companies, a mere 0.67% of the total endowment.

Introduction

In 1986, Bryn Mawr College's endowment held $8 million or 8.33% of its $96 million endowment in investments tied to Apartheid in South Africa. In line with other major US institutions who believed they must act moral in the face of violent and exploitative system of racial discrimination, the Board of Trustees, the governing body that oversees college operations and finances, proposed a plan in 1985 to divest from subsidiaries of their stock in South Africa if Apartheid was still in place 24 months later in 1987. This came at the tail end of the international movement to oppose and end Apartheid through economic pressures. Bryn Mawr students would reject this plan, occupying buildings and mobilizing campus to disrupt Board meetings. Students said they would not rest until full divestment. Their movement held a shared commitment to ending Apartheid in South Africa and to ending racism in the United States.

"Apartheid KILLS" poster from February 1986 Protests at Bryn Mawr's Administrative Building.[1]

[1] BMC SpecCol. 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa.

This paper narrates how the social and economic movements against Apartheid panned out at Bryn Mawr College in the 1980s. Based on my original primary source research at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges' special collections, I uncover the tactics and frameworks of the student movement to divest as well as the college's response. Inevitably, the administration took partial measures to accommodate some of the demands of the student movement for divestment. The nexus between the student movement for divestment and the college administration took new heights in 1986. In this year, the students rejected the college's newly presented plan for divestment, as they understood it as a mere palliative measure in the face of the violence and racism of Apartheid. To understand the student zeitgeist at the time , I illuminate the historical context of the movement against Apartheid by situating it in relation to the preceding anti-War and Civil Rights movements. The later era of activism precipitated into the New Left movement, which was a radical student movement grounded in ideas of political and economic democracy. I provide readers with a primer on the foundations of ethical investment in South Africa. The college's plan embodied the corporate responsibility ethos of the 80s, which sought to maintain capitalism and pacify very popular alternatives through modest reforms. These principles undergirded Bryn Mawr College's eventual divestment strategy, which sought to maintain profit and to make a statement about their opposition to the political system of Apartheid. To make this argument, I draw on archival discussions of corporate responsibility politics and the theory of change they espouse which forwarded reform through pressuring the companies they held stock in. I engage in an analysis of discourses emerging from a school-sponsored trip to South Africa in the winter of 1986, which was dubbed a "Peace Mission Fact Finding Trip." This analysis is essential to understanding student and faculty perspectives, as there was not a consensus on the subject. In the end, Bryn Mawr adopted a divestment plan that was in the name of corporate

responsibility. They wrote letters to the corporations they held stock in who had subsidiaries in South Africa, and asked what they were going to do to end Apartheid. The school sold $651,558 in 1986 of stock from the 5 companies, a mere 0.67% of the total endowment.

What is Apartheid?

Apartheid, meaning separateness in Afrikaans, was the state policy of maintaining separate and unequal conditions through racial division in South Africa. This was a chief policy of the white supremacist Afrikaner National Party (NP), which ascended to power in 1948. The NP enacted several laws to institutionalize Apartheid, the first major law of which being the Popular Registration Act of 1950 that required all residents of the country to be registered by one of four races: 'white', 'Asian', 'coloured', and 'native'. The NP also banned interracial marriages the same year. Indigenous Africans, under influx control laws, were only permitted in cities if they had employment. Their status was recorded in a dreaded government-issued document, called a passbook, which required a signature from a white employer and the government to validate an African's status. This restricted Black people's freedom of movement and precipitated passbook burning protests and demonstrations. Women led many of the demonstrations, refusing to have their movement restricted. The Apartheid government created multiple Group Areas Acts which confided Native Africans to 'Bantustans' or 'Black homelands' in order for more land to be available for the white minority.

The African National Congress (ANC) was founded in 1912. Their famous Freedom Charter was written in 1950 following the NP takeover, sending out 50,000 people to collect the people's demands across the country and in remote areas. On scraps of paper, responses were collected, such as: "Land to be given to all landless people," "Living wages and shorter hours of

work," "Free and compulsory education, irrespective of colour, race or nationality," and "The right to reside and move about freely." The Freedom Charter was announced in English, Sesotho and Xhosa.[2] The ANC's organizing included non-violent tactics like strikes, civil disobedience, and boycotts. In 1960, a massive nonviolent protest against pass laws in Sharpeville became a massacre when police opened fire on Black demonstrators outside a police station, killing 69 people.[3] After Sharpeville, the UN declared apartheid a violation of its charter. In retaliation, the NP banned the ANC from 1960 until the 1990, when the parties began a negotiation process to end Apartheid. The ANC would have to go underground and in exile abroad. Many of its leaders and lawyers were incarcerated as political prisoners. The ANC, and other emergent Black nationalist parties, would increasingly take up an armed struggle that escalated in the 1980s.

Student Activism History

The Vietnam protest generation across US college campuses forwarded a culture of student solidarity with transnational liberation struggles. These students criticized US intervention and lack of economic democracy amidst the Cold War, forming the New Left movement. The New Left also criticized the USSR for its political totalitarianism. This framework was embraced by groups like Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which spearheaded early anti-Apartheid campaigns. SDS was a major New Left organization that called for a popular democratic government and a just democratic economy.[4] My discussion of the New Left will look at the transnational and intersectional currents in the student movement from the 1960s-70s. In 1964 *The Bi-College News* sympathetically covered an event at Georgetown

[2] Klein, Naomi. 2008. The Shock Doctrine. Harlow, England: Penguin Books. Chap 10, "Democracy Born in Chains".
[3] Canadian Museum of Human Rights. "The Sharpeville Massacre," March 19, 2019.
[4] Students for a Democratic Society. The Port Huron Statement (1962).

University raising awareness about Apartheid. The author called attention to the fact that atrocities like Sharpeville were happening with support from the US and Europe, calling on Americans to continue to agitate for an end to Apartheid.[5]

Sixty-two Students Picketers Stand So That All May Sit

Bachrach Praises Student Picketers

The students who picketed Woolworth's last Saturday "did a worthy deed" according to Mr. Bachrach, Professor of Political Science at Bryn Mawr. Mr. Bachrach spoke on "Political Action, Re: Picketing," Monday evening.

There are four major objections to picketing. To those who feel that it is not an effective means of ameliorating the present integration problem, and who have left it to the picketers to prove its effectiveness, Mr. Bachrach answered that negative action is also action. The burden of proof, therefore, doesn't any more rest on the initiator of action than on those

F. W. WOOLWORTH CO.

Students turn out for Bryn Mawr Picket.

"Sixty-two Students Picketers Stand So That All May Sit." 1960.[6]

As early as 1965, Swarthmore students wrote an open letter to the college to end investment in Chase Manhattan Bank, as part of a SDS call to put pressure on the Bank for its investments and policy of lending in Apartheid South Africa. This movement was simultaneous with the movement for Civil Rights in the US, taking down a similarly racist segregation system. At Bryn Mawr, student activists participated in the Civil Rights movement, holding fundraisers and participating in the Freedom Rides, a voter registration effort organized by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. The student movement was global, and many of such were met with brutal crackdown. May 1968 is notorious for hundreds of student demonstrations across the world demanding worker and civil rights, an end to militarism, and for many different freedoms; From Paris, France to Orangeburg, South Carolina to Mexico City. Police responded to protesters with brutality, and in some cases massacres.

[5] BMC SpecCol. The College News, 1964-04-17, Vol. 50, No. 19.
[6] "Social Action – Who Built Bryn Mawr?," Digital Exhibit.

The South African student movement precipitated in June of 1976, when secondary school students resisted the introduction of the Afrikaans language into 'Bantu schools'. This event is called the Soweto Uprisings. Police opened fire and tear gassed the 20,000 students who were peacefully protesting, murdering over 176 people.[7] In the wake of Soweto, the student movement increased its efforts to protest Western governments' policies of arming Apartheid, as well as corporations who were profiting from the Apartheid regime. This emerging movement called for Divestment from South Africa. This strategy sought to challenge US complacency and cut ties with corporations profiting off of Apartheid. Divestment within the anti-Apartheid movement would come to mean "individuals and institutions selling their stock in companies that have subsidiaries in South Africa," defined here by Haverford student Howard Snipes.[8] Student activists would pressure their college's executive boardrooms to divest their endowment holdings in South Africa. Hampshire College was the first US school to divest, in 1977. By 1988, 155 schools divested.[9]

Poster graphic of an iconic photo from Soweto depicting a murdered 12-year-old boy named Hector Pieterson being carried by a student. Pieterson's sister holds her palm up in defiance, on the left.[10]

[7] Zinn Education Project. "June 16, 1976: Soweto Uprising - Zinn Education Project," June 17, 2023.
[8] HC SpecCol. Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986. B-Co Box 16 Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986 Snipes, Howard. "Statement On Divestment".
[9] "Divestment from South Africa," Amherst Online Exhibit.
[10] Zinn Education Project. "June 16, 1976: Soweto Uprising – Zinn Education Project," June 17, 2023.

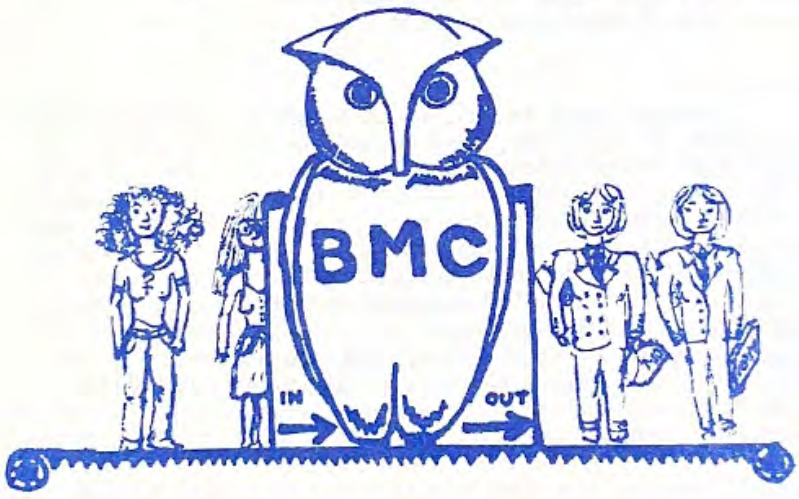
Corporate Responsibility

In 1977, Leon Sullivan of the Philadelphia Zion Baptist Church established a set of guidelines to improve workplace conditions and structures to uplift Black workers in South Africa. Called the Sullivan Principles after the minister, the principles were a voluntary business code, which companies could pay into to receive a compliance rating to signal their workplace equity to consumers and investors abroad. They had to fill out a questionnaire and allow inspectors into their factories for review. The Principles were celebrated by the business world as a means of signaling their commitment to end the increasingly unpopular Apartheid regime without sacrificing their profits. Zeb Larson argues, "Business leaders saw social responsibility as a way to protect free-market capitalism from communism by addressing certain communist criticisms, such as poverty."[11] Through educating and uplifting destitute Black workers, the Principles would effectively maintain capitalism as the ANC was calling for redistribution and democratization. In *Decoding Corporate Camouflage* (1980), Elizabeth Schmidt investigated the effectiveness of the Sullivan Principles, finding that they advanced "gradualism and utility– as a tool of corporate propaganda." The Principles' strategy neglected to stop US investment in key sectors of Apartheid like computers and energy. Further, in addressing workplace segregation, corporations maintained de facto segregation by "changing black-only cafeterias to spaces for "hourly workers".[12]

In the same vein as the principles, in 1978, Bryn Mawr co-sponsored a resolution by local churches to demand "Eastman Kodak halt sales of aerial surveillance film to the South African Military." This resolution was a petition to the corporation itself. The College felt as a shareholder they had the power to demand policy changes. They saw petition as more effective

[11] Larson, Zeb. "The Sullivan Principles: South Africa, Apartheid, and Globalization." Diplomatic History 44:3 (2020): 479-503.
[12] Larson, 495.

than divestment. Bryn Mawr's presidential assistant Joseph Johnston stated Divestment "is an ineffective response.. It's dramatic, and it's a gesture that cleanses an institution of its previous involvement, but you lose your leverage to influence the behavior of corporations."[13] Casting off divestment as a strategy and then holding out for gradual change through established and profitable channels was a strategy that sought to present Byrn Mawr's complacency on positive pro-democracy terms, despite Apartheid's fundamentally undemocratic groundings. In 1987, Welsleyean's president invited Bryn Mawr's president to hear Sullivan speak at the college in Middletown, Connecticut.[14] Sullivan himself was initially in favor of full economic disengagement with South Africa, and after the Sullivan Principles weren't entirely effective walked back to his initial values of disengagement. Bryn Mawr, however, was staunchly committed to the principles' doctrine of corporate responsibility. They saw their stockholder status as a form of corporate constituency, a vote in the company's proceedings.



Owlification! Bryn Mawr can turn Feminist scaries who burned their bras into girl bosses pant-suited up, ready to run a board room.[15]

[13] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa. *The Bulletin* Sunday, December 3, 1978. "Colleges rapped for S. African ties" Sam W. Pressley.
[14] McPherson Papers. Correspondence, Subjects 9/10, Se-Sw. Box 59 of 82. Folder: South African 1984-88 Campbell, Colin. Letter from Wellesley college president to Bryn Mawr President Pat McPherson. March 12, 1987.
[15] HC SpecCol. Social Action Caucus records (HCQ.003.034)

Bryn Mawr was deeply embedded in the neoliberal ethos of the late 70s and 80s, which sought efficient strategies and leadership on the new expanding frontiers of the free market. The Bi-Co Social Action Caucus, an anti-racist, feminist, internationalist, and intersectional student group, criticized Bryn Mawr's production of docile neoliberal subjects. They saw Bryn Mawr as a deradicalizing and professionalizing space, as cartoonishly depicted in the organization's 1976 pamphlet, "Alive and Kicking" (Above). Bryn Mawr's 'mission' of education was not grounded in human solidarity, but rather was to create better leaders to reinforce global capitalism under kinder smiles. Bryn Mawr, as well as many other colleges, would engage in such "shareholder activism." "During the 1980s, over 350 U.S. Companies had direct investment in South Africa. 176 of these firms received at least one shareholder resolution concerning its involvement in South Africa."[16] To the tune of their passive stance on Eastman Kodak in 1978, Bryn Mawr would adopt an equally slow moving reform strategy in 1985. That year, it was estimated Bryn Mawr had $8 million of investments in South Africa, within 21 corporations. The Board of Trustees proposed a watered down divestment plan, spanning over 24 months into 1987 based off of a company's compliance with the Sullivan Principles. With this decision, the trustees established a set of social responsibility targets, the chief concern of course being "a corporation's fair employment practices for women and minorities."[17] The Owlification of Divestment would not be accepted by students.

[16] Broyles, Philip A. "The Impact Of Shareholder Activism On Corporate Involvement In South Africa During The Reagan Era." *International Review of Modern Sociology* 28, no. 1 (1998): 1–19.
[17] HCV: President's Papers Harry C Payne 1987-1988 So-U Box 6. Folder: South Africa: Wesleyan University South Africa Research Consortium, 1985-1988.

The Anti-Apartheid Student Movement at Bryn Mawr

Bryn Mawr had $8 million invested in South Africa in the fall of 1985. Students did not accept the college's proposed gradual and strategic partial divestment. South African senior Binafer Nowrojee told *The Mainline Times,* "The students want completely severed ties with the 21 corporations dealing with the oppressive government in place in South Africa."[18] A Kenyan first year told *The Inquirer* "I hope to shake things up on campus… [it] is so complacent, and there is so much ignorance of international issues." Students formed the Coalition for Divestment which held a massive day of action Friday, February 28th, 1986. 200 students took over the administrative office hallway on the second floor of Taylor Hall, beginning at 6am. Two administrators, attempting to get into their offices, were turned away.[19] The takeover had 3 clear demands: Total and immediate divestment; The institution of a diversity requirement; The observation of the end of Black History Month.

Total divestment went against Bryn Mawr's entire modus operandi of slow and gradual decisions to protect profit. "Students find corporate reforms absurd," reads one headline.[20] Becky Young wrote how the trustees position that the US government was the best vehicle to achieve change in South Africa was hypocritical. If Bryn Mawr wouldn't divest how could they call for the US to put sanctions on South Africa? The coalition felt the college's trust in corporations to reform Apartheid was misguided. Paraphrasing Archbishop Desmond Tutu, they wrote how "we do not wish to make the chains of Apartheid more comfortable; we wish to see them broken." The coalition argued all money in South Africa bolstered Apartheid, as the state had the ability to

[18] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa *Mainline Times* Thursday, March 6, 1986. 35.
[19] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Saturday, March 1, 1986. 3-B.
[20] From a Bi-Co News Headline. Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co. Box 16. Folder: Bryn Mawr-South Africa, 1986.

appropriate any corporation. South Africa under the NP actually had the most nationalized businesses outside the Communist Bloc, but only whites benefited from this.[21]

Trustees walk past a candlelight vigil for divestment on their way into the Campus Center on Friday.

The front door of Taylor Hall on Friday when over 100 students took over the second floor in protest of the College's holdings in South Africa.

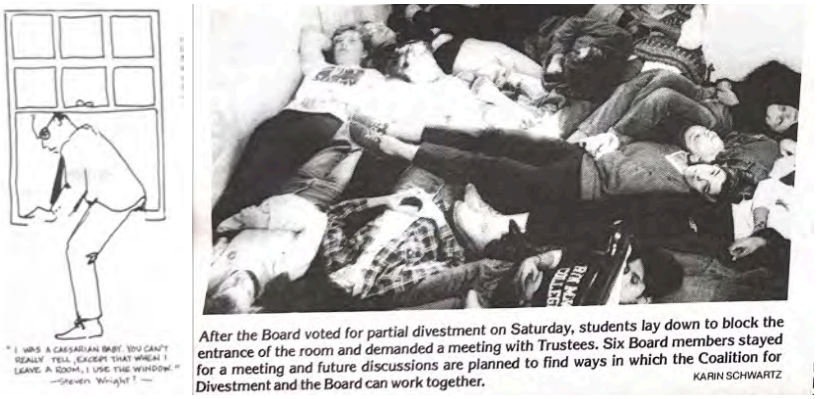
Archival newspaper clippings of the 1986 demonstration.[22]

The Coalition made a deliberate decision to forward women of color as leaders, as these issues impacted them the most. Linking international solidarity with a system of segregation to racism at Bryn Mawr and in the US was central to the anti-Apartheid struggle on campus. Affinity groups such as Sisterhood, the Asian Students Association, International Students Association, and Color held a poetry reading and had a "speak out" about racism on campus. These organizers noted how they faced pushback from apathetic people telling them to "Fight

[21] Sparks, Allister, *The Mind of South Africa* "The Great Trek Inward", 2016. 134.
[22] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Saturday, March 1, 1986. 3-B.

racism here first" — a suggestion that anti-Apartheid activism was unrelated to the US and insinuation that nothing could be done about it. The women of color organizers saw their expression of solidarity as fighting racism everywhere and creating community across racial boundaries in the process.

The protests were successful, despite the fact that they took place during midterm season. The students received vocal support from professors. Major news outlets covered the events. The college even cut phone service on the second floor of Taylor where protesters were mobilized. Students set up in nearby dorms and classrooms to contact students outside the building. 100 students participated in a vigil at Campus Center at 6pm that evening. The sit-in was slated to end at then, but 30 students decided to spend the night in Taylor until the Board of Trustees met the next day to discuss divestment. The campers made cardboard coffins to hold up during a protest in the morning. During the trustees meeting, 60 students laid down in the lobby of Wyndham Alumni House to block the trustees from exiting. Student protesters saw this as representing their powerless position. Some trustees crawled out of the window, while the stragglers spoke with students.



After the Board voted for partial divestment on Saturday, students lay down to block the entrance of the room and demanded a meeting with Trustees. Six Board members stayed for a meeting and future discussions are planned to find ways in which the Coalition for Divestment and the Board can work together.
KARIN SCHWARTZ

Cartoon (left) of one of the two trustees who took a window exit, as to avoid students obstructing exits with their bodies to demand divestment.[23]

[23] Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16 Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986. *Bi-College News.* March 6, 1986. 8.

College Peace Mission Trip

Bryn Mawr's response to student protests was informed by a "Fact Finding Mission" sent to South Africa as a part of College President McPherson's "Peace Studies" program. The "Peace Studies" program was launched in 1981, which sent students on Fact Finding Mission trips around the world. It sent students to Canada, West Germany, and Britain; Another went to Costa Rica and Nicaragua amidst the US' ongoing involvement in arming Central American anti-communist militants; and to Northern Ireland and Philly to observe the impact of violence on youth development.[24] This program captures the interests of the college at the tail end of two decades of the Cold War as well as Global decolonial uprisings. The "Peace Mission" is almost the marriage of two generations of international soft power, religious missionaries, then the Peace Corps. Through sending student "missionaries" to engage in global education trips, Bryn Mawr was on the forefront of globalization's new iteration of white saviorism. However, students and professors took advantage of these trips to better understand decolonization and expressed genuine sentiments of solidarity.

In January 1986, Bryn Mawr sent 4 Bi-Co students, a Bryn Mawr alum, and a sociology professor on a Peace Studies Mission to South Africa. Their trip was initially slated for the summer of 1985, but their requests for visas were initially rejected by the South African government. The Presidents of Bryn Mawr and Haverford went to the NYC consulate to make the trip happen. In the spring of 1985, they met with Leon Sullivan, the drafter of the Sullivan Principles, as well the American Friends Service Committee, members of the African National Congress, and the director of the United States-South African leader Exchange Program.[25]

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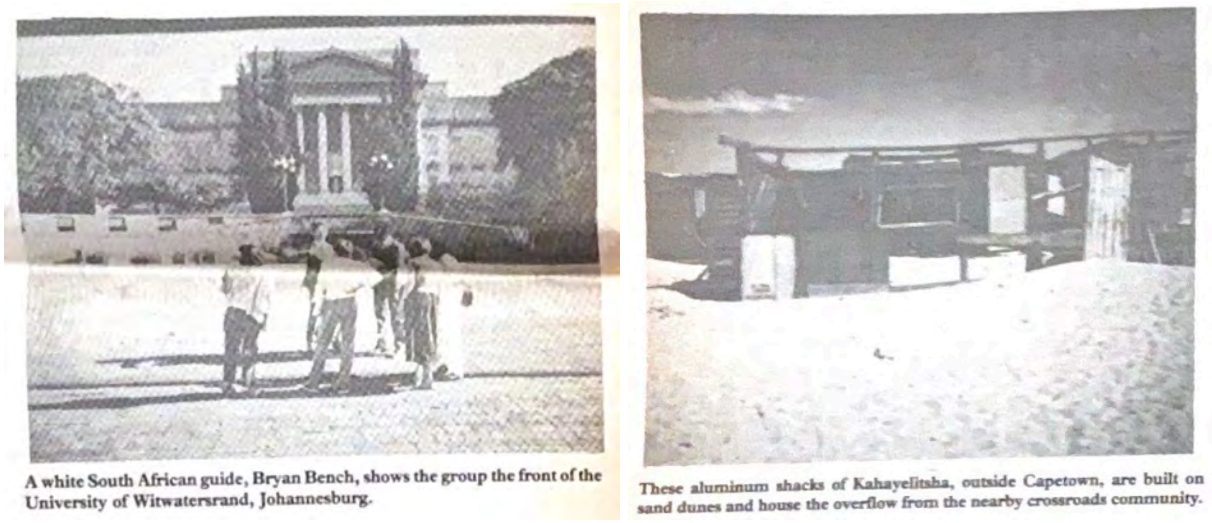
[24] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. Memo: "Peace Studies Mission". 1984"

[25] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. "Peace Studies Goes to South Africa". Audrey Silverman.

The “Peace Missionaries” did a two week trip, visiting Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, the Bophuthatswana homeland, and a final stop in Harare, Zimbabwe. On the second day of the trip, the missionaries were detained by armed police in the Black township of Tembisa, after Bryn Mawr alumni Penny Chang ‘85 took photos of military transport trucks.[26]



A white South African guide, Bryan Bench, shows the group the front of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

These aluminum shacks of Kahayelitsha, outside Capetown, are built on sand dunes and house the overflow from the nearby crossroads community.

Photos printed in a Bi-College News spread about the Peace Mission.[27]

They met with “advisors in government, resistance workers, businesspeople, teachers, the American Chamber of Commerce, and Bayers Naude, head of the South African Council of Churches”. They visited the lavish Johannasburg estate of Helen Sussman, the founder of the white liberal Progressive Federal Party, which revealed to the missionaries the racial-class stratification of the country.

Bryn Mawr senior economics student Elizabeth Edwards commented how 74% of the wealth is owned by whites who make up 18% of the population. She observed the spatial topography of Apartheid when traveling city to city, passing through radial zones, with Black

[26] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. . Folder: Peace studies: Mission, Forum.*Main Line Times*. Thursday, February 6, 1986. “Haverford, Bryn Mawr Students Spend Break in A. Africa.” Lisa Greene. 16.
[27] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. Newspaper clippings.

townships on the outside, then a "band of Indian then colored homes." She called this a "buffer zone" between whites and Blacks. The majority of Black people in townships lived in what Edwards compared to "Sears metal toolsheds". Edwards noted how Apartheid created a class of Black people who wanted to maintain the status quo and lived in the "Black Beverly Hills" of the townships.[28] Edwards was dismayed to see a reflection of something familiar in South Africa: "Johannasburg looked like a typical American city. I had hoped we would see something at least different from my culture."[29]

Senior Rachel Baker noticed a culture of resistance from the grassroots. She noted the presence of political organizations, but also politicized student and church groups.[30] Haverford senior Michael Paulson similarly was attune to the politics of resistance, located in education as a radicalizing force.[31] The Soweto Parents organization described their mission to Paulson, "Education under apartheid divides people into classes and ethnic groups, produces subservience, docile people, indoctrinates and dominates, and is intended to entrench apartheid and capitalism."[32] Upon returning to campus, the students reported their findings to the campus community at a forum [pictured] and were even interviewed in local papers. Most crucially, they were to report their facts and opinions on divestment to the Board of Trustees. Three of the participants advocated immediate total divestment, one strong sanctions and conditional divestment, and the last opposed divestment.

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[28] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Peace studies: Mission, Forum. *Main Line Times*. Thursday, February 6, 1986. "Haverford, Bryn Mawr Students Spend Break in A. Africa." Lisa Greene. 16; *The Inquirer* undated "Seeing apartheid firsthand: Group reports on its trip to S. Africa". Maura C. Circcarelli

[29] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. *The Inquirer* undated "Seeing apartheid firsthand: Group reports on its trip to S. Africa". Maura C. Circcarelli.

[30] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. . Folder: Peace studies: Mission, Forum. *Main Line Times*. Thursday, February 6, 1986. "Haverford, Bryn Mawr Students Spend Break in A. Africa." Lisa Greene. 16.

[31] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. . Folder: Peace studies: Mission, Forum. *Main Line Times*. Thursday, February 6, 1986. "Haverford, Bryn Mawr Students Spend Break in A. Africa." Lisa Greene. 16.

[32] Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16 Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986 Paulson, Michael. The Bryn Mawr-Haverford College News, Friday February 7, 1986. Pg 10.

Baker and Paulson strongly supported divestment. Baker argued that corporate reforms failed to improve the lives of Black South Africans. Paulson wrote "It is our responsibility to assist in bringing down apartheid as rapidly as possible."[33] Another Haverford member of the mission wrote in his statement about the support for divestment he saw on the ground in the resistance movement, saying, "they said it was helpful for several reasons, including keeping pressure on those companies to reform; keeping international attention focused on South Africa: and making a symbolic statement against apartheid. South Africans told us that symbolic gestures give encouragement and strength to apartheid's opponents and embarrass and anger government supporters."[34]

Bryn Mawr senior Rachel Baker, Haverford senior Michael Paulson and three South Africans look around a black township school in Tembisa, outside Johannesburg.

Newspaper clipping of the Peace Mission's visit to a Township School.[35]

[33] Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16. Folder: Bryn Mawr-South Africa. Paulson, Micheal. "Haverford 86 Peace Studies Fact-Finding Mission to South Personal Statement on Divestment Africa Submitted to Bryn Mawr College Board of Trustees February 11, 1986."
[34] Pres Stevens Papers. 1985-1986. B-Co Box 16 Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986 Snipes, Howard. "Statement on Divestment".
[35] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. Newspaper clippings.

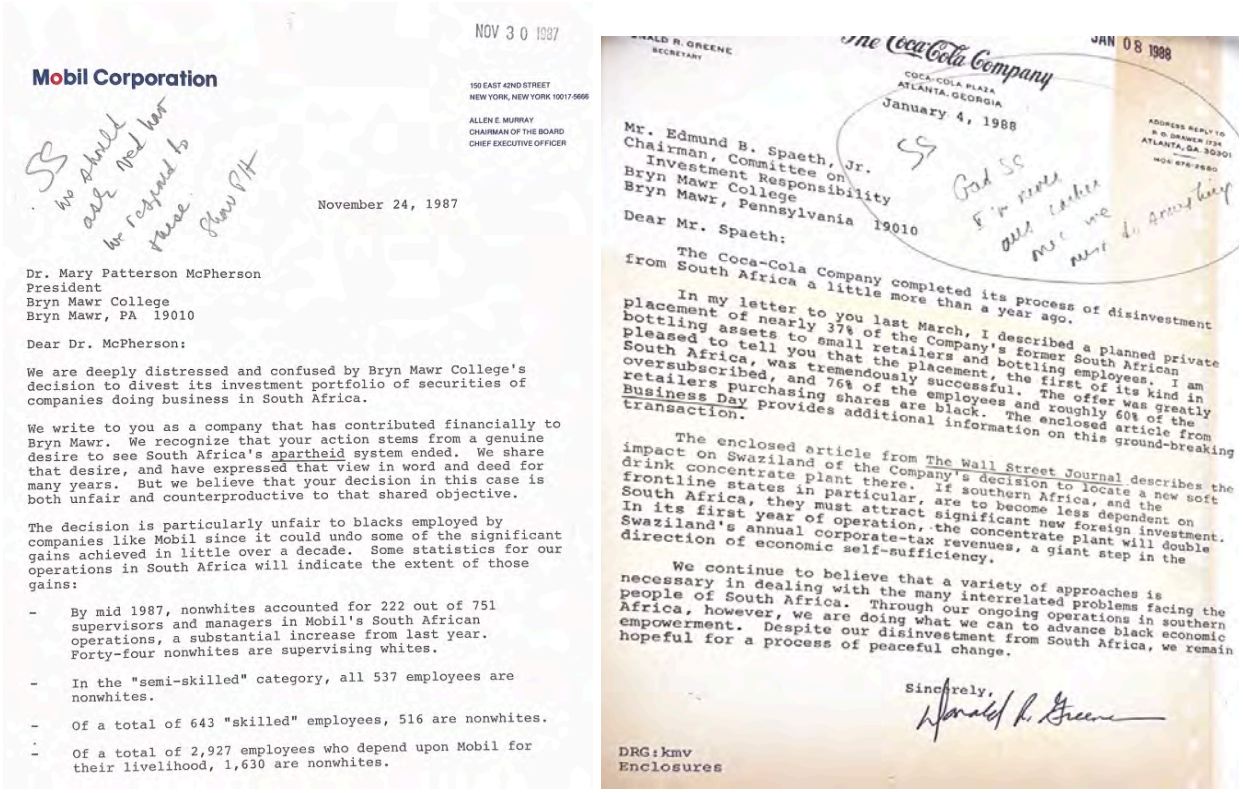
Edwards was very attuned to the modes of Apartheid, however she felt divestment "outlived its usefulness." She was the dissenting voice of the trip, opting for the college to focus on its power to pressure corporations and the government of South Africa. She proposed a strategy aligned with the college's goals of leadership and corporate responsibility, writing "Instead of working against corporations which have the influence necessary to bring about meaningful change in South Africa, I believe the College should take advantage of its leadership ability, brain power and alumnae network to work with such corporations to hasten reform and find and implement solutions to the nation's deeply rooted problems."[36] This emphasis on the alumnae network is fundamental to Bryn Mawr's identity as a women's college, creating girl bosses who could end Apartheid aka Owlification.

Bryn Mawr's Divestment Strategy

President McPherson proposed three potential divestment strategies to the board of trustees, grounded in corporate responsibility but also informed by student protesters and the facts and opinions of the peace missionaries. McPherson proposed, 1) Full divestment as a symbol of solidarity; 2) Divest from companies not committed to confronting apartheid, full divest in December 1986 if apartheid continued; 3) Strategic divestment using Sullivan principles and by writing to corporations they held stock in with poor ratings, eventually divesting based on their responses. The Board of Trustees ended up going with the most moderate response, an adaptation of option 3, which recognized the shortcomings of the Sullivan Principles. They wanted to see corporations actively advocate the government of South Africa to

[36] Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16. Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986. Edwards, Elizabeth "Bryn Mawr College and Divestment Issue: An Opportunity for Leadership."

end Apartheid.[37] They finally divested from 5 corporations who did not write back to their inquiry about the company's commitment to ending apartheid. They sold $651,558 of stock in Air Products, American Brands, Ashland Oil, Crown Cork and Seal, and Goodyear Tire. Bryn Mawr kept stock in the 16 companies who wrote letters expressing their commitment to a non racial society. This is indicative of Bryn Mawr's corporate reform strategy which believed companies could be forced to effect nonviolent change.



NOV 30 1987

Mobil Corporation

150 EAST 42ND STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017-5666

ALLEN E. MURRAY
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

November 24, 1987

Dr. Mary Patterson McPherson
President
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Dear Dr. McPherson:

We are deeply distressed and confused by Bryn Mawr College's decision to divest its investment portfolio of securities of companies doing business in South Africa.

We write to you as a company that has contributed financially to Bryn Mawr. We recognize that your action stems from a genuine desire to see South Africa's apartheid system ended. We share that desire, and have expressed that view in word and deed for many years. But we believe that your decision in this case is both unfair and counterproductive to that shared objective.

The decision is particularly unfair to blacks employed by companies like Mobil since it could undo some of the significant gains achieved in little over a decade. Some statistics for our operations in South Africa will indicate the extent of those gains:

- By mid 1987, nonwhites accounted for 222 out of 751 supervisors and managers in Mobil's South African operations, a substantial increase from last year. Forty-four nonwhites are supervising whites.
- In the "semi-skilled" category, all 537 employees are nonwhites.
- Of a total of 643 "skilled" employees, 516 are nonwhites.
- Of a total of 2,927 employees who depend upon Mobil for their livelihood, 1,630 are nonwhites.

JAN 08 1988

The Coca-Cola Company

COCA-COLA PLAZA
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

January 4, 1988

Mr. Edmund B. Spaeth, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Investment Responsibility
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010

Dear Mr. Spaeth:

The Coca-Cola Company completed its process of disinvestment from South Africa a little more than a year ago.

In my letter to you last March, I described a planned private placement of nearly 37% of the Company's former South African bottling assets to small retailers and bottling employees. I am pleased to tell you that the placement, the first of its kind in South Africa, was tremendously successful. The offer was greatly oversubscribed, and 76% of the employees and roughly 60% of the retailers purchasing shares are black. The enclosed article from Business Day provides additional information on this ground-breaking transaction.

The enclosed article from The Wall Street Journal describes the impact on Swaziland of the Company's decision to locate a new soft drink concentrate plant there. If southern Africa, and the frontline states in particular, are to become less dependent on South Africa, they must attract significant new foreign investment. In its first year of operation, the concentrate plant will double Swaziland's annual corporate-tax revenues, a giant step in the direction of economic self-sufficiency.

We continue to believe that a variety of approaches is necessary in dealing with the many interrelated problems facing the people of South Africa. Through our ongoing operations in southern Africa, however, we are doing what we can to advance black economic empowerment. Despite our disinvestment from South Africa, we remain hopeful for a process of peaceful change.

Sincerely,

Harold R. Greene

DRG:kmv
Enclosures

Corporations responses to Bryn Mawr[38]

The Board would forward political action outside the arena of its investments through "[inviting] interested members of the Bryn Mawr College community to join with it in an organized effort of this and other colleges and universities to urge Congress and the President to take leadership

[37] Pres Stevens Papers 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16. Folder: Bryn Mawr-South Africa. Mary Patterson McPherson "Report on Investment Responsibility and Our Recommendations".
[38] McPherson Papers. Correspondence, Subjects 9/10, Se-Sw. Box 59 of 82. Folder: South African 1984-88

with regard to South African affairs much as they have recently managed in Haiti and the Philippines."[39] They also committed to "giving financial aid to South African students, forming a committee which will deal with constructive proposals from students and meeting with other colleges to draw up proposals about timeliness for divestment."[40]

Bryn Mawr's divestment strategy held out hope that corporations, who wrote they were committed to ending Apartheid, would make do on their promises. Following the 1986 day of actions, Binafer Nowrojee firmly told the *New York Times*, "we will not rest until we have full divestment."[41] In the fall semester following the spring protests, Bryn Mawr Coalition for Divestment leader Diba Siddiqi wrote, "Bryn Mawr's imminent divestment is by no means a signal for sitting back complacently. Apartheid still kills. South Africans still have urgent stories to tell."[42] Siddiqi called on her peers to not to accept a partial divestment and fall victim to being sedated by the college's prescription of corporate responsibility. This disregarded student's concerns about the ethics of profiting from a country with fundamental human rights abuses. The college's reformist divestment strategy was in line with its neoliberal ethos. President Mary Patterson McPherson was interviewed in a June 1986 *Newsweek* article titled "Divisions over Divestment: Balancing social conscience with fiscal prudence." She spoke about the difficulties divesting at a small college like Bryn Mawr as opposed to a larger institution, stating that "each institution would suffer proportionally." The article details the financial costs of divestment, including fees on liquidating stocks and the "opportunity costs" of limiting investment opportunities.[43] This position dismissed student activists' contestation of the premise that any

[39] McPherson Papers. Correspondence, Subjects 9/10, Se-Sw. Box 59 of 82. Folder: South African 1984-88
[40] Bryn Mawr College Publications, Special Collections, Digitized Books. *The College News*. 1986-10-8 Vol. 8 No. 2 Students of Bryn Mawr College.
[41] Swarthmore To Sell Stocks Linked To South Africa. *New York Times.* March 2, 1986, Sect 1, Page 23.
[42] Bryn Mawr College News 1986 Bryn Mawr College Publications, Special Collections, Digitized Books. The College News 1986-10-8 Vol. 8 No. 2. Students of Bryn Mawr College.
[43] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: Divestment S. Africa.

financial engagement in South Africa was complacent in maintaining Apartheid. In the end, a third strategy that neither endorsed or declined divestment was embraced by the college. This strategy was similar to the suggestion by sociology professor who led the Peace Mission trip to South Africa, Robert Washington. He argued for corporations to engage in a pressure campaign by threatening to leave the country if the government of South Africa did not end the three pillars of Apartheid. It is important to note that Washington was the college's first Black professor, hired in 1971 by the college's fifth president.[44]

Bryn Mawr Sociology professor Robert Washington tours an Indian community of Durban.

Newspaper clipping of Professor Washington.[45]

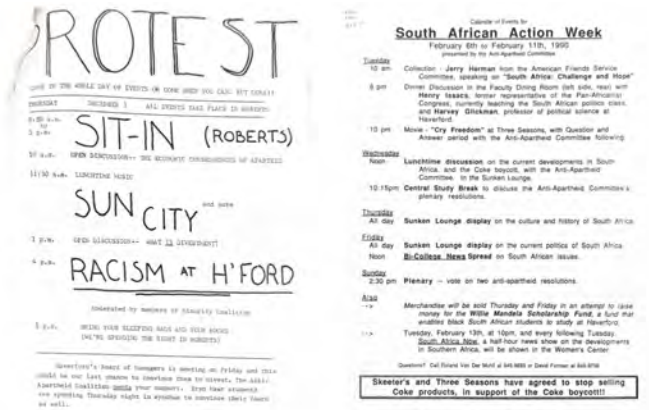
Bryn Mawr is a part of a consortium of Quaker founded institutions in Pennsylvania. Its partner schools also engaged in successful divestment campaigns. Students at Haverford College locked administration out as a part of this coordinated movement in the consortium. Four Black members of the faculty and administration at Haverford wrote that the College must "Live up to its principles and divest". The institution's Quaker values informed its investments for over 100 years; the college did not invest in tobacco or military holdings. Haverford also only divested

[44] Garrison, Amell. "Bryn Mawr History: The Silencing Of BIPOC Voices". Timeline. 2021.
[45] 9I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder Peace studies: Mission, Forum. Newspaper clippings.

from 5 companies in 1986, selling $1,214,480 of stock.[46] Swarthmore College began divestment in 1978, and by 1986 it divested $3 million. However, dissatisfied and dedicated students pushed the administration to fully divest though a mass action of around 100 students breaching a closed board meeting.

Viewing the Links

Despite Bryn Mawr's self image as a place that protects women and minorities, it was an explicitly racist environment. In 1988, a coalition of students published an open letter about racism and classism in *The College News*. The letter cited examples, a major instance being some racist positions on South Africa on campus. One student wrote how someone posted anti-Black signs on their door saying things such as: "What's wrong with apartheid" and "[n-word] lover." Another student shared in the same open letter they "heard a former president of Bryn Mawr College inform a South African woman that he knew more about that situation; after all, he'd been on a fact finding mission in South Africa."[47]



Education posters which host Apartheid and US Racism Educational Events.[48]

[46] HC SpecCol. PRES STEVENS PAPERS 1985-1986 B-Co Box 16 Folder: Bryn Mawr- South Africa, 1986.
[47] BMC SpecCol, Digitized Books The College News 1988. 4-13 Vol. 9 No. 11.
[48] PRES STEVENS PAPERS 1985-1986 Pr-So Box 20 Folder: South African April-October (scan left) HCQ.003.059 STUDENT GROUPS ANTI-APARTHEID COMMITTEE COLLECTION, 1990 (scan right).

During Black History month, anti-Apartheid activism was central to student organizations. In 1988, Sia Nowrojee wrote an article titled "Apartheid Continues" in *The College News* which highlighted Bryn Mawr's Black affinity group and Sisterhood's continued educational events about South Africa. Sisterhood's co-president Jackie McGriff, in a speech introducing South African speaker Victor Mokoena, made clear connections between the US and South Africa, naming racism at BMC as tantamount to apartheid.[49] Sisterhood would hold several anti-Apartheid and anti-racism educational events at their affinity house called Perry House. The House closed in 2012 "due to lack of maintenance". This was very upsetting to residents, who believed that "the college had let the building fall into disrepair."[50] The fall of the cherished and active affinity house is indicative of the college's institutional racism.

Gina Dorcely, a Black student in the class of 1988, wrote an article for the DSA newsletter in 1985 titled "Racism and apartheid: Viewing the links." She newsletter how activists must make ties between the US and South Africa, not just economically, but in social structures. She called on the student movement to confront structural and internal racism. Her peers at a DSA roundtable discussed the importance of movements forwarding Black leadership rather than tokenizing it. The anti-racist struggle could not be complete without self-reflection and confronting how even well-intentioned activists can perpetuate racism in the movement. She noted how at primarily white institutions it was essential to confront paternalism, and further, to not allow international solidarity organizing to distract activists from issues within and around them at home. Dorcely argues that comparing the racism of both the US and South Africa not only fosters solidarity, it provides insight into how those located in the US can confront racism.

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[49] Nowrojee, Sia. "Apartheid Continues". College News. Feb 17. (1988). Pg 7.
[50] Mulhere, Kaitlin. "Confederate Flag Causes Controversy at Bryn Mawr." Inside Higher Ed. October 6, 2014.

She writes, “The anti-apartheid movement's power to transform the landscape of American student politics lies partially in the moral intensity and urgency of its aim, to eradicate the evil of racism in South Africa. This aim evokes compelling images of a more just world in which people of all races work together, images that at once jar and stimulate the national consciousness.”

Photo of Dorcely.[51]

The New Left student movement, despite its global solidarity, was held back by racism and sexism, as Kathie Sheldon wrote in *The Radical Teacher* about her experience in anti-Apartheid groups at UCLA.[52] Sheldon proposed radical coalition building as a way to be more inclusive in the movement. Linking racism to Apartheid was a crucial component of the struggle for divestment on campus. The vision of building an anti-racist society was transnational and embraced solidarity across causes. As Audre Lorde said: “I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own. And I am not free as long as one person of Color remains chained. Nor is any one of you.”[53]

Divest into the 21st century: Learning from South Africa Solidarity

[51] I Issues On Campus/Student Activism. Folder: apartheid. Dorcely, Gina. *Publication of the Youth Section of the Democratic Socialists of America*. Number 16. September 1985. “Racism and apartheid: Viewing the links”.
[52] Sheldon, Kathie. “Anti-Apartheid Organizing on Campus.” *The Radical Teacher*, no. 21 (1982): 14–16.
[53] Lorde, Audre. “The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism”. 1981.

Dorcely's argument to "View the Links" provides a framework for intersectional transformation at Bryn Mawr today. The student movement against Apartheid was grounded in emergent intersectional politics, organizing for collective liberation across gender, race, and class. The movement to Divest matters because it is a commitment to humanity, even at a small school such a change reverberates outward. This embodies adrienne marie brown's writing on fractals, which she describes as patterns that repeat themselves regardless of the scale, micro or macro. She writes how the whole is a mirror of the parts. Brown writes: "There is a structural echo that suggests two things: one, that there are shapes and patterns fundamental to our universe, and two, that what we practice at a small scale can reverberate to the largest scale."[54] By pressuring the College to be more inclusive and committed to not profiting from exploitation, student activists were waging an anti-racist struggle locally and globally. The efforts of the 1986 Divest movement constituted a predecessor to the contemporary struggles for divestment. In 2013, Bryn Mawr students organized and petitioned for the college to divest from fossil fuels. Their coalition argued divestment was aligned with the college's goals such as its "commitment to "racial justice and to equity" since fossil fuel "industries disproportionately impact vulnerable, minority populations." They argued the college could invest in renewables and still maintain or increase returns on investments.[55] This climate justice work continues today, as student organizers are continuing to pressure the college to commit to its self-proclaimed principles and transparency in its investments.

The ongoing struggle to divest from Israeli Apartheid and Occupation conjures the spirit of the 1986 movement for divestment. In the wake of Israel's atrocious war on Gaza, which the ICJ decried as a plausible case of "genocide", Bi-Co Students for Justice in Palestine occupied

[54] brown, adrienne marie. "Fractals: The Relationship between Small and Large." Earthling Opinion, March 1, 2019.
[55] The Bi-College News. "Bryn Mawr College Community Moves towards Divestment – Haverford and Bryn Mawr Bi-College News," February 28, 2020.

Taylor Hall on November 1, 2023 to demand the college to divest from Israeli Apartheid. Similarities and links exist between the struggle for Palestinian rights and the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa. In both cases, the regimes in power formalize the ethnic supremacy of one group of people through the disenfranchisement, spatial confinement, and systematic dehumanization of the indigenous peoples.[56] These similarities between South Africa and Israel/Palestine prompted renowned voices in international law such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem to describe the Israeli regime between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean sea as an Apartheid system.

Students protesting in 2023 using the same die-in and sit-in tactics from 1986. On the right, students occupied Taylor Hall for 12 hours, the same building as 1986.[57]

[56] Chappell, Bill. "Israel Is an Apartheid State, Amnesty International Says." *NPR*, February 1, 2022.
[57] Author's photos.

The movement to Divest from Israel intensified in the spring of 2024, following violent police crackdowns at Columbia University. The Tri-College consortium joined the emergent student encampment movement in solidarity with Gaza. Haverford launched a weekend long encampment during a Board of Managers meeting weekend, Bryn Mawr had an eighteen-day long encampment, and Swarthmore students camped in front of the college's main building for more than a month . Across the consortium, students were successful in disrupting board meetings[58] and starting negotiations with the administration. Both Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore took disciplinary action. At the three schools, students mainly demanded the colleges divest from Israeli Apartheid and the war machine. Bryn Mawr also sought to pressure the college to call for a ceasefire, which 89.7% of the voting student body was in favor of. Bryn Mawr's endowment is larger than ever, at $1 billion. Students' demands for disclosure pressured the college to reveal that 0.5% of the endowment is invested in Israeli tech startups. The movement to oppose brutal racial capitalism waged in 1986 continues in 2024.

Bryn Mawr College Gaza Solidarity Encampment, known as the People's College for the Liberation of Palestine.[59]

[58] Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore forced the boards to meet off campus and on Zoom.
[59] Epstein, Hannah. April 30, 2024. "Bryn Mawr Encampment Continues to Grow as it Enters Day Three: "The People's College for the Liberation of Palestine" Bi-College News.

On December 4, 1997, in observation of the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People, post-apartheid South Africa's first president Nelson Mandela articulated the deep linkage between South Africa and Palestine and committed to peace. Mandela said: "We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."[60] It is no wonder that a post-Apartheid South African delegation to the International Court of Justice would charge Apartheid Israel of the crime of genocide.[61] Throughout the course of the 2024-2024 school year, student groups and faculty held talks, many of which made the links between the movement for South African freedom to the movement for Palestinian freedom, recognizing the shared threads of settler colonialism, apartheid, and an exploitative capitalist economy. I even presented the contents of this paper at the Bryn Mawr encampment at a teach-in one afternoon.

The student movement remains in steadfast solidarity with the Global South, many students at the encampment revisiting the works of 20th century radicals, learning from their triumphs and mistakes. The writer Sarah Aziza, in her letters from the apocalypse to her friend George Abraham wrote:

> To align with those at the margins of empire and capital, to rebel by simply refusing to participate in the necrotic norm, is to risk immense violence and loss. And yet, such refusals are necessary, if we are to begin building the world we need. Indeed, as a popular chant proclaims—we have discovered Palestine is everywhere. And it is making us more free.

Aziza and Abraham conclude that "Solidarity, we conclude, must be a verb. We need more than words. We need our bodies in each others' homes, and in the streets."[62] The encampment movement is the embodiment of this radical solidarity, the sacrifices from the heart of Empire to

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[60] Mandela, Nelson. "Address by President Nelson Mandela at International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People, Pretoria". December 4, 1997.
[61] Cocks, Tim. "South Africa's Genocide Case Is Diplomatic Win Whatever Verdict." Reuters, January 26, 2024.
[62] George Abraham and Sarah Aziza. "Palestine Is Everywhere, and It Is Making Us More Free". *The Nation*. 2024.

take a principled stand against the crimes of Apartheid and Genocide. Campaigns for Divestment are our principled stance to assert the Palestinian right to return, to remain, and to resist. The intersectional struggle for the end to South African Apartheid has proved much of the grammar and structure for this movement. At Bryn Mawr, we strategically planned with parents who organized against Apartheid when they were in college in the 80s. From inside the movement and inside the archive, it was made clear to me as a young historian that accounts of social history must draw the links with related struggles. As the great freedom fighter Assata Shakur wrote in her autobiography, spinning a classic Karl Marx quote, "It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains."[63]

[63] Shakur, Assata. *Assata : an Autobiography*. 1988. Chicago, Illinois :Lawrence Hill Books, 2001.

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Using the Colonizers' Own Weapons: The Politics of Equality, Freedom, & Integration in Advocacy Against American Indian Termination

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Yale University

Beginning in the early 1950s, the United States Congress enacted a program of "termination" of American Indian tribes. By eliminating the special relationship between tribes and the federal government, termination aimed at the full assimilation of American Indians into U.S. society. Government proponents advocated for termination using the language of equal rights, freedom, and integration. Previous scholarship has shown that anti-termination advocates, by contrast, appealed to the internationalist Cold War language of development, self-governance, and global decolonization to resist termination. These same leaders also invoked the civil rights language of termination's proponents, however. Their arguments illustrated how the federal government misconstrued and misapplied the concepts of equality and freedom in relation to federal Indian policy; in other words, they used the colonizers' own weapons against them. Not only is this analysis an important missing piece in historical scholarship on anti-termination advocacy, but it also challenges the supposed opposition between tribal sovereignty and civil rights struggles and emphasizes the historical coexistence of multiple competing interpretations of American freedom and equality.

Introduction

As decolonization swept the globe after World War II, the United States broadcasted a national vision of equality, democracy, and inclusion on the international stage. Domestic racial segregation and inequality became increasingly humiliating for U.S. Cold War politics, particularly as African American freedom movements invigorated by wartime experiences advocated for racial integration in international political arenas.[1] The country's stated commitment to racial equality contributed to the politics of the civil rights movement, which entered onto the national scene in the 1950s and persists well into our current historical moment.

The politics of equal rights and integration reached American Indians, too—or, as many tribal advocates argued, it was weaponized against them for their destruction.[2] After several years of legislative and political foreshadowing, in 1953 Congress passed a pair of bills that constructed the policy of tribal "termination": a federal policy initiative that promised to dissolve the special federal-tribal relationship, including the trusteeship landholding system and the federal provision of services, in favor of Indian assimilation into U.S. society.[3] Described by leading termination advocate and Utah Senator Arthur V. Watkins as an "Indian freedom program" grounded on the principles of integration and equality before the law, the 1953 legislation prompted a string of campaigns that terminated or, in Watkins' words, "freed" various tribes in the 1950s and 1960s.[4]

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[1] See, e.g., Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York, NY and Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[2] In this paper, following the lead of tribal advocates in the mid-twentieth century and modern historians, I use the term "American Indians" or "Indians" to refer to individuals who trace their ancestry to people indigenous to the modern U.S.

[3] The official Congressional Record documents the use of the term "termination" by Congressmen and personnel of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) since before 1953. See: Charles F. Wilkinson and Eric R. Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," *American Indian Law Review* 5, no. 1 (1977): 166n3.

[4] Arthur V. Watkins, "Termination of Federal Supervision: The Removal of Restrictions over Indian Property and Person," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 311 (May 1957): 49.

Termination policies provoked intense political mobilization by American Indians and their advocates at local and national levels. By and large, advocates for Indian rights opposed termination and instead sought continued federal aid and protection of tribal sovereignty.[5] In articulating their opposition, leading anti-termination advocates had a wealth of political discourses at their disposal.[6] While the Cold War spotlighted the warring ideologies of communism and democracy, the paired process of global decolonization generated discourses about Third World development and sovereignty. Meanwhile, the language of freedom, equal rights, and integration held political sway domestically. At the same time, anti-termination advocates also contended with the urgent material needs of American Indian communities.[7]

How, then, did anti-termination advocates articulate their opposition to termination in light of this multifaceted post-war political environment? Of particular interest is the period from the late 1940s, when termination first showed political promise, to the early 1960s, after which the tribal sovereignty movement gained national political momentum. Daniel M. Cobb and Paul C. Rosier, historians of American Indian politics, have argued that anti-termination advocates in this period found inspiration in the Cold War politics of development, self-governance, and decolonization.[8] In other words, these advocates articulated their opposition to termination policies, which were cloaked in the language of freedom and equality, in alternative discourses that centered indigenous sovereignty and survival.

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[5] Wilkinson and Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," 139.

[6] The "anti-termination advocates" whose views I examine in this paper include both Indians and non-Indians. As this paper analyzes prominent political discourses on termination, I chose to focus on sources likely to have had significant circulation and/or political influence, and many of the most influential advocates for Indian rights in this period were non-Indian. Consequently, this paper does not purport to analyze the views of tribal communities themselves. Further research, perhaps in local tribal archives or through oral history interviews, could help to illuminate the perspectives of tribal communities and ordinary tribal members on termination.

[7] See, e.g., Paul C. Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands': Race, Place, and Politics in Cold War Native America, 1945–1961," *The Journal of American History* 92, no. 4 (March 2006): 1300–1326.

[8] Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Daniel M. Cobb, "Indian Politics in Cold War America: Parallel and Contradiction," *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 67, no. 2 (Winter 2006): 392–419; Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands.'"

These alternative discourses were not anti-termination advocates' only source of inspiration, however. In political, academic, and media statements from the late 1940s to the early 1960s, anti-termination advocates hardly dismissed the language of equality, freedom, and integration that infused termination politics. Rather, in addition to drawing inspiration from anticolonial sovereignty politics, they seriously grappled with the vision of equal rights as liberation and adopted its language to articulate their opposition to termination. In doing so, they showed how the government misconstrued and misapplied the concepts of freedom, equality, and integration in federal Indian policy; they used the colonizers' own weapons against them.

This historical reorientation places the anti-termination movement within the mainstream U.S. political frameworks of freedom and equal rights. While other scholars have suggested that American Indian sovereignty efforts and African American civil rights struggles were inevitably opposed, this analysis helps to explain anti-termination advocates' nuanced understandings of the relationship between diverse ethnic movements. Furthermore, the contours of anti-termination advocacy serve as a valuable reminder of the historical coexistence of multiple competing interpretations of American freedom and equality.

In this paper, I proceed by extrapolating on termination policies and the diverse political forces that influenced anti-termination advocacy. After acknowledging the ways in which anti-termination advocates drew on developmentalist and anticolonial politics, I turn to their use of notions of equality, freedom, and integration towards the same ends, and I illustrate how they used the government's language against itself through their arguments. Given anti-termination advocates' engagement with U.S. civil rights principles, I then explore their views on other ethnic minority struggles in relation to those of American Indians. Finally, in light of this history, I conclude by reflecting on the contested meanings of freedom and equality in the U.S.

Prescribing Freedom & Equality Through Termination

The termination era followed a period of groundbreaking federal Indian political reform. During sociologist John Collier's reign as Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) commissioner from 1933 to 1945, the U.S. government strengthened protections for tribal sovereignty, land ownership, and cultural autonomy through a package of policies collectively known as the Indian New Deal.[9] What followed was a wildly different policy approach: after World War II, all three branches of government pivoted to programs that eroded the federal-tribal legal relationship.[10] As legal scholars Charles F. Wilkinson and Eric R. Biggs aptly summed up, federal Indian policy has long taken the form of a pendulum swinging between the tensions of self-determination and assimilation.[11] Following the war, the pendulum swung decisively towards the latter.

The aggressive assimilationist approach of termination became official federal policy in August 1953 through the passage of two bills: House Concurrent Resolution 108, which called for tribal members in four states to be "freed from Federal supervision and control and from all disabilities and limitations specially applicable to Indians"; and Public Law 280, which granted states permission to unilaterally assume criminal and civil jurisdiction on Indian reservations.[12] These two laws provided the groundwork for campaigns to terminate individual tribes, which peaked in 1954 and ultimately succeeded in terminating 109 tribes. While termination directly affected less than three percent of the American Indian population, termination efforts went hand in hand with other federal government initiatives that disrupted autonomous reservation livelihoods. Relocation programs, for instance, used often-coercive methods to transfer tribal

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[9] Kenneth R. Philp, J*ohn Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920–1954* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1977), xiv.
[10] Wilkinson and Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," 145–147.
[11] Wilkinson and Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," 139.
[12] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Indians*, House Concurrent Resolution 108, 83rd Congress, First Session, passed Aug 1, 1953; *An Act to Confer Jurisdiction on the States of California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, and Wisconsin*, Public Law 83-280, 67 Stat. 588, Aug 15, 1953.

members from reservations to urban areas throughout the 1950s.[13] By the mid-sixties, however, the pendulum of federal Indian policy swung back towards self-determination. Amidst a strengthening tribal sovereignty movement, Congress gradually abandoned its termination efforts and embraced a political stance more amenable to Indian self-determination.[14]

To justify termination, government officials invoked the language of freedom, equality, and integration that had become central to America's post-war image. In a 1957 academic journal article, Watkins articulated arguments that dominated the government's stated support for termination and which also resonated with popular America.[15] Federal "wardship," he wrote, conferred upon Indians a form of second-class citizenship. Termination solved this travesty: it "integrat[ed]" Indians with the "common citizenry," fostered "equality before the law," and enabled the "full realization of their national citizenship with all other Americans." Underscoring its liberatory nature, Watkins even likened termination to the 1865 Emancipation Proclamation.[16] Relatedly, President Dwight W. Eisenhower justified signing the controversial Public Law 280 into law in the name of "granting equality to all Indians in our nation."[17]

Navigating the Cold War Political Milieu

This optimistic political cacophony muffled the often devastating prospects of termination for tribal communities. Although many leading American Indian rights advocates

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[13] Donald Lee Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945–1960* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 101, 135; Wilkinson and Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," 151, 161.
[14] Wilkinson and Biggs, "The Evolution of the Termination Policy," 163–164; Charles F. Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York, NY and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 191–197. For accounts of the timeline of the tribal sovereignty movement, see: Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands,'" 1302; Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*, 31; Wilkinson, "Red Power," in *Blood Struggle*, 129–149.
[15] For commentary on the popularity of Watson's beliefs, see: Fixico, *Termination and Relocation*, 106–107.
[16] Watkins, "Termination of Federal Supervision," 47, 48, 49, 52, 55.
[17] Statement by President Eisenhower, released by James C. Hagerty, Aug 15, 1953, as cited in Fixico, *Termination and Relocation*, 227n3.

were open to eventual assimilation and/or integration, the vast majority objected to the proposed methods of termination.[18] In crafting their responses, these advocates had to navigate a peculiar Cold War political environment. In many respects, U.S. Cold War politics enabled the political viability of termination. Supporters of the policy invoked the primacy of individual freedom, equality before the law, and the integration of minorities, which aligned with the U.S.'s self-positioning as the global leader of freedom, human rights, and democracy.[19] Maintaining the reservation system, which termination supporters characterized as segregated, prison-like, and socialist, would violate these principles.[20] Watkins' rhetoric in support of termination, therefore, possessed contemporary political resonance.

In other ways, termination, by degrading tribal sovereignty and disrupting Indians' livelihoods, stood in clear opposition with other Cold War principles, particularly decolonization, Third World economic development, and self-determination. As Cobb and Rosier have noted, leading anti-termination advocates invoked this latter category of Cold War principles to articulate opposition to termination.[21] John Collier, for instance, founded the Institute for Ethnic Affairs (IEA) in 1945 to facilitate research and advocacy for groups living under U.S. colonial rule, such as in Guam.[22] Invoking the common plight of American Indians and dependent groups worldwide, Collier responded to termination by highlighting U.S. aid to impoverished countries abroad through "Point Four" economic development programs. Instead of obliterating tribal communities through termination, he argued, the U.S. government should apply the same principles at home by piloting Point Four on its domestic dependent nations.[23]

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[18] Fixico, *Termination and Relocation*, 98.
[19] See, e.g., Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*.
[20] See Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America,* 12–13.
[21] Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*; Cobb, "Indian Politics in Cold War America"; Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands.'"
[22] Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform*. 214–215.
[23] John Collier, "Striking at Indians: Directive Viewed as Aimed at Destruction of Trusteeship," *New York Times*, October 19, 1952, obtained from *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*; John Collier, "Two Illustrative Case Records on

The political aspirations undergirding this advocacy approach—decolonization, development, and self-determination—often failed to gain traction in U.S. domestic politics.[24] And indeed, they were not the only contemporary politics to which anti-termination advocates appealed. Rather, a previously-unexplored rhetorical strand of opposition to termination appropriated the very language of freedom, equality, and integration that the authors of termination themselves utilized.[25] It is to this inquiry that I now turn.

Pro-Equal Rights, Anti-Termination

Anti-termination advocates engaged directly with the language embedded in termination politics. They argued that termination did not advance their equal rights as U.S. citizens, nor would it bring them freedom. They also strove to disentangle the concept of integration from assimilation and termination. Moreover, they presented themselves as embracing a vision that aligned with the desired international image of the U.S.

Not fooled by the government's rhetoric, anti-termination advocates exposed the irony of what they understood as rhetorical manipulation by termination's proponents to obscure the policy's true implications. For instance, Felix Cohen, a prominent legal scholar who played a significant role in engineering the Indian New Deal, expressed skepticism towards the government's idealistic language. In a 1953 article for *The American Indian*, a magazine of the

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the Point Four Planning," *News Letter of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs, Inc.* 5, no. 1 (1950): 1–3. See also: D'Arcy McNickle, "U.S. Indian Affairs – 1953," *América Indígena: Organo Trimestral del Instituto Indigenista Interamericano* 7, no. 4 (October 1953): 273; National Congress of American Indians, "Point Four Program for American Indians," November 21, 1954, as excerpted in Daniel M. Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations: Documents of Politics and Protest in Indigenous America Since 1887* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 93–100.

[24] See, e.g., Jim Cullen, *Democratic Empire: The United States Since 1945* (Newark, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2016).

[25] In the archival sources I consulted, anti-termination advocates did not similarly appropriate the rhetoric of anti-communism in U.S. Cold War politics. U.S. anti-communism likely was difficult for them to overcome and navigate. Collier, for instance, ultimately lost credibility in the federal government due to accusations that he was a Communist (see Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle*, 63). This topic, while beyond the scope of this paper, remains underexplored and is an area for future research.

Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA), Cohen recommended heightened scrutiny for legislation that was "ornamented by high-sounding terms like 'withdrawal' and 'emancipation.'"[26] With numerous termination bills pending in 1954, Collier similarly cautioned in the *New York Times* that Indians faced "assaults cloaked in the guise of 'emancipation,' 'liberation' and 'equality.'"[27]

Although these examples reveal that anti-termination advocates questioned the sincerity of the government's language of equality, freedom, and integration in termination politics, they did not discard the value of those principles. Instead, they engaged deeply with them, exploiting the very language of termination politics to expose the government's missteps and hypocrisy in advancing termination.

Equality Before the Law

One of the core tenets of pro-termination advocacy was the idea that termination would remedy American Indians' disadvantaged legal status by equalizing them with all other U.S. citizens. Anti-termination advocates insisted that this argument misconstrued the concept of Indian advancement through equality. In 1954 Congressional hearings that featured debates on termination, Helen Peterson (executive director of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)) objected to policies that promised only to "restor[e] the same rights to the Indian tribes which are enjoyed by all citizens of the United States."[28] After all, American Indians *already* possessed equal rights of American citizenship, as guaranteed by the Indian Citizenship Act of

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[26] Felix Cohen, "Indian Wardship: The Twilight of a Myth," *The American Indian*, 1953, as reproduced in Lucy Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience: Selective Papers of Felix S. Cohen* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1960), 334. See also: Felix Cohen, "First Americans First," *The New Leader* 36, no. 4 (January 1953): 17.
[27] John Collier, "Threat to Indians Feared: Pending Bills Called an Assault on Rights of Oldest Minority," *New York Times*, August 1, 1954, obtained from *ProQuest Historical Newspapers.*
[28] Helen Peterson and Alice Jamison, "This Resolution 'Gives' Indians Nothing," 1954, in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 104.

1924.[29] Peterson's argument reflects a broader critique among anti-termination advocates: a policy whose supposed gains for American Indians simply reified benefits they already possessed offered no gains at all.[30] The irony of such a policy was duly noted by Oliver La Farge, anthropologist and AAIA president, who commented in 1957, "One cannot 'equalize' people by depriving them of their property and of the going communities of their own kind that are their source of strength."[31]

The government's presupposition that American Indians did not enjoy full citizenship rights rested on a misrepresentation of the federal-tribal trust relationship. In a 1953 article entitled "Indian Wardship: The Twilight of a Myth," Cohen exposed "two popular fallacies" among the American public: "the idea that Indians are wards under the guardianship of the Great White Father, and the idea that a ward cannot be a citizen or, at least, cannot exercise the rights of citizenship."[32] Both of these ideas, Cohen explained, were myths. The Indian New Deal established the federal government's role as a trustee of tribal lands and the provider of key funding and services—not as the guardian of a ward.[33] Far from an arrangement that victimized tribes or precluded Indians' abilities to exercise citizenship rights, trusteeship was grounded on "mutual consent" and "contractual obligation," according to NCAI cofounder D'Arcy McNickle.[34] The best way to conceive of American Indians' legal status, various advocates argued, was to acknowledge that they possessed both the full rights of U.S. citizenship and, *in*

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[29] Gray C. Stein, "The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924," *New Mexico Historical Review* 47, no. 3 (July 1972): 257–274.
[30] See also: Felix Cohen, "Indians Are Citizens!" *The American Indian*, 1944, in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 253–263; "Crisis in Indian Affairs," *Indian Affairs: News Letter of the American Indian Fund and the Association on American Indian Affairs*, October 20, 1953, in "American Indians General File, 1950-1955," in *A-B; NAACP Papers, Part 18: Special Subjects, 1940-1955*, Library of Congress, obtained from *ProQuest*.
[31] Oliver La Farge, "Termination of Federal Supervision: Disintegration and the American Indians," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 311 (May 1957): 42.
[32] Cohen, "Indian Wardship," in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 328.
[33] Cohen, "Indian Wardship," in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 328.
[34] McNickle, "U.S. Indian Affairs – 1953," 268.

addition, special rights and provisions that the federal government had guaranteed to tribes in treaties and agreements in exchange for vast land concessions.[35]

Although anti-termination advocates highlighted this dual legal structure, they were wary of compromising the principle of equality and thus framed these special treaty privileges as consistent with equality before the law. "This is not special pleading," read The Declaration of Indian Purpose at the 1961 American Indian Chicago Conference. "We ask only that the United States be true to its own traditions and set an example to the world in fair dealing."[36] Seven years earlier, Joseph Garry of the NCAI advanced a similar argument: since the federal government negotiated colonial-era treaty obligations "on a basis of full equality" with tribes, the principles of equality and consent of the governed demanded continued compliance with treaty provisions.[37] Earlier still, Cohen, perhaps anticipating the debates that would emerge in the post-war BIA, wrote in 1944 that the "special rights" of Indians were comparable to those of other groups who possessed "special claims upon the Federal Government," such as veterans and government employees.[38] This comparison emphasized the idea that Indians' treaty privileges did not inherently interfere with the principle of equality before the law, since many other Americans also enjoyed special legal privileges on top of the standard package of citizenship benefits.

In addition to broad arguments about legal equality and citizenship rights, anti-termination advocates invoked the principle of equal rights in demanding tribes' control over their own fates. La Farge wrote in 1957 that, given the history of European descendants compromising Indians' opportunities for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," it follows that "we cannot, as Americans, rest content until we have restored that opportunity to them *at*

[35] See, e.g., Collier, "Threat to Indians Feared."
[36] American Indian Chicago Conference, "The Declaration of Indian Purpose," University of Chicago, June 13–20, 1961, as excerpted in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 121.
[37] Joseph Garry, "A Declaration of Indian Rights," NCAI Emergency Meeting on Termination, February 1954, as reproduced in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 102.
[38] Cohen, "Indians Are Citizens!" 1944, in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 255.

least to the degree that other citizens have it."[39] In the context of termination, according to Cohen, Collier, and McNickle, this notion of equality through self-determination required Indians' participation in decisions related to tribal assimilation and development, as well as a degree of self-governance consistent with other U.S. communities.[40] In other words, protecting tribal self-determination fell within the political project of equalizing freedoms across all citizens. To deny these rights to Indians, Cohen wrote in 1949, would be to selectively exclude them from American liberty.[41]

American Freedom

Indeed, anti-termination advocates reframed not only the concept of equality that had been invoked in termination politics but also ideas about American freedom. The government's conception of freedom, which also dominated mainstream domestic politics, embraced the American Dream-like vision of freedom as unrestricted movement, individualism, and social mobility. Under this definition, government officials argued that termination was an act of emancipation for Indians through its dissolution of reservations and group-based politics and its assimilation of Indians into U.S. society.[42] In their opposition, anti-termination advocates contested these definitions of American freedom and its applications.

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[39] La Farge, "Termination of Federal Supervision," 41 (emphasis added). Felix Cohen similarly argued that the federal government must include Indians in U.S. democracy by allowing them some self-governance, "just as neighboring white communities do." (Felix Cohen, "Colonialism: U.S. Style," *The Progressive* (February 1951): 18.)

[40] Felix Cohen, "Indian Self-Government," *The American Indian*, 1949, in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 305; John Collier, "Threat to Indian Rights Seen: Bills Proposing Termination of Federal Services to Tribes Opposed," *New York Times*, February 24, 1954, obtained from *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*; D'Arcy McNickle, "The Indian in American Society," in *The Social Welfare Forum, 1955: Official Proceedings, 82nd Annual Forum, National Conference of Social Work* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1955), 178, 183.

[41] Cohen, "Indian Self-Government," in Kramer Cohen, ed., *The Legal Conscience*, 314.

[42] See Watkins, "Termination of Federal Supervision."

First, anti-termination advocates challenged the claim that freedom of movement did not exist on reservations, which Watkins had compared to refugee camps and which Soviet propaganda had likened to Nazi concentration camps.[43] According to various anti-termination advocates, reservations did *not* constrict their residents' freedom of movement. Forcefully explaining NCAI's perspective in the 1954 "Declaration of Indian Rights," Joseph Garry refuted the myth of prison-like reservations. "Nothing could be farther from the truth," he declared. "Reservations do not imprison us. They are ancestral homelands, retained by us for our perpetual use and enjoyment." Furthermore, he noted, Indians are "free to move about the country like everyone else."[44] Much like government officials' promise that termination would grant Indians full rights of U.S. citizenship, their claim that eliminating the reservation system would afford Indians freedom of movement fell on deaf ears: the government promised Indians nothing more than that which they already possessed.

Anti-termination advocates also disputed the notion that group-based politics precluded individual freedom. Collier is the authoritative voice on this subject. Not unlike the argument that freedom was possible only outside of Indian reservations, the idea that Indian grouphood pervaded individual assimilation and liberty had long persisted, Collier explained. Examining historical federal Indian policy, he argued that the federal government's assimilationist reforms consistently posited that "the individual Indian must be rescued from his grouphood."[45] Collier countered that the perceived contradiction between guaranteeing individual liberties (including

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[43] U.S. Congress, *Termination of Federal Supervision Over Certain Tribes of Indians: Joint Hearings Before the Subcommittees of the Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs, Congress of the United States, Eighty-Third Congress, Second Session, Part 6* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954), 744; Rosier, "'They Are Ancestral Homelands,'" 1300.
[44] Garry, "A Declaration of Indian Rights," 1954, in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 102. For similar examples, see: Felix Cohen, "The Erosion of Indian Rights, 1950–1953: A Case Study in Bureaucracy," *Yale Law Journal* 62, no. 3 (February 1953): 358; John Collier, "The American Indian: Cultural Autonomy or Individual Assimilation," 1954, John Collier Papers (MS 146), Reel 52U, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
[45] Collier, "The American Indian: Cultural Autonomy or Individual Assimilation," 3–4.

the freedom to assimilate) and sustaining group autonomy was not universal, but rather a position that the U.S. government applied selectively to groups viewed as other, such as American Indians and people of African descent.[46] He argued that Indians' individual liberties not only could but *should* be protected alongside group autonomy, a position that did not gain political traction until the 1960s.[47]

Finally, anti-termination advocates highlighted that the BIA's infringement on tribal sovereignty limited Indians' social and economic mobility, which was a central tenet of the American Dream and post-war freedom rhetoric. Cohen argued that the "expert governance" approach of the BIA, which required extensive professional and educational backgrounds for its program staff, effectively prevented tribal members from entering public service, thus compromising their "freedom of opportunity."[48] La Farge noted, moreover, that assimilation likely would create new forms of discrimination against Indians: "When you ask an Indian to become assimilated you ask him, in effect, to become an anonymous, dark-skinned individual in a society that has a notable prejudice against dark-skinned individuals."[49] Such concerns were particularly heightened in the Jim Crow South, such as among the Mississippi Choctaws.[50] In other words, termination was likely to exacerbate, rather than eliminate, the limitations on Indians' mobility.

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[46] Collier, "The American Indian: Cultural Autonomy or Individual Assimilation," 7–8.
[47] See "John Collier on Indian Equality" in "The Indians—Three Points of View," *Saskatchewan Community* 3, no. 10 (May 1952): 1–3; John Collier, "America's Aboriginal Societies Come into Their Own," *Common Ground* 7, no. 3 (Summer 1947): 38–42.
[48] Cohen, "The Erosion of Indian Rights, 1950–1953," 361, 390.
[49] Oliver La Farge, "Assimilation: The Indian View," *New Mexico Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (Spring 1956): 12.
[50] See Phillip Martin to Fred A. Seaton, September 27, 1960, as reproduced in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 111–114.

Integration, Assimilation, and Termination

As this last example suggests, anti-termination advocates' arguments about freedom and equality also sparked conversations about the relationships between integration, assimilation, and termination. Government officials and policies used all three of these terms, sometimes interchangeably.[51] To anti-termination advocates, however, they were far from synonymous. In articulating their opposition to termination, advocates questioned what the rosy Cold War language of integration of ethnic minorities meant for American Indians.

To challenge integration-based justifications for termination, anti-termination advocates argued that integration did not naturally follow from assimilation or termination, and vice versa. Phillip Martin, chairman of the Mississippi Choctaws, wrote to the Interior Secretary in 1960 declaring that the BIA and the tribe differed in their long-term goals of "termination" versus "integration," respectively. He defined the tribe's vision for "integration" as "gradual assimilation," which remained distinct from the BIA-prescribed rapid "termination."[52] Relatedly, speaking at the 1961 American Indian Chicago Conference, Pueblo anthropologist Edward Dozier claimed that integration of Indians into American society was achievable without assimilation or termination.[53] This argument mirrored Collier's claims that American Indians' individual liberties could be protected without the wholesale destruction of Indian grouphood.

Anti-termination advocates also challenged the government's assumption that Indian segregation was involuntary and necessarily opposed to the ideals of freedom and equality. Speaking at the 1955 National Conference of Social Work in the wake of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954), D'Arcy McNickle refuted these claims. He declared that the typical

[51] See, e.g., U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Report with respect to the House Resolution authorizing the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs to conduct an investigation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs pursuant to House Resolution 89*, 83rd Congress, Second Session, 1954, H.R. Rep. 2680, serial 11747, 11–12.
[52] Phillip Martin to Fred A. Seaton, September 27, 1960, as reproduced in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 112, 113.
[53] Edward P. Dozier, Keynote Address, American Indian Chicago Conference, 1961, as reproduced in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 118.

U.S. government view of segregation as "a form of isolation of persons, such as the foreign-born or an ethnic group such as the Negroes, under conditions in which neither the group nor the individual has freedom of choice," did not apply to the "isolation" of American Indians. Rather, although Indians suffered some involuntary segregation at the level of individuals (due to their lack of trade, language, and education skills, for instance), their isolation as a group was neither involuntary nor absolute. McNickle instead proposed an alternative conceptualization of segregation in light of American Indian history: in response to colonial settlement, Indians' segregation had been "an act of self-preservation, the motivation being a desire to keep what they had." Extending into the termination era, McNickle said, "this motivation persists." In effect, he claimed, it was far from certain that integration into broader U.S. society would promote genuine freedom or equality for American Indians.[54]

Tribal Sovereignty and Civil Rights

This examination of the concepts of equality, freedom and integration—the very language of termination—is an important and missing piece in historical scholarship on anti-termination advocacy. In addition, the fact that this advocacy shared rhetorical principles with mainstream domestic politics and the U.S. civil rights movement begs the question: how did the anti-termination movement relate to other post-war racial and ethnic advocacy movements?

In his writings, historian Daniel Cobb referenced a comment by Helen Peterson of the NCAI in 1957: "Indian problems aren't civil rights problems." With integrationist politics gaining political momentum after *Brown*, Peterson worried that tribal sovereignty efforts would

[54] McNickle, "The Indian in American Society," 174. See also: Collier, "Threat to Indians Feared."

flounder amidst assimilation and termination campaigns that were politically in vogue.[55] With the door of the civil rights movement supposedly closed off to American Indians, anti-termination advocates needed to appeal to alternative political models. They found the most promise, Cobb claimed, in the Cold War international politics of decolonization, development, and self-determination. Furthermore, Cobb wrote, by the late 1950s this framework led anti-termination advocates to reconceptualize tribes "as communities emerging from colonialism rather than minorities desiring integration."[56]

Were the anti-termination and U.S. civil rights movements as diametrically opposed as Peterson and Cobb suggested? More broadly, did advocacy for American Indian rights in the 1950s really have so little in common with advocacy for African American equality in the same period, or with other minority rights movements? Where Cobb erred, and what this paper seeks to remedy, was his failure to recognize that anti-termination advocates did in fact invoke the same principles that formed the core of the civil rights movement. Unsurprisingly, then, many of these advocates expressed views on the relationship between tribal sovereignty and civil rights struggles that were more nuanced than a simple story of total opposition.

Certainly, anti-termination advocates acknowledged that American Indian problems and goals differed from those of African Americans and other minority groups in the U.S. In particular, La Farge cautioned against assuming that Indians had "the same ultimate goal as almost all other minorities, racial or national-origin, in the United States, which is eventual assimilation." This distinction, he and others noted, could be attributed to the distinct histories of American Indians and other U.S. ethnic minorities.[57] Still, advocacy movements for American

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[55] Proceedings of a Meeting of the Commission on the Rights, Liberties, and Responsibilities of the American Indian with Representatives of Voluntary Agencies in the Field of Indian Affairs, February 18, 1957, as cited in Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*, 219n42.
[56] Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*, 22, 27.
[57] La Farge, "Assimilation: The Indian View," 7. See also: La Farge, "Termination of Federal Supervision," 44; Dozier, Keynote Address, in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 117.

Indians and other U.S. minorities addressed overlapping problems. Like other minority groups, American Indians experienced discrimination and deprivation of full rights that constituted "second class citizenship," according to Dozier, despite legal guarantees to the contrary.[58] La Farge also admitted that, although significant differences remained, Indians were "moving towards resemblance to other minorities."[59]

These perceived similarities between American Indian struggles and those of other minority groups influenced anti-termination advocates' understandings of their political project. For La Farge, the shared struggles of U.S. minority groups, paired with American Indians' long-term success in resisting assimilation, modified the mid-century scholarly consensus: perhaps U.S. minority assimilation was not inevitable after all.[60] For Dozier, the commonalities created opportunities for collaboration between ethnic movements.[61] And Collier, whose advocacy during the termination era encompassed both American Indians and marginalized groups worldwide, concluded that American Indian struggles and achievements offered lessons in advocacy and governance for ethnic minorities and dependent groups across the U.S. and around the world.[62]

Conclusion: A Multiplicity of Freedoms

Given that anti-termination advocates consistently articulated the principles of equality, freedom, and integration that became linked with the U.S. civil rights movement, it comes as no surprise that they perceived shared characteristics between the two movements. For although

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[58] Dozier, Keynote Address, in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 117.
[59] La Farge, "Assimilation: The Indian View," 6.
[60] La Farge, "Assimilation: The Indian View," 10.
[61] Dozier, Keynote Address, in Cobb, ed., *Say We Are Nations*, 117.
[62] John Collier, "United States Indian Administration as a Laboratory of Ethnic Relations," *Social Research* 12, no. 3 (September 1945): 298, 301; John Collier, Untitled speech, undated (1947?), John Collier Papers (MS 146), Reel 52U.

termination itself came packaged in the language of equality, freedom, and integration, anti-termination advocates recognized that termination did not represent the realization of those ideals for American Indians. It would be incorrect, therefore, to conclude that anti-termination advocates were uninterested in pursuing the goals of equality, freedom, or integration. By examining the ways in which they used civil rights-esque language to resist termination, we can understand how their tactics not only appropriated the language of the government to demonstrate its fallacies but also challenged the supposed opposition between American Indian struggles and those of African Americans and other ethnic minorities at home and abroad.

In addition to capturing a more nuanced relationship between the anti-termination movement and civil rights aspirations in the 1950s, this history emphasizes that the civil rights tenets incorporated into U.S. law in the 1960s were not the only possible realization of the foundational U.S. principles of freedom and equality. These principles, baked into founding documents and U.S. Cold War politics alike, conformed to diverse visions. For Cohen, Collier, La Farge, McNickle, and other anti-termination advocates, the assimilationist ethic of termination violated the principles of freedom and equality. Their vision for realizing those principles emphasized sovereignty and development over integration and uniformity, the latter of which characterized the civil rights principles enshrined into law in the following decade.

Whether they did so intentionally or not, anti-termination advocates likely advanced their political legitimacy by speaking the language of reform most assimilable to post-war domestic politics. Their rhetoric also revealed a deeper truth, however: freedom and equality were not settled, uncontested principles in mid-century America. To accept integration and uniformity as a result predetermined by America's political foundations is to discredit the authors of diverse resistance movements. After all, civil rights advocates constructed the links between

quintessential American promises and their visions for integration, just as anti-termination advocates connected their opposition to termination with their interpretations of freedom and equality. Distinct U.S. communities have envisioned multiple interpretations of freedom and equality, any one of which theoretically could have prevailed. Anti-termination advocates' use of their political opponents' rhetorical tools serves as an important reminder of the malleability of the principles of freedom and equality, which have, in one way or another, shaped our collective history.

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The Identity Crisis in China's National Drama: Vilification and Erasure of the Homosexuality of the Dan in Peking Opera, 1910–45

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The homosexuality of male dan actors — female impersonators — in the renowned Peking Opera has long been the subject of tabloid speculation and intellectual criticism since the 19th century, and yet little is said about it in modern-day China. While scholars have ascribed the cause of this change in perceptions of dan homosexuality to events of 1910–20s, including the work of Mei Lanfang, domestic political and economic change, and Japanese influence, I argue that Western and Soviet influence spanning from 1910–45 was the driving factor behind the vilification and heterosexualisation of dan actors.

I show the absence of homophobic stigma surrounding dan actors in fin-de-siècle China, before the introduction of Western ideas by the New Culture Movement. I then illustrate how the New Culture Movement's import of Western sexology (1910–35) created homophobia and vilification toward dan actors. Finally, I examine how American and Soviet praise for dan actors (1930–35) was connected with the immediately subsequent heterosexualisation of dan actors in Chinese literature (1935–45) by showing that these new writings incorporated the rhetoric of American and Soviet commentary of dan to deny their homosexuality.

Introduction

In the winter of 1929, Mei Lanfang, the famous *dan* actor of the Peking Opera, left for his legendary tour in the United States. During this visit, he became known to his American fans as "A Great King of Actors", and received honorary doctorates from the University of Southern California and Pomona College — a feat that no other figure in Peking Opera has ever replicated.[1] The curtains to his show rose before members of the American elite, including First Lady Edith Wilson, prominent philosopher John Dewey, and New York City Mayor Jimmy Walker.[2] Banquets were held in his name with exorbitantly priced tables sold at up to $1000.[3] However, behind this façade of international recognition and glory, perceptions of *dan* actors in China were undergoing tumultuous changes due to the performers' associations with homosexuality.[4] During this period, the homosexuality of the *dan* and one of the last representations of queer Chinese culture was erased, and a heroic but necessarily heterosexual image of *dan* actors was established in its place. This image, purged of its historical homosexuality, continues to exist in both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) today.

There is an ongoing academic debate about how, and more contentiously, why this change occurred. To answer the first question, I premise this essay on Kang Wenqing's "two

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[1] Herbert Matthews, "China's Stage Idol Comes to Broadway," New York Times, Feb 16, 1930, https://www.nytimes.com/1930/02/16/archives/chinas-stage-idol-comes-to-broadway-mei-lanfang-modestly-known-as.html; Rui Zhang, "Peking Opera Artist Receives US Honorary Doctorate," accessed August 1st, 2023, http://www.china.org.cn/arts/2016-05/23/content_38515495.htm.

[2] Nancy Guy, "Brokering Glory for the Chinese Nation," *Comparative Drama* 35, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 2001-2): 377, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41154150.

[3] Guy, "Brokering Glory," 377.

[4] *Dan* actors in this essay will refer solely to male *dan* actors of the Peking Opera.
Min Tian, "Male Dan: The Paradox of Sex, Acting, and Perception of Female Impersonation in Traditional Chinese Theatre," *Asian Theatre Journal* 17, no. 1 (2000): 78–97. Although some women began having the opportunity to perform dan roles at his time, this was still a more marginalised practice due to them being banned from theatre for the Ming and Qing dynasties, and thus, male dan were considered as irreplaceable by female actors.

shifts" model of *how* perceptions of *dan* homosexuality changed. Based on this established timeline of the shifting discourse around dan actors, I argue that the main cause of these changes was the role of foreign influence, a break from current historiography. This new perspective is significant because it bridges the gap in the transformation of Chinese culture from including homosexuality to complete heterosexuality, and reveals the role of cultural imperialism from the West in writing the queer and cultural histories of China.

There are two main academic views on how opinions of *dan* homosexuality changed in early 20th century China. Kang Wenqing leads the predominant perspective that there were two changes in the way intellectuals and the public saw *dan* actors. According to Kang, the first change was a shift from intellectuals' acceptance and romanticisation of *dan* actors in the late imperial era to the role's fall from grace in 1910–30, during which New Culture intellectuals vilified *dan* actors as homosexual prostitutes.[5] The second occurred in the late 1930s and early 1940s when Chinese literature began heterosexualising the actors.[6] These two changes have also been identified respectively by Guo Chao in his book *Chinese Theatre and Male Dan* and Wu Xinmiao in his article about post-1935 Chinese public discourse.[7] On the other hand, Catherine Yeh contends alone that only one main change occurred, during which the *dan* actor became a "national" star from 1910–30, citing a newspaper's popular opinion poll and various magazine writings.[8]

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[5] Kang, *Obsession*, 118–134.
[6] Kang, *Obsession*, 135–144.
[7] G. Chao, "Between Scholar-Intellectuals and Theatrical Aficionados," in *Chinese Traditional Theatre and Male Dan: Social Power, Cultural Change and Gender Relations* (Routledge, 2022), 74-92, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003050278.
Wu, "Public Discourse," page number not displayed. Wu wrote that far fewer attacks towards the actors' supposed homosexuality after 1935, when Mei visited the Soviet Union. This matches the second mid-1930s shift Kang describes.
[8] Catherine Vance Yeh, "Politics, Art, and Eroticism: The Female Impersonator as the National Cultural Symbol of Republican China," in *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940*, ed. Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh, and Joshua S. Mostow (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 295–312. *Sinica Leidensia*, Volume 91.

To discuss perceptions of the homosexuality of *dan* actors, I regard Kang's "two shifts" model as more relevant. Although Yeh could be right in that *dan* actors became popular with the general public, which is the group her historical sources focused on, they had less influence than the New Culture intellectuals in creating the rhetoric around the *homosexuality* of *dan* actors. Radical intellectuals of the New Culture Movement were far more engaged in the discourse around science, morality, and sexuality, and had more reign over perceptions of certain groups in Chinese society. This essay echoes Kang's view that by the conclusion of the early 20th century, *dan* actors had first changed from tolerated homosexual prostitutes to immoral and aberrant corrupters of society, and then to heterosexual heroes of the Chinese nation, as this was primarily evidenced by intellectual writings.

Given the premise of *how* the Chinese discourse around *dan* actors changed, this essay explores *why* this vilification and heterosexualisatiion of *dan* occurred. There are three main theories in the current historiography which attempt to explain this shift. The first, proposed by Joshua Goldstein in his article "Mei Lanfang and the Nationalisation of Peking Opera", was that Mei Lanfang's work from 1912–30 desexualised the *dan* role, and by purging it of its erotic implications, Mei, by extension, removed the homosexual appeal of the *dan*.[9] The second, proposed by Catherine Yeh, was that a myriad of domestic influences caused the changing perceptions of *dan* actors, including economic growth and domestic politics.[10] Yeh also hinted

[9] Joshua Goldstein, "Mei Lanfang and the Nationalisation of the Peking Opera, 1912-1930," *Positions: East Asia Culture Critique* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 377–79. Goldstein writes that by connecting dan performance and "national culture", Mei Lanfang successfully appealed to China's political climate in the 1920s, consequently desexualising dan actors in the Chinese eye.

[10] Yeh, "Where is the Centre of Cultural Production," 74. Yeh writes that the new post-imperial Chinese economy caused a cultural transformation that propelled *dan* actors to domestic stardom and national representation.

Yeh, *Performing 'Nation'*, 215. Yeh writes that the improvement of the *dan* image "in large part the result of literati/politicians . . . demonstrating their power to reset public taste."

that Japanese influence during Japan's occupation of Chinese regions could be a third reason for these changes.[11]

However, the established "two shifts" timeline of intellectual vilification (1910–34) and heterosexualisation (1935–45) of *dan* actors reveal two gaps in these previous theories. For one, none of them explains why perceptions of *dan* homosexuality worsened from 1910–34, and for another, these writings imply that the improvement of Chinese opinions towards *dan* actors took place during the 1920s, which contradicts how *dan* actors continued to suffer intense humiliations up to 1935.

To remedy these inconsistencies, I propose an alternate theory: that Western and Soviet influences, readily absorbed by intellectuals of the New Culture Movement, caused the demonisation and subsequent erasure of *dan* actors' homosexuality instead of domestic and Asian influences. This contributes to the academic debate in two ways.

First, my analysis of *why* the *dan* homosexuality discourse changed adheres to the new "two shifts" framework about *how* it changed, making it more academically relevant compared to previous writings premised on an older historical account of how these changes occurred.

Second, my focus on New Culture literature around *dan* actors situates the academic debate about the perception of *dan* culture in the broader political context of 20th-century China. At the time, the New Culture Movement was a symbol of the nationalistic and iconoclastic reaction against the Qing monarchy and the Republic of China's weak response to Western and

[11] Yeh, *Performing 'Nation'*, 215. Yeh argued that Japan was an arbiter for Chinese tastes because it embodied Western values, allowing its affirmation of *dan* actors during the 1920s to influence Chinese perceptions of *dan* actors.

Japanese imperialism and the 1916–28 era of warlordism.[12] At the time, New Culture intellectuals imported Western ideas about science, morality, and sexuality, and established them as a new intellectual authority, entrenching Western homophobia.[13] Importantly, the Movement's members also gained core roles in major political factions, especially in the forming Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which later rose to power, causing its ideas to remain relevant to the present day.[14] By exploring the evolution of the New Culture Movement's ideas around *dan* homosexuality, I engage with the broader story of cultural self-colonialism, and how Chinese homophobia as we know it today came to be.

By adopting Kang's new framework of how perceptions of *dan* changed and drawing upon themes in the broader history of 20th-century China, I answer the question of why opinions of *dan* shifted in a way that is more faithful to the broader histories of both *dan* actors and Chinese society. Indeed, my argument that foreign influence caused the changes in the rhetoric around *dan* homosexuality is strongly consistent with broader academic work about the state of homophobia in imperial and republican China. Pioneering works of Chinese queer history, such as *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China* by Bret Hinsch and Kang's book on early 20th century Chinese homosexuality, *Obsession: Male Same-Sex Relations in 1900–50*, suggest that the introduction of foreign sexological ideas in early 20th century China significantly reduced the level of acceptance for homosexuals.[15] This essay

[12] Roberts, J. A. G. "Warlordism in China." *Review of African Political Economy*, no. 45/46 (1989): 26.
[13] James Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1983), 4; Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice*: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity — China, 1930–37 (California: Stanford University Press, 1995), 234. Liu illustrates this by analysing a central New Culture work, the Compendium by Cai Yuanpei, then president of Peking University, which all but completely submitted to the West. According to Liu, the Compendium was a "self-colonising project in which the West served as the ultimate source of authority in terms of which one had to renegotiate what was meaningful in Chinese literature."
[14] Zhidong Hao. "May 4th and June 4th compared: A sociological study of Chinese social movements." *Journal of Contemporary China* 6 (1997): 79-99.
[15] Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 1–3. Hinsch describes some level of acceptance for homosexuality throughout the dynasties of imperial China prior to the introduction of Western sexology to China in the post-imperial era.

crystalises what this deteriorating acceptance looked like by demonstrating how foreign influence aided in the rewriting of Chinese traditions and culture to the erasure of queer presences, which has contributed to Chinese heteronormativity to this very day.[16]

I. The Social Context of 1900s China: Perceptions of Dan Actors Before the New Culture Movement and the First Wave of Change

Before the New Culture Movement of 1910–20s, intellectuals had a long history of interacting with *dan* actors in the Peking Opera and documented them as homosexuals. Despite this, most of these writers were not explicitly critical of *dan*, and if they did, the negativity was usually centre on their prostitution rather than their homosexuality, and equated *dan* with female prostitutes.[17] This implied a level of acceptance towards *dan* homosexuality before the rise of the New Culture Movement.

The stereotypical association of *dan* actors with homosexuality — although not always true — existed as far back as the 17th century and grew until the 1900s. In the mid-1600s, Chinese playwright Li Yu was already treating the homosexuality of *dan* actors as a matter of fact, stating that they "[pleasured] people of the same sex in their beds."[18] Since Li worked in theatre, his observations on *dan* actors likely had some level of credibility. A similar work of fiction from the 18th century, *Pinhua baojian* (A treasured mirror for the appreciation of flowers), was more detailed, describing its protagonist engaging in homosexual relations with

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Wenqing Kang, *Obsession: Male Same-Sex Relations in China, 1900-50* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 6. Kang writes that the attempt to modernise China under the pressure of national crisis resulted in a "reconfiguration of indigenous knowledge about male same-sex relations".

[16] Tian, "Male Dan," 92.

[17] "Peking Opera," *China Culture Tour*, last modified December 11, 2022, accessed July 19, 2023, https://www.chinaculturetour.com/culture/peking-opera.htm#:~:text=Peking%20opera%2C%20also%20referred%20to,Qianlong%20Emperor%20on%20September%2025.

[18] Yu Li, *Lian Cheng Bi* (c. 1650; Beijing: Zhonghua diancang, n.d.), 1-2. https://www.zhonghuadiancang.com/wenxueyishu/lianchengbi/.

two *dan* actors.[19] Considering that the idea of *dan* homosexuality was a significant part of the novel's plot, it was probably quite a common, if not mainstream perception.

Beyond works of fiction, historical accounts also evidence the prevailing view that *dan* actors engaged in homosexual relations: an 1884 report book on the social customs of Tianjin, *Jinmen zaji* (Miscellaneous notes on Jinmen), classified *dan* actors as a lower class because they sold their bodies, which heavily indicates the prevalence of their practice of homosexual prostitution considering that this classification applied to all of them without exception.[20] The *dan*'s homosexual practices were explained more bluntly by the 1916 *Qingbai leichao* (Qing unofficial reference book), which described how unpopular male actors had to frequently resort to homosexual prostitution to support themselves during the Qing dynasty.[21] The expectation that *dan* actors attracted other men was even self-evident in the features that *dan* actor training schools selected for — sexually appealing, feminine looks, which usually appealed to most men of the time.[22]

However, despite this overwhelming amount of evidence for *dan* homosexuality, this stereotypical characterisation of homosexual prostitution was only predominantly applicable to unsuccessful *dan* actors, as the more popular ones could "choose to meet the most intimate and the most influential." As per *Jinmen zaji*, the more well-off *dan* actors from Beijing usually only acted as drinking company and could avoid sexual contact with patrons. However, due to the prevalence of tabloids and magazines reporting on homosexual encounters between actor and patron, by the turn of the century, *dan* actors were consistently seen as "sexual objects on

[19] Tian, "Male Dan," 83.
[20] Shou Zhang, *Jinmen zaji*, (Tianjin: Unknown Publisher, 1884), 49.
[21] Ke Xu, *Qing Unofficial Reference Book* (清稗类钞; Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1916), 5926–6021.
[22] Tian, "Male Dan," 82.

and off the stage" who may be "required to serve [male] officials sexually in a private household" as homosexual prostitutes.[23]

Although *dan* actors were seen as homosexual prostitutes, they were not stigmatised far more than their female counterparts. A variety of sources equate *dan* actors and female sex workers in terms of status. In 1878, an intellectual writer under the pseudonym of Sheng Yilan noted that the phrase referring to *dan* actors, *xianggong*, was "borrowed from the term for courtesans", implying that the perception of the nature of their work was likely similar.[24] This was supported by Wang Shunu in *Zhongguo changji shi* (history of prostitution in China). Wang notes that historically, male actors were referred to as "hua", the same expression used for female prostitutes. Furthermore, the phrase for visiting their house, "da cha wei" was synonymous with "going to a brothel."[25] This lexicon surrounding *dan* actors indicates that they were viewed in the same way as female prostitutes despite homosexual implications that have existed since the 17th century, illustrating a largely ambivalent Chinese attitude towards *dan* homosexuality before the arrival of the New Culture Movement.

Dan actors may have even benefited from their homosexual status. The aforementioned history of prostitution in China praised *dan* actors as better companions than female prostitutes, seeing them as more cultured and tasteful.[26] This preference for *dan* actors over female prostitutes indicates that they were not marginalised for their homosexuality, but were instead normalised and even fetishized. This view is echoed by renowned sinologist Colin P. Mackerras in *The Rise of the Peking Opera*, who wrote that *dan* actors "[could] best be compared not to

[23] Sophia Tingting Zhao, "Reorienting the Gaze in Mei Lanfang's Lyrical Theatre: Performing Female Interiority," *Asian Theatre Journal* 33, no. 2 (2016): 397, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24737189.
[24] Zhang, *Qingchao fazhishi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 246.
[25] Wang, *Zhonguo changji shi*, 317–28.
[26] Wang, *Zhongguo changji shi,* 317–28

ordinary prostitutes but to high-grade courtesans", implying a level of respect for *dan* which did not apply to most prostitutes.[27] By the turn of the century, *dan* actors may have even been less frowned upon compared to female prostitutes at the time and suffered from little homophobia.

II. The New Culture Movement's Attack on *Dan* Homosexuality and its Roots in Western Pseudoscience

On May 4th, 1919, at the height of the New Culture Movement, over 3,000 students protested the terms of the Versailles Treaty in Tiananmen Square. In the 1910–20s, this movement produced a group of nationalist and iconoclastic intellectuals who exalted Western ideas and gained important positions in Chinese universities and political movements, allowing them to heavily influence the public discourse not just during the 1910–20s, but the 30s and 40s as well.[28] Using the homophobic beliefs they gained from Western sexology, these influential New Culture intellectuals launched an all-out attack on *dan* homosexuality from 1910 to 1930.

The first attack on *dan* actors arrived in the form of a 1912 announcement in the *Zhengzong aiguo bao* (orthodox patriotic newspaper), a nationalist ally of the New Culture Movement.[29] It criticised *dan* opera houses which "seduced boys from respectable families, [and] made them sexually attractive," branding the intermixing of intellectuals and *dan* actors as a "hotbed of the filthy and the foul." Given the prevailing narrative that *dan* actors were homosexual prostitutes, this was likely a direct reference to their sexual relations with men.

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[27] Colin Mackerras, Rise of the Peking Opera, 1770-1870: Social Aspects of the Theatre in Manchu China (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 152.
[28] Yunzhi Geng, "From Cultural Movement to Political Movement," in An Introductory Study on China's Cultural Transformation in Recent Times (New York: Springer Link, 2015), 315–8.
[29] Baidu Baike, "Zhengzong aiguo bao," last modified August 2, 2020, accessed July 20, 2023, https://baike.baidu.com/item/正宗爱国报/23170383.

With the homosexual status of *dan* actors established, the author further comments that *dan* actors have "contaminated" the whole country with their homosexuality and invited "[ridicule] by foreigners".[30] This comment was critical, because it construed *dan* homosexuality as a threat to national pride, and brought the private homosexual relations of *dan* into the context of post-imperial China's struggle for a place in the international order. The fact that *dan* actors were seen by the author as so pernicious to China meant that to the nationalists behind the self-proclaimed patriotic newspaper, *dan* homosexuality constituted more than the exchange between the actor and the patron, but also had a dimension of immorality and backwardness that contrasted China's efforts to modernise and gain international respect. Indeed, the very existence of such a denigrating commentary on *dan* homosexuality by self-proclaimed patriots — who themselves claim to mind national problems rather than the sexual relations of private individuals — is highly revealing; it displays the inherently homophobic idea that these same-sex relations were not a private matter, but rather one that could be publicly judged and, according to Kang's analysis in *Obsession*, tied to the fate of the new Chinese republic.[31]

The nespaper was not alone, however, in supporting the idea that *dan* actors were sexual aberrations and thus a threat to Chinese modernity. This view was echoed by one of the most famous New Culture intellectuals, Lu Xun. In his 1924 article, "Lun zhaoxiang zhilei" (On photography and the sort), Lu Xun claimed that *dan* actors can attract men because the audience "see the female character performed by the male actor" rather than the masculinity of the actor themselves, resulting in homoerotic attractions. He remarks that this is "most worrying" as a part of Chinese national culture, thus appealing to the threat of Chinese identity potentially

[30] Cixi Zhang, *Qingdai yandu liyuan shiliao* (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1988), 1243.
[31] Kang, *Obsession*, 116.

being tarnished by *dan* homosexuality in the same way the previous newspaper did.[32] Sarcastically, Lu Xun also writes that the "greatest and most eternal art of our China is men dressing up as women", and given his known belief that tradition clashed with Chinese modernisation, his characterisation of something as "eternal art" essentially equates to calling it backwards.[33] As Min Tian analyses in his book, *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth-Century International Stage*, Lu Xun branded *dan* cross-dressing, and more importantly, the homosexuality it espouses, "as symptomatic of the declining of Chinese nationality".[34]

This concern of *dan* homosexuality being problematic for Chinese modernisation and damage international perceptions of China can also be found in other New Culture writings. In 1929, an issue of the New Culture journal *Wenxue zhoubao* (literature weekly) launched especially scathing criticisms against *dan* actors in anticipation of Mei Lanfang's performances in the United States. It contained articles titled "Please Save Our International Reputation" which exclusively "[refuted] the artistic value of male *dan* actors" because of their homosexuality. Furthermore, it condemned famous *dan* actor Mei Lanfang to be an "abnormal person" and decried his visit to the United States as "flaunting aberrations", continuing previous homophobic rhetoric.[35] The criticisms from this journal were not an isolated case. According to Wu Xinmiao's analysis in his journal article "Public Discourse Before and After Mei Lanfang's 1935 Soviet Union Visit", this type of harsh vilification filled with homophobic

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[32] Shuren Zhou, "On Photography and the Sort (论照相之类)," in *Grave* (坟), (Beijing: Beixin Shuju, 1929), 167-75.
[33] Julia Lovell, *The Politics of Cultural Capital: China's Quest for a Nobel Prize in Literature* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 81.
[34] Min Tian, *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth-Century International Stage: Chinese Culture Placed and Displaced* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 144.
[35] Zheng Zhenduo, "Dadao nanban nüzhuang de danjue; dadao danjue de daibiao ren Mei Lanfang" (down with the dan actors in women's clothes; down with the representative dan actor Mei Lanfang), *Wenxue zhoubao* 8, no. 3: 62–65.

connotations was “a very common style” for articles about *dan* actors, and these criticisms of *dan* homosexuality remained prevalent throughout the 1920s.[36]

The Chinese literature in the years 1910–30 was extremely clear in showing intellectuals’ negative views towards *dan* homosexuality. In those years, intellectual opinions of *dan* took a sharp turn for the worse. This is contrary to the assumptions of previous studies, rendering them insufficient to explain why this deterioration occurred. After re-examining how homophobic principles came to be part of the New Culture narratives around *dan* actors in the first place, an alternative interpretation for the cause of change emerges: the import of foreign ideas.

Homophobic ideas entered the 1910–30 New Culture intellectual discourse through the Movement’s import of Western scientific ideals to re-evaluate Chinese culture and society. To the intellectuals, Western scientific knowledge included a pseudoscientific branch of sexology, which regarded homosexuality as inherently wrong and pathological.[37] As New Culture intellectuals heavily borrowed from Western knowledge, these homophobic ideas began to appear in their writings. The most poignant example of this was an article by written vernacular author Yu Muxia. In the social commentary paper *Shanghai linzhao*, he borrowed from Western sexology to explain the differences between homosexuality and heterosexuality, stating that “mutual attraction between men and women is very common,” whereas “homosexuality, between men or between women, is simply sexual perversion.”[38] Importantly, this concept of ‘sexual perversion’ was a Western concept that had not appeared in Chinese literature before,

[36] Xinmiao Wu, “Public Discourse Before and After Mei Lanfang’s 1935 Soviet Union Visit,” *Du Shu* (读书) 42, no. 3 (2020), page number unmarked on journal website, https://www.jiemian.com/article/4117635.html.
[37] Kang, *Obsession*, 6.
[38] Yu Muxia, "Tongxing lian'ai," *Shanghai linzha*o, 1933.

signifying a direct Western role in cementing homophobia in the early days of the Republic of China.[39]

As the New Culture Movement translated and absorbed Western sexology, their vilifications of *dan* homosexuality incorporated the homophobic rhetoric present in those writings. Repeatedly, different New Culture intellectuals argued or implied that the actors' relationships with other men were 'perversions' that 'contaminated' and threatened the nation.[40] These ideas mirrored the themes of immorality and pathology that major Western sexological texts ascribed to homosexuality. One of these writings was the 1886 foundational Western sexological work, *Psychopathia Sexualis* by Richar von Krafft-Ebing. A core claim that von Krafft-Ebing puts forth was that homosexuality was a "moral vice" in the form of a pathological "sexual perversion."[41] This was supported by German psychologist Albert Moll, who deemed homosexuality a sign of pathological degeneration, and that only heterosexual sex was natural.[42] These ideas likely found their way into the New Culture consciousness through the translation work of New Culture intellectuals themselves. Yang Youtian, one such intellectual, treated these homophobic characterisations as scientific facts and translated them into Chinese, thus giving them a direct avenue to mould the way intellectuals saw *dan* homosexuality. In his article, "Tongxin'ai de wenti" (the issue with same-sex love), Yang argued that homosexuality was a "sexual perversion", and cited von Krafft-Ebing and Moll as his sources.[43]

[39] Kang, *Obsession*, 31.
[40] Cixi Zhang, *Qingdai yandu liyuan shiliao* ,1243.
[41] Richard Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag, 1886; New York: Arcade, 2011), 185–92.
[42] Harry Oosterhuis, "Albert Moll's Ambivalence about Homosexuality and His Marginalisation as a Sexual Pioneer," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 28, no. 1 (2019): 1–43, doi:10.7560/JHS28101.
[43] Youtian Yang, "Tongxin'ai de wenti," in *A Collection of Discussions On the Issue of Homosexuality* (Shanghai: Beixin Shuju, 1930), 2–6.

It is important to note, however, that the attitudes towards homosexuality in Western sexology during this time were nuanced and not uniformly homophobic, but the more homophobic narratives were the ones absorbed by Chinese intellectuals. Alternate psychological authorities like Havelock Ellis and Sigmund Freud were more sympathetic to homosexuals, famously not characterising homosexuality as a disease in their writings.[44] According to *Gay Lives*, a book on the Western homosexual experience by Paul Robinson, Freud and Ellis also both subscribed to the belief that homosexuality was innate, a stance which allowed them to make the argument that it was an illegitimate basis for discrimination considering that it is completely arbitrary.[45] As such, there were also strong voices in Western sexology at the time which were accepting of homosexuality.

However, despite this nuance in Western sexology, its homosexual ideas were the ones more readily absorbed by nationalistic Chinese intellectuals concerned with explaining the supposed inferiority of the Chinese people, and were used to decry *dan* actors' homosexuality as immoral.[46] The fact that intellectuals repeatedly cited the West's potential judgement and ridicule as a justification for homophobia further implies that New Culture criticisms were based on Western judgements. This strongly suggests that the harsh New Culture rhetoric towards *dan* actors was heavily inspired by Western homophobic theories if not a direct consequence of them.

However, this new, stigmatised characterisation of *dan* actors as socially divisive homosexuals did not last long. In the next decade, *dan* actors rose to international acclaim, and

[44] Kenneth Lewes, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Male Homosexuality,* (New York: New American Library, 1988), 2–12.
[45] Paul Robinson, *Gay Lives,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), XII–XIV.
[46] Guo Chao, "Between Scholar-Intellectuals and Theatrical Aficionados," in *Chinese Traditional Theatre and Male Dan: Social Power, Cultural Change and Gender Relations* (Routledge, 2022), 74-92, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003050278.

when the cultural authorities of the New Culture Movement — the United States and the Soviet Union — came together to express their admiration for the *dan* performers, Chinese intellectuals immediately followed suit. Near overnight, accusations of *dan* homosexuality ceased, and literature began treating the sexual association of *dan* with other men with a new type of rhetoric: denial.

III. International Recognition of *Dan* Actors and How it Changed the Chinese Intellectual Discourse

From 1930 to 1935, Mei Lanfang, hailed as the leader of *dan* performers and the Peking Opera, visited the United States and the Soviet Union and received widespread acclaim. Immediately after, from 1935–45, New Culture-affiliated intellectuals produced literature that not only embraced *dan* actors as a national symbol but also omitted or actively denied their homosexuality, constituting a second shift in the rhetoric around *dan* homosexuality. Not only is the temporal correlation between foreign input and changes in perceptions indicative of their causal connection, but narratives from foreign commentary on *dan* actors frequently appear as themes in this new writing, further establishing the role of American and Soviet influence in the erasure of *dan* homosexuality.

The explosion of international acclaim and attention towards Chinese culture first came on February 23, 1930, when the *New York Times* published *Mei Lanfang, Ambassador in Art* during Mei's visit to the United States. The long article featured on the first page of *Drama-Music* praised the work of Mei with uncompromising affirmation, writing that even the accomplishments of the "extremes of stylisation in [American] experimental theatres" could not compare to "the pure art" of Peking Opera.[47] Mei's *dan* performances were applauded as

[47] J. Brooks Atkinson, "Mei Lan Fang, Ambassador in Art," *New York Times*, February 23, 1930, https://www.nytimes.com/1930/02/23/archives/mei-lanfang-ambassador-in-art.html.

"China's national drama" in the United States, and acclaim rose from throughout the American elite, with the list of tour sponsors in New York reading "like a who's who of American high society."[48]

However, America's approval of the Peking Opera as a cultural treasure was not enough to end the Chinese intellectuals' criticisms of *dan* actors. As Tian explains in *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth-Century International Stage*, "Chinese responses to his success were far from being unanimously positive" and "hardly reached a consensus." Challenges from left-leaning individuals were particularly common. In 1930, leftist journalist Zou Taofen criticised Mei's *dan* role as something played with by old male officials who were mentally abnormal, continuing the rhetoric of homophobic vilification from the 1910s and 20s.[49] In 1934, New Culture intellectual Han Shiheng slammed the cross-dressing and homosexuality of *dan* as "immoral and uncultured".[50] In the same year, Lu Xun also returned to his criticism of Mei, suggesting that he should "use an unknown pen name to complement his own acting".[51] The source that was most indicative, however, of continued vilification towards *dan* actors, was a 1932 article in the Tianjin newspaper *Tianfeng bao*, which deens the "filthy deeds of *dan* actors" as the cause of the Chinese national crisis. After extensively expounding upon *dan* homosexuality, it comments that the Republic of China "is on the verge of extinction because such freaks and monsters exist."[52] Clearly, the critical tone of the Chinese rhetoric towards *dan* actors had not exactly abated in the early 1930s and echoed the homophobic connection between national crisis and homosexuality made by writers from the 1910s–20s,

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[48] Na Liu, "Mei Lan-Fang's American Tour and China's Images in the U.S.," Global Journal of Human-Social Science 22, no. 6 (2022): 23, https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume22/3-Mei-Lan-Fangs.pdf.
Guy, "Brokering Glory," 384–89.
[49] Zou Taofen, "Mei boshi de gongxian," *Shenghuo* 5, no. 27 (1930): 490-93.
[50] Wu, "Public Discourse."
[51] Zhou, "Lüelun Mei Lanfang ji qita," 169.
[52] Dafeng Sha, *Tianfeng bao*, January 20, 1932.

This was because, at this time, foreign influence was not enough to capture both camps of Chinese intellectuals. The nuance here is that two opposing factions arose from the New Culture Movement, and American approval for *dan* actors could only change the opinions of one of them. As Arif Dirlik explains in his article "The New Culture Movement Revisited", the New Culture Movement gave rise to both the Liberals, a group which believed in notably American values like liberty and individualism, led by Hu Shi who was ostensibly pro-West, and the Communists, a more radical group which embraced iconoclasm and revolutionary change, led by Cheng Duxiu and Li Dazhao, to whom the capitalist United States was anathema.[53]

For the Liberals, the United States' approval of *dan* actors meant that they must follow suit by praising or at least accepting Mei's work and the Peking Opera as a quintessential part of Chinese culture. Indeed, it was Hu Shi, the leading figure of the Liberals himself, who helped to select plays and write introductions for Mei's performances in the United States.[54] This demonstrates that the United States' acceptance of Mei's proposal to perform was enough to elicit the Liberals' firm approval of his *dan* act. This American influence on the Liberals can explain the improvements in Chinese perceptions of *dan* actors between 1930–34 that previous scholars have used to justify their arguments.[55]

However, the Communists were the group that could explain some intellectuals' continued opposition to *dan* actors despite American praise. By the 1930s, they had become a

[53] Arif Dirlik, "The New Culture Movement Revisited: Anarchism and the Idea of Social Revolution in New Culture Thinking," *Modern China* 11, no. 3 (1985): 252–59, https://doi.org/10.1177/009770048501100301.
[54] Shuwen Cao, "A Peking Opera LP Record at the Princeton University Library," *Journal of Cultural Interaction in East Asia* 13, no. 2 (2022): 147-157, https://doi.org/10.1515/jciea-2022-0008.
[55] Goldstein, "Nationalisation of the Peking Opera," 382.

strong voice in the Chinese discourse. Many intellectuals had aligned themselves or sympathised with the Communists as they became "disillusioned and frustrated" with problems the Liberals and the far-right Kuomintang failed to solve and "turned to ideological radicalism and political revolution."[56] To these more radical individuals, the opinions of the United States held little sway. This was because before 1936, Communists opposed the Americans as an imperial power trying to meddle in Chinese politics and society with ill intent, and thus they did not see the United States as the same cultural authority that they were to the Liberals.[57] Therefore, intellectuals on this more radical side of the New Culture Movement could remain adamantly opposed to *dan* actors despite positive American opinions of the performers, and this accounts for the opposition to *dan* from 1930–34. This more radical and adamant group could only be convinced by a different international cultural authority, one that aligned more closely with their communist ideals.

Indeed, in 1935, when Mei went on tour in the Soviet Union, these dissenting voices were stifled. Just as in the US, he received great critical acclaim from prominent Soviet practitioners, some of whom compared the "Mei Lanfang Performance System" with Germany's Brechtian theatre and Russia's Stanislavski's Naturalism — the world's two most highly renowned, distinctive, and internationally recognised models of drama.[58] Needless to say, this was a decisive affirmation of the cultural and national value of *dan* performances in Peking Opera by the Soviets. Furthermore, in a panel discussion of Mei's performances among prominent Russian theatre practitioners, the great Soviet film director Sergei Eisenstein even

[56] Young-Tsu Wong, "The Fate of Liberalism in Revolutionary China: Chu Anping and His Circle, 1946-1950," *Modern China* 19, no. 4 (1993): 458, http://www.jstor.org/stable/189116.
[57] Michael M. Sheng, "America's Lost Chance in China? A Reappraisal of Chinese Communist Policy Toward the United States Before 1945," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 29 (1993): 138, https://doi.org/10.2307/2949955.
[58] Wu, "Public Discourse."

compared Mei's practice to that of Shakespeare's, and praised his great virtuosity, commenting that he had "an absolutely startling ability to function in all registers of art."[59]

It was at this point that Chinese discourse around *dan* actors' images experienced a fuller shift to affirmation, which was accompanied swiftly by heterosexualisation. According to Wu Xinmiao, previous to Mei's visit to the Soviet Union, literary works focused "mainly on criticism of Mei Lanfang and old theatre,' but after, "it centred on reports of success and the comments of the Soviet Union trip by Mei and his associates."[60] By the 1940s, this affirmation had erased homosexual stigmas around *dan* actors. Literature and even tabloid articles about *dan* homosexuality had become rare.[61] What appeared in replacement of these writings that attacked *dan* homosexuality was a wave of literature that instead denied entirely the existence of homosexual relationships between the actors and patrons.

One of the first of these heterosexualising writings was the 1937 short story *Tu* (rabbit) by prominent author Lao She. According to Kang, in this work, Lao She "denied the sexual relationship between the *dan* actor and his supporter" and "disputed the characterisation of *dan* as . . . men who engaged in sexual relationships with other men."[62] Significantly, Lao She had been strongly influenced by New Culture thought, famously writing that "May Fourth (the New Culture Movement's famous protest) gave me a new soul."[63] However, despite his loyalty to the New Culture Movement, his denial of the homosexuality of *dan* actors was directly at odds with the Movement's exposure and vilification of it. This reveals a second shift — from

[59] Janne Risum, "Minutes of 'Evening to Sum Up the Conclusions' from the Stay of the Theatre of Mei Lanfang in the Soviet Union," Asian Theatre J. 37, no. 2 (2020): 328–75.
[60] Wu, "Public Discourse."
[61] Kang, *Obsession*, 135.
[62] Kang, *Obsession*, 140.
[63] Qingchun Shu, "Wusi geilewo shenmo," in *All Works of Lao She*, 649-50 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1995), 649–50.

homophobic criticism to heterosexualising denial — in the intellectual discourse about *dan* homosexuality, occurring exactly as both the Soviets and the West began to praise the *dan* actor.

Indeed, there is a temporal match between when this rhetoric changed and when foreign influence became sufficient to satisfy both branches of the New Culture intellectuals. The Liberals aligned with the Americans, and the Communists with the Soviets. Therefore, the Americans' acclaim for *dan* performance in the 1930s changed the stance of the Liberals, while the Communists remained adamantly opposed to *dan* until 1935 when the Soviets voiced their approval. The timeline at which intellectual factions changed stances matched directly with the time at which their respective cultural authorities showed their affirmation for *dan* actors — a phenomenon unlikely to be a coincidence.

A closer examination of post-1935 heterosexualising *dan* literature further reveals direct connections to foreign rhetoric. There were broadly two ways in which *dan* actors were heterosexualised: masculinisation — which, in the heteronormative Republic of China, detracted from their homosexual image — and nationalisation — which painted *dan* actors as symbols of the nation rather than Lu Xun's pre-1935 conception of them as homosexual consorts of imperial oppressors.[64] Revealingly, both of these two narratives first appeared in the foreign commentary about *dan* actors, appearing to have later been imported and replicated in Chinese intellectual works.

The nationalisation narrative appeared in the play *Qiu haitang* (begonia, also the main character's name), a commercial success written in 1942, which described a *dan* actor who resisted the homosexual harassment of male officials and pursued a relationship with a young

[64] Zhou, "Lun zhaoxiang zhilei," 167–75.

and educated woman. According to Kang, there were various evocative pieces of symbolism including the name of the main character himself, which identified the character to symbolise the Chinese nation.[65] This nationalisation of the *dan* actor was present also in another successful play, *Fengxueye guiren* (the man who returned on a snowy night), which depicted a *dan* actor eloping together with his sponsor's concubine to "stop being rich people's toys" and "join the effort to save the nation."[66] These two works of theatre exemplified the theme of 'nationalising' *dan* actors to make them representative of the Chinese cultural identity.

This idea — that *dan* actors represented China — was not a Chinese one. Before the influx of foreign compliments of *dan* performance, many Chinese individuals did not even see *dan* actors or the Peking Opera as a representative of China. As Tian analyses in *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth-Century International Stage*, some believed that "it was an absurd and sad thing to have Mei represent Chinese art abroad" and even saw this representation as a "pernicious habit".[67]

Instead, this idea is predominantly found in American and Soviet rhetoric from the 1930s. For instance, the 1930 New York Times article which referred to Mei Lanfang as an "ambassador in art" conveyed the idea that the *dan* actor was an ambassador and a representative of China's national pride.[68] Similarly, the way Soviet practitioners labelled Mei's *dan* act as a system of performance comparable to that of Russia's Naturalism and Germany's Brechtian theatre also affirmed *dan* and Peking Opera as a Chinese national symbol. These ideas soon spread into China through the reporting of major Chinese newspapers and magazines like *Shen bao*, *Da wanbao*, *Chen bao*, *Yong bao*, and *Dagong bao* as they quoted notable foreign

[65] Kang, *Obsession*, 142.
[66] Kang, *Obsession*, 142.
[67] Tian, *Mei Lanfang and the International Stage*, 62.
[68] Atkinson, "Mei Lan-fang, Ambassador in Art."

figures' compliments to Mei Lanfang.[69] Thus, it is highly likely that the Western and Soviet characterisation of *dan* actors as a Chinese national symbol entered the post–1935 Chinese discourse, and was responsible for 'nationalising' *dan* actors in Chinese literature.[70]

This makes foreign influence culpable for the heterosexualisation of *dan* actors. As Kang pointed out in *Obsession*, nationalisation was invariably tied to heterosexualisation: after "Peking Opera had been elevated to the status of a national opera", the homosexual relationships between actors and officials "could no longer be recklessly suggested in public".[71] Thus, to rid *dan* actors of their homosexual stigma in consideration of their now-irreplaceable place in the national consciousness, intellectuals began to actively heterosexualise their image in Chinese literature.[72] The West's place in this causal link is that it was what elevated the Peking Opera to national prominence and thus scrutiny in the first place, making it the precursor of its heterosexualisation.

Aside from nationalisation, the alternative rhetoric of masculinisation also caused the heterosexualisation of *dan* actors, and it too appeared first in foreign discourse. In "Moustache as Resistance", Guangda Wu describes how Chinese newspapers juxtaposed the masculine image of actors without makeup and their feminine onstage appearance. Wu notes that this encouraged readers to see the *dan* actors' identity as women onstage as "fictional, while comprehending the gentlemen offstage as 'natural'" and "essentially true or real."[73] This masculinised and distanced *dan* actors from their effeminate appearance. Kang also

[69] Tian, *Mei Lanfang and the International Stage*, 126.
[70] Wu, "Public Discourse."
[71] Kang, *Obsession*, 133.
[72] Kang, *Obsession*, 134.
[73] Guanda Wu, "Mustache as Resistance: Representation and Reception of Mei Lanfang's Masculinity," *TDR* (1988-) 60, no. 2 (2016): 131, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43835057.

corroborates this, writing that the image of *dan* actors saw a "growing emphasis on masculinity" during the 1940s.

Like nationalisation, this masculinisation of *dan* actors was also an idea first to be found in the West, indicating that foreign influence was a likely source for this narrative too. The *New York Times* hailed Mei Lanfang as "A Great *King* of Actors" after his performances of female impersonation in 1930, complimenting him as a male performer, rather than fixating on the femininity of his art.[74] With Chinese newspapers hanging on to every word, this Western commentary embedded with the masculinisation of *dan* actors made its way into the Chinese discourse. This rhetoric of masculinisation then heterosexualises *dan* actors, because, as Tian wrote in 2000, their association with femininity was the premise for their homoerotic attractions.[75]

This similarity of narratives between the foreign commentary during the early 1930s and the heterosexualising *dan* literature of the late 1930s and 1940s means that not only did the post-1935 heterosexualising trend bear a temporal correlation to the foreign appraisal of the *dan* actor, but it also used borrowed rhetoric from the foreign commentary itself to heterosexualise the actors. This suggests that the heterosexualising second shift of perceptions around *dan* actors was also a product of international influence.

Conclusion

The rise of *dan* actors and the Peking Opera from an analogy of homosexual prostitution to its current heterosexual glory took far more than economic growth and the work of one man

[74] Matthews, "China's Stage Idol."
[75] Tian, "Male Dan," 82.

as previously suggested. Instead, this ascension involved a collective bowing of heads by Chinese intellectuals to the Western and Soviet cultural authorities and the erasure of all homosexuality from the Opera's actors. The twin changes in the discourse around *dan* actors paint a more nuanced picture of how Chinese intellectuals imported Western ideas. Unlike the prevailing characterisation of foreign influence in Chinese thought, there was not just a static absorption of Western ideas in the form of books and research. which was the source of the vilification of *dan* homosexuality 1910–30, but also a dynamic attempt to 'catch up' and align with the changing popular opinions of the West and the Soviets, which drove the heterosexualisation of the *dan* actor in 1930–45. In the end, both of these methods through which Chinese intellectuals attempted to align the Chinese discourse with Western ones altered the sexuality of Chinese culture to make for the heterosexualised Peking Opera today.

In the modern day, the impact of the intellectuals' Western ideas on *dan* actors remains palpable in Peking Opera. The *dan* role, in both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China, faces extinction due to socially conservative ideology that largely grew prominent during the 1920s; the very same ideology that was informed by the import of Western thought in the 1920s.[76] Fewer Opera masters are willing to teach new *dan* performers, and the likes of Mei Lanfang never reappeared to rejuvenate interest in the *dan* role. Perhaps this essay overlooks a third wave of change in perceptions towards *dan* actors, one in which they vanish entirely from the Chinese cultural consciousness due to social attitudes caused by deeply ingrained Western homophobia — a change that is unfolding in the present day.

This still-ongoing history of how *dan* identity changed in the Chinese intellectual imagination speaks to a wider context of homophobic cultural colonialism throughout Asia, in

[76] Tian, "Male Dan", 92.

which the West ingrained hateful and marginalising rhetoric into the societies which it oppresses, erased any representation of homosexuality in their cultures, and irrevocably damaged parts of tradition that have been associated with homoeroticism for most of history. The Chinese tale of *dan* actors is not an isolated one and should be connected with similar histories of other nations to form a fuller understanding of how Western homophobia shaped culture, literature, and art throughout the countries that it has oppressed.

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Lian Cheng Bi was a social commentary novel written by playwright Li Yu, which had great emphasis on critiquing the status quo of 17th century Qing China, including descriptions of a wide variety of characters of different social positions. As such, it is a valuable source to consider for understanding the perceptions of *dan* actors in ancient China, especially considering that Li himself was a playwright, meaning that he likely had more realistic conceptions of *dan* actors than most.

Shu, Qingchun. "Wusi geilewo shenmo." In *All Works of Lao She* (老舍全集), 649-50. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1995.

Sha, Dafeng. "——." *Tianfeng Bao*, January 20, 1932.

This newspaper was one of the most influential papers in Tianjin during the 1930s, and could credibly represent parts of public opinions towards *dan* actors during this time.

Wang, Shunu. *Zhongguo changji shi*. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1986.

Wu, Xinmiao. "Public Discourse Before and After Mei Lanfang's 1935 Soviet Union Visit." *Du Shu* 42, no. 3 (2020): Page numbers not displayed on the journal website.

This article noted a plethora of Chinese and Soviet primary sources around the 1930s, including Soviet practitioners' proposal of the 'Mei Lanfang Performance System' and quotations from *Literature Weekly* and Sergei Eisenstein. The page numbers of the article are

unknown because it was reposted on the website *Jiemian*, which does not show the page numbers from the journal it was taken from.

Xiao Tongqing. *Fin-de-siècle Thought and Modern Chinese Literature*. Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000.

This book analysed a variety of Chinese primary sources from the New Culture Movement, including the remarks of Chen Duxiu on the "debased and weak" character of Chinese people, which was used in this essay.

Xu, Ke. *Qing bai lei chao*. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1916. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.

The *Qing Unofficial Reference Book* was a history of the Qing dynasty written in imitation of similar histories of the Song and the Ming dynasties widely covering events, individuals, and opinions. Xu Ke, a scholar-official of the late Qing, used various other historians' works, journals and newspapers, and archival information kept by his family to create the work. Even though the truth of such information is hard to verify, his comments on the social standing of *dan* actors, which this essay references, have a high level of credibility since Xu was a member of the Qing dynasty himself. Therefore, even if his conclusions were subject to his own biases, this was to some extent representative of the QIng.

Yang, Youtian. "The Issue with Same-Sex Love." In *A Collection of Discussions On the Issue of Homosexuality*. Shanghai: Beixin shuju, 1930.

Yu, Muxia. "Tongxing lian'ai." *Shanghai linzhao,* 1933.

Shanghai Linzhao was a tabloid newspaper in written vernacular, which the New Culture Movement proposed. In it, Yu Muxia mainly wrote short articles on the changing society of Shanghai and the lives of average citizens, to entertain the readers of the tabloid. In

"Tongxing Lian'ai", he introduces the general public to the concept that homosexuality is a type of sexual perversion. This not only revealed his homophobia as a New Culture intellectual, which is analysed in the essay, but it also showed that the general public's opinions towards homosexuality were probably ambivalent to start with, considering that Yu treated the issue as something akin to entertainment which could be included in his tabloid article.

Zhang, Cixi. *Qingdai yandu liyuan shiliao*. Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1988.

In this book, Zhang Cixi compiles a study in documents on the city of Peking's theatre during the Qing dynasty, one of its sources being the *Orthodox Patriotic Newspaper*, which this essay uses.

Zhang, Jinfan. *Qingchao fazhishi*. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998.

This history of the legal system of the Qing dynasty contained Sheng Yilan's 1878 commentary on *dan* actors, which was used as a primary source in this essay.

Zhang, Shou. *Jinmen zaji*. Tianjin: Unknown Publisher, 1884.

Jinmen zaji was a report-style book on the social customs of the Tianjin people by Zhang Shou, who wrote on his personal experiences and readings in Tianjin, along with histories of the city which he found in official archives. He had a high level of criticality and objectivity in his writing, expressing some distaste for traditional Chinese customs and ideals like binding the feet of women and valuing male over female children. This makes him a largely credible source on the status of *dan* actors as homosexual prostitutes in Tianjin.

Zheng Zhenduo. 1929. "Dadao nanban nüzhuang de danjue; dadao danjue de daibiao ren Mei Lanfang." *Wenxue zhoubao* 8, no. 3: 62–65.

Zhou, Shuren. “Lue lun Mei Lanfang ji qita” In *Huabian wenxue*, 167-71. Shanghai: Lianhua shuju, 1936.

Zhou Shuren is referred to as Lu Xun, his pen name, in this essay, as this is what he is most widely known as.

Zhou, Shuren. “Lun zhaoxiang zhilei.” In *Fen*, 167-75. Beijing: Beixin shuju, 1929.

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Oosterhuis, Harry. “Albert Moll's Ambivalence about Homosexuality and His Marginalisation as a Sexual Pioneer.” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 28, no. 1 (2019): 1–43.

This journal article illustrates Moll’s opinions towards homosexuality, and presents primary sources to illustrate Albert Moll’s negative remarks towards it. This essay mainly focuses on those primary sources, which is why this title is labelled under this section.

Risum, Janne. "Minutes of 'Evening to Sum Up the Conclusions from the Stay of the Theatre of Mei Lanfang in the Soviet Union' at The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS) on Sunday, 14 April 1935: Introduction and Translation with Editorial Comments by Janne Risum." *Asian Theatre Journal* 37, no. 2 (2020): 328+. Gale Academic OneFile. Accessed August 5, 2023.

This is a translated and edited version of a Soviet panel meeting between the nation's most esteemed theatricians regarding Mei Lanfang's performances in his 1935 Soviet Union tour. The source provides extremely nuanced insights into the aspects of Mei's performance that the Soviets had appreciated, and is authoritative first-hand proof of a Soviet art world that was largely in consensus on the cultural value of *dan* actors in Peking Opera.

Tian, Min. "The Gentlemanly 'Leading Lady' as 'Ambassador in Art': Mei Lanfang's 1930 Tour of the United States." In *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth-Century International Stage*, 57-101. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

This journal article details Mei Lanfang's success in his 1930 American tour, and is marked as a primary source because this essay solely uses its reference to the 1924 *Literary Digest* article praising Mei Lanfang as "the Gentlemanly 'Leading Lady' of China".

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Poles and Puerto Ricans:
Immigration and Assimilation in the Pioneer Valley

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This paper attempts to explain why Polish immigrant farmers who came to the Pioneer Valley around the turn of the century assimilated more fully into the dominant culture and achieved on average greater economic success than Puerto Rican immigrant farmers who engaged in similar work in the same region roughly fifty years later. I begin by reviewing American Studies literature on assimilation dynamics to develop a framework for qualitatively evaluating how both groups changed over time. The evaluation is thereafter based on local newspaper articles and secondary ethnographic and historical literature from throughout the twentieth century, as well as interviews with the descendants of immigrants and personal accounts from local Massachusetts historians. In the vein of theoretical perspectives developed by scholars Sanchez, Bodnar, and Spickard, I conclude that the disparate outcomes experienced by the two groups is due in large part to the structural forces of postcolonial racism against Puerto Ricans in the context of global capitalism, specifically mid twentieth century urban deindustrialization. However, there is also a significant component to the disparity that I attribute to individual decision-making informed by shifting cultural values and behaviors.

My project is to evaluate and compare the experiences of two groups of rural farm workers who immigrated to the Connecticut River Valley in the twentieth century. The first group is Polish immigrants who came to the United States during the wave of "new immigration" around the turn of the century. The second group is Puerto Rican men who were drawn to the area in significant numbers during the 50s and 60s by certain contract-labor policies of the federal government.

The main focus of my work is an analysis of how the cultures of these groups changed after settling in the Valley, using methods of immigration and assimilation studies. Evaluating the extent to which a group "assimilates" is a complicated and highly subjective task, requiring normative assessment of a particular group or groups. This is a controversial enterprise today, as generalizing and essentializing ethnic or racial groups has come to be viewed critically in liberal society. As such, in the fifty years since the time period covered here, the scholarship of assimilation has become increasingly sensitive to post-colonial and post-modern discourse surrounding race and ethnicity. Although the incorporation of this awareness into assimilation studies does not preclude the necessity of defining specific groups for the purposes of analysis, it does recognize the imperial and/or colonial origins of many of these definitions. It therefore enables scholars to critique and complicate what has been historically implicit and grossly inaccurate in racial and ethnic categorization. Along these lines, scholars now take great pains to grant agency to immigrants, conceiving of their outcomes as negotiated in part by the immigrants themselves, as opposed to something imposed exclusively by impersonal social forces or predetermined by supposedly inherent ethnic traits.

However, a consequence of postcolonial thought's acknowledgment of the role of racial conceptions is its tendency to present a monocausal interpretation of assimilation shaped entirely

by racial dynamics. In his work on the historiography of US immigration[1] and assimilation studies, Couvares critiques scholars such as Paul Spickard, who argue for an exclusive focus on "race-making" and colonial, capitalist dynamics in understanding modern inequality and our current conceptions of difference.[2] In support of his idea, Spickard points out that immigration studies historically have paid too much attention to European immigration to the US and the East Coast, and have neglected areas like the West Coast and the Southwest where more racial-minority immigrants settled. Although true that white immigration is overrepresented in the scholarship, this does not justify Spickard's proposal to abandon older models of assimilation in favor of models based solely on race. While Spickard's lens may be applicable to the experience of Puerto Rican immigrants, it is insufficient and less relevant regarding this study of Polish immigrants. Therefore, immigration scholarship that predates this shift, in addition to more recent post-colonial and postmodernist thought, will be employed to construct an analytical framework with ample breadth to evaluate both populations. This framework aims to moderate the particular focus of more race-oriented conceptions by maintaining the critical awareness of the role imperial and colonial ideology has played and continues to play in immigration and assimilation studies.

The basic terms, definitions, and categories of analysis are derived from Milton Gordon's foundational work, *Assimilation in American Life*[3], which attempts to explain the dynamics of "ethnic" integration into American society with a sociological framework. As such, it provides a comprehensive structure to analyze assimilation. Gordon divides society into primary and secondary "groups." The primary encompasses personal relationships, such as social circles or

[1] Francis Couvares, "Immigrant Assimilation or Transnational Race-Making?" (unpublished paper, 2023).
[2] Spickard, Paul. *Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism in American History and Identity.* New York: Routledge, 2009.
[3] Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

smaller community organizations. The secondary encompasses impersonal relationships, like those in administrative or business contexts. An ethnic group is distinguished from other groups in terms of exclusivity, as members of ethnic groups are said to interact exclusively with people of their own ethnicity. In other words, an ethnic group encapsulates all its own subgroups, enabling members of such subgroups to never interact personally or impersonally with anyone outside that group. Under this conception, Gordon also sees the social structure as fragmented into ethnic "sub-societies" that exist in parallel, but do not overlap much. He then further refines these sub-societies with the addition of class-based designations, creating a matrix of coexistent "ethclasses," each with its own distinct cultural practices and economic characteristics.

Gordon's ethclass model of assimilation also includes the "core group," defined as the dominant ethclass in a society to which, he assumes, all other ethclasses assimilate. For instance, in the United States, the white middle class generally has been the core group, and Gordon's work takes for granted that other ethnic groups acculturate in relation to it. To illustrate the ways in which an ethclass might adapt to the core group, Gordon introduces a structure of seven different forms of assimilation: behavioral or cultural, structural, marital, identificational, attitude receptional, behavior receptional, and civic. Behavioral/cultural assimilation describes a change in ethclass cultural patterns to match the core group. Structural assimilation refers to incorporation into core group institutions. Marital assimilation refers to the intermarriage of ethclass members with core group members. Identificational assimilation refers to the "development of a sense of people-hood based exclusively on the host society." Attitudinal and behavioral assimilation refer to, respectively, the absence of prejudice and discrimination against the assimilating ethclass. Finally, Gordon defines civic assimilation as "the absence of value or

power conflict," meaning that once achieved, the minority ethclass would no longer resist particular values or power systems of the core group.

While using Gordon's basic analytical framework, this study also incorporates concepts from other scholars to complicate his essentialist notion of ethnicity. The starting point for Gordon's thought is his view that "the sense of ethnicity proved to be hardy," or in other words, his formations operate under the assumption that ethnicity is rigidly defined.[4] Although recognizing that individuals and even whole groups can change their cultures, Gordon's conception of assimilation as a linear change from one internally consistent culture to another is too simplistic. Especially monolithic in Goron's view is the "host culture," or core group, which he contends is singular, immutable, and everlasting – inevitably absorbing all other cultures into itself.

A more flexible alternative framework is advanced by Thomas Archdeacon, who uses a model of "resistance and accommodation" to explain assimilation dynamics.[5] He posits that the degree to which a particular ethclass adopts the core group culture is dependent on their resistance to assimilation, which in turn is affected by the core group's willingness to accommodate the newcomer's culture. In this sense, Archdeacon views the process as a push and pull rather than an inexorable flow in one direction. Therefore, he credits the immigrants with some degree of *agency* in the assimilation process, a paradigm that has become a hallmark and priority of immigration scholarship over the past forty years or so. Bodnar, one of Archdeacon's contemporaries, similarly argues that immigrants actively use their own culture as a set of tools to help them navigate and make sense of their new environments, and in doing so take charge of the extent to which they adapt to the host society.

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[4] Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 25.
[5] Thomas J. Archdeacon, *Becoming American: An Ethnic History* (New York: Free Press; London: Collier Macmillan, 1983).

Even while they insist on the value and strength of immigrant cultures in the face of Anglo-American hegemony, these scholars ultimately still see all ethnicities largely as static and durable units, which individuals and populations can move between with varying degrees of awareness. George Sanchez offers a critique of this assumption in *Becoming Mexican American*, claiming that "culture" has been "one of the most hotly debated terms… throughout the twentieth century."[6] In his analysis, Sanchez follows the example of more radical scholarship, in which "culture is not what preexists [capitalism], but is how humans whose lives are structurally defined by institutionally enacted capitalist principles respond to them in their everyday life and experience." In this capacity, Sanchez sees culture as "contested, temporal, and emergent."[7] His conception allows for "the possibility of multiple identities and contradictory positions" within an individual, and he sets up this idea in opposition to the views of scholars like Gordon or even Bodnar, whose view he refers to as the "bipolar model of changing cultures." Critically, Sanchez believes that the bipolar model "treat[s] contradictions as temporary features that [are] certain to disappear with the passage of time and generations."[8] In his own view, Sanchez sees these contradictions instead as crucially important entities that have the ability to represent a wholly new culture, related to but ultimately divorced from both its culture of origin and the culture of the core group.

My own qualification of Sanchez's argument rests on the idea that cultural contradiction, in this context, is inevitably a relative term, as it only has meaning within the bipolar conception of assimilation. Contradictions can only exist between cultures that are seen as immutable and in opposition, and therefore by accepting and incorporating the existence of cultural contradictions,

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[6] George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 8.
[7] Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, 8-9.
[8] Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, 8.

Sanchez conforms to the bipolar model he critiques. To demonstrate this inconsistency, imagine a descendant of a Polish immigrant that is atheist or agnostic, but still eats kielbasa and dances to Polka music on the holidays. This "Polish-American" would be seen by Sanchez as the embodiment of a contradiction, and as evidence for the emergence of a brand new and durable culture, as this person simultaneously displays elements of American culture and elements of Polish culture. To Sanchez this cannot be dismissed as a passing cultural phase, but as a new reality that came about as a reaction to a particular social world. However, this view is based on the assumption that catholicism is fundamental to Polish culture, and that Polka music is fundamentally un-American, as otherwise there could be no contradiction to begin with.

The salient problem in this conception is its implicit fixation on durability and persistence. Although Sanchez, like Bodnar, recognizes the prominent role of global political and social forces in constructing identity, what he ignores is the *continual* effect of broader trends on all cultures and individuals. Along with a degree of personal agency, these impersonal forces are the ultimate cause of cultural development, and their universal, albeit variable, effect on *all cultures* causes perpetual change. Therefore, assimilation cannot be seen as something that terminates, and it cannot be seen as something influenced exclusively by cultural interchange.

The view of acculturation used in this paper's analysis rests primarily on Sanchez's view that there can be no absolute definition of culture or ethnicity. Culture can only be deemed somewhat stable within clearly defined temporal and spatial bounds. Following the example of Bodnar, immigration, and therefore cultural change, is seen as affected significantly by socio-political forces and power structures, specifically the dynamics and logics of global capitalism that inform decision-making at society's micro, meso and macro levels. Incorporated within these global structures are persistent post-colonial political, social, and economic

formations, which include deeply-rooted racism and gender prejudices that cause uneven effects on privileged and under-privileged populations. Although structural discrimination is certainly not the only factor in evaluating immigration and assimilation dynamics, as scholars like Spickard may suggest, it is nevertheless an aspect of analysis in this field that cannot be overlooked.

Immigrants from the area of modern day Poland began arriving in the Pioneer Valley in significant numbers "in the third quarter of the 19th century" accompanying political and economic disruptions in Europe.[9] These immigrants included people from a variety of ethnic groups, such Ukranians and Lithuanians, although at the time Americans tended to refer to all people from Eastern Europe generally as "Polanders." It is John Bodnar's position that the development of global capitalism in the 19th century upset structural conditions in Europe and caused mass migration, especially Eastern Europe in the latter half of the century. He writes that this was due to the transition from traditional subsistence agriculture to market production in particular. Land ownership patterns changed drastically and often became consolidated, due to the popular notion that standardized and mechanized agricultural practices would ultimately be more efficient and lead to higher yields.[10] Part of this transition was related to population increases following industrialization, as well as the emancipation of serfs in the region around this time. Bodnar claims that despite what Eastern European reformers intended, emancipation did not necessarily lead to widespread land ownership, as inheritance conventions dictated that a father's land be divided equally among his sons upon his death, causing family plots to become

[9] "The Incoming of the Poles," *Greenfield Gazette and Courier,* May 26, 1900.
[10] John E. Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 24.

smaller and smaller over time. This made subsistence farming increasingly difficult, especially in light of a booming population.[11]

Bodnar stresses that those who left Eastern Europe for these reasons were not necessarily the poorest of the poor, as it was only people with modest means that could afford to leave their homes. Generally an individual would sell all their property to afford the steamboat ticket to cross the Atlantic, but this was not viable for those without any property in the first place.[12] On the opposite side of the spectrum, it was uncommon for people with moderate wealth to make the journey, as they had less incentive to leave.[13]

Although it was not cheap or easy to get across the ocean, it is likely that the process became easier after the turn of the century as Eastern European governments grew more lenient. In the early 20th century, steerage steamboat tickets could cost between $30-35,[14] which, in terms of an average wage for a Polish farm worker in the Valley, could take years to pay off. In an interview with Walter Kownacki, who was born in Hatfield, Massachusetts in 1929, he relates how his father had worked for a Hatfield farmer who had sponsored the journey across the Atlantic – it took Kownacki Sr. two years of farm labor to pay off the debt.[15]

Most of these personal statements from descendants of Polish immigrants attribute their ancestors' migratory motives to a lack of work in Poland and an acute labor shortage in America, which generally aligns with Bodnar's structural arguments. However, there is also a thread of debate asserting that Poles fled also due to political reasons. At the end of the 19th century Poland was split into three partitions, belonging to Russia, Prussia, and Austro-Hungary, and

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[11] Bodnar, *The Transplanted*, 30.
[12] "Interview with Josephine Skalski," interview by Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, Massachusetts, United States of America.
[13] Bodnar, *The Transplanted*.
[14] Stephen Szabados, Polish Immigration to America: When, Where, Why and How (Stephen Szabados, 2016), ch2.
[15] "Interview with Walter Kownacki," interview by Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Peter Thomas, and Michael Kline, Deerfield, Massachusetts, 2022, United States of America.

some sources indicate that in this political environment Poles faced compulsory military service and even persecution at times.[16] While this likely isn't a primary reason for mass migration, deliberate government intervention certainly played a role in alternatively restricting or enabling migration flows. There was purportedly a period where the Austro-Hungarian government passed laws preventing migration due to reports of Poles facing terrible working conditions, although that is not to say governments were concerned primarily with humanitarian issues.[17] Bodnar mentions that there were some instances of labor shortages in Eastern Europe, which posed an economic problem and caused governments to discourage out-migration.[18] Ironically, these labor shortages were due to the same commercialization efforts that were pushing people away to begin with.

However, immigration restraints were not necessarily heeded or even well-enforced by European governments. For instance, citizens were often required to obtain travel visas before leaving the country, which entailed the settling of all debts and the completion of military service, and Prussia specifically was known to station troops at the border to stop those without proper documentation.[19] But ship manifests and the proliferation of artifacts from shipping companies advertising their services to Poles demonstrates that it was nevertheless common for migrants to leave their homelands, if covertly.[20] As such, Bodnar claims that eventually governments abandoned their attempts to curtail immigration due to the overwhelming tide of people leaving the continent, and instead began to capitalize on what was clearly an unstoppable mass movement.[21] They engaged in lucrative cooperations with transportation companies, many

[16] Joseph R. Katra Jr., "A SURVEY OF THE POLISH POPULATION OF NORTHAMPTON, MA (1889-1953)" (Amherst College, 1953), 8.
[17] F. Missler Bremen Wallet, cloth wallet, The Polish Center of Discovery and Learning, Chicopee, Massachusetts, United States of America, 1899.
[18] Bodnar, *The Transplanted,* 29.
[19] Szabados, *Polish Immigration to America*, ch2.
[20] *F. Missler Bremen Wallet.*
[21] Bodnar, *The Transplanted,* 48.

of them German and American,[22] companies which came to be essential middle-men in establishing connections between the New World and the Old.[23]

In the late 19th century the Massachusetts Pioneer Valley was facing dire economic conditions. What had for centuries been a prosperous agricultural center was in recession. The Poles that were to eventually move into the region claimed almost universally that the Valley "had some of the best soil in the world," and while such statements are difficult to validate, undoubtedly the land was very fertile and had been utilized by Yankee farmers for centuries to grow grains and fruit and to raise pork and beef. Starting around the 1830s farmers began growing broomcorn in the region, and subsequently local broom manufacturing sprung up in developing industrial centers like South Deerfield.[24] It became a very profitable industry and the region grew central to the whole nation's broom industry.[25] However, Hardin claims that in time, overspeculation led to a decline and eventually production of broomcorn began to shift westward.

But the failure of the broomcorn industry did not alone lead to the economic destitution of the region. Soon after the corn bust, tobacco growing boomed and became another successful and dominant cash-crop, although this production eventually formed a speculation bubble as well that burst in much the same way as the broomcorn had.[26] In his 1975 thesis on Poles in Hadley, Massachusetts, Hardin uses Hampshire County population statistics from the census to demonstrate that in the 25 years from 1870 to 1895 the area's population saw a general decline.

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[22] *F. Missler Bremen Wallet.*
[23] Katra, *Survey of the Polish Population*, 9.
[24] Peter Hardin, "Poles and Puritans in Hadley, Massachusetts: An Historical Study of Hadley's Polish Population" (Hampshire College, 1975), ch1.
[25] Walentyna Pomasko, "Deerfield - It's Early Beauty Has Never Left [Sic]," *Tercentenary Greenfield Reporter,* June 29, 1973.
[26] However, tobacco production in the Valley would eventually become profitable again and continues in some areas to this day.

He attributes this to the "call of the city," the idea that in the face of growing industrialization and urbanization, the children of Yankee farmers had decreasing desire to carry on the agricultural tradition and instead sought more modern occupations in population centers.[27] Ironically, this could be seen as a result of the 19th century agricultural financial success with cash-crops in the Valley, as it likely contributed to Yankee farmers' ability to educate their children at a higher level which in turn encouraged a departure from traditional livelihoods.

Regardless, by the time Polish immigrants began arriving in the region, Yankee farmers were aging and they had no children around to work their land or take over their farms once they died. This created a widely recognized social problem, which the Greenfield Gazette and Courier referred to as "the abandoned farm question,"[28] where empty land proliferated across the countryside. The solution was to import labor, which was accomplished using a handful of different methods. Initially, this importation was orchestrated by independent labor agents, characters now largely seen as nefarious, who made their living by essentially mortgaging Eastern European laborers to farmers who needed extra hands. A handful of these agents are known by name, the most infamous being Charles T. Parsons. He was said to have concocted the idea to travel to New York and intercept immigrants right from off the boat, telling them "as pleasing stories as was necessary to make the Poles see the Connecticut River Valley as the promised land."[29] Parsons would advance the men money to pay for their travel to the Valley, as well as sell them to the highest bidding farmer once they reached the Valley. While they were waiting to be purchased, these Poles, who spoke no English, were said to have been kept in barns. There are even stories claiming Parsons kept Poles "tightly bound,"[30] and in one instance

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[27] Hardin, *Poles and Puritans*, ch1.
[28] Greenfield Gazette and Courier, "The Incoming of the Poles."
[29] Boston Globe, "Poles Prosper Where Yankees Failed," June 29, 1902.
[30] Stefan Włoszczewski, *History of Polish American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 23.

he was reported to have chained a number of Poles to the back of a wagon.[31] Eventually, Parsons was arrested in 1888 for his inhumane practices, although allegedly he single-handedly brought thousands of Poles to work in the Valley.[32]

Once Polish farm workers became established in the Valley, they would often send for other family members and sponsor the journeys with their own earnings, a practice which ultimately made the local labor agent business irrelevant by the turn of the century.[33] However, it was not easy for the Poles to attain the financial stability to make this possible – it would often take years of virtual indentured servitude for them to pay off the predatory loans provided for them by labor agents, and meanwhile they lived in oppressive conditions. Yankee newspaper articles from the time, although they were certainly biased against the Poles who were widely considered to be racially inferior, characterized their living conditions as dirty and overcrowded.[34] Observers put special emphasis on a common Polish practice where newly arrived immigrants would live as lodgers in the homes of more well-established Poles, who rented out rooms to supplement their income. An excerpt from the Dillingham Commission purports that "in these houses, two, or perhaps three, families of average size are frequently sheltered. The sanitary arrangements are seldom considered… Single men are crowded into small attic rooms, where as many as 6 men were found sleeping in a room with 1 window and 3 small beds."[35] Often Yankee sources attribute these living conditions to Polish moral destitution, or alternatively as evidence of a less developed culture. Balch writes that Polish wage-laborers were considered dirty and drunken, although this sometimes manifested among Yankees as a sort of detached sympathy. This attitude is present in Brunner's work, who claims that some Yankees

[31] Katra, *Survey of the Polish Population*, 13.
[32] Boston Globe, "Poles Prosper."
[33] Emily Greene Balch, *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1910), ch12.
[34] Balch, *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, 342.
[35] William Paul Dillingham, "Immigrants in Industries, Part 24: Recent Immigrants in Agriculture," *American Centuries Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association Website,* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911).

considered the Polish workers to be treated little better than slaves, in that they were ill-fed, ill-housed, and overworked – he even lamented the corporal punishment farmers inflicted.[36]

Despite challenging initial conditions, Polish immigrants were able to effectively assimilate into the culture of the core group in the Pioneer Valley after two generations had elapsed. In the context of Gordon's framework of the seven modes of assimilation, the Poles achieved a significant degree of conformity in a majority of these categories. The only mode in which Poles did not effectively assimilate after two generations was in terms of intermarriage with other ethnic groups, but this too followed after another few decades.[37]

Brunner's work on Sunderland illustrates the social climate that had developed between Poles and non-Poles in the Valley by around 1930. Brunner suggests that Polish enclaves in Valley cities such as Greenfield and Northampton had all but disappeared by this point (although other sources qualify this point), and that resentment among Yankees for Polish people had become a minority opinion.[38] Generally speaking, Brunner believes that the Poles' steadily improving economic conditions considerably improved their relationship with Yankees, which is strongly supported by other sources. Polish enclaves and their broad social webs had largely been centered around fraternal organizations and church groups, wherein members relied on each other for economic help during the early years of their time in America. However, these groups tended to disintegrate and lose members, at least in urban centers, as Poles gradually got to be more financially independent. As a result, the ties holding the Polish-American social world together began to break down and enable their integration into Anglo society.

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[36] Edmund De Schweinitz Brunner, "Sunderland," in *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 214.
[37] Brunner, "Sunderland."
[38] Brunner, "Sunderland," 232.

Turners Falls, for instance, had two Polish social organizations in the 1920s that were committed to the economic support of the community there,[39] and likewise "The Sunderland Society of Sons of Poland and Lithuania" was created to provide welfare and employment to the slavs of Sunderland.[40] The Society of St. George, a Polish Catholic organization in the Valley, was in 1898 known in Northampton to pay between $4 and $6 a week to struggling families in the case of emergencies like sickness, death, or unemployment. The St. George Society simultaneously served as a source of social unity, as it was a gathering place for the dispersed Polish community in Northampton which eventually formed its own parish church. As its congregation grew over the first decades of the century, various devotional fraternities formed out of it. This further emphasizes the importance of the parish as a Polish social space.[41] Some Polish organizations emerged with the express purpose of helping their members naturalize and obtain their citizenship papers,[42] such as the Polish Naturalization Club of Northampton, founded in 1906, or a similar one that emerged in Chicopee a few years before.[43]

Eventually, in the context of the patriotic fervor and anti-immigrant sentiment that swept the nation around the First World War, these naturalization efforts assumed a more feverish pitch. Patriotic rhetoric began to appear as propaganda in many aspects of Polish life, including in the YMCA, industrial classes, citizens committees, patriotic festivals, and especially in public school curriculum.[44] An article from the Springfield Republican in 1914 suggests that this state-sponsored assimilation campaign was supported by Yankees, as one journalist wrote that "it now remains for us to invade them with knowledge, education, democracy, and American

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[39] "Will Visit Native Land," *Greenfield Recorder,* January 17, 1920.
[40] "Poles Organize," *Greenfield Gazette and Courier,* January 4, 1904.
[41] Katra, *Survey of the Polish Population*, 36.
[42] Katra, *Survey of the Polish Population*, 49.
[43] Edward Kirk Titus, "The Pole In The Land Of The Puritan," *New England Magazine,* January 1903.
[44] Edward R. Kantowicz and John J. Bukowczyk, "And My Children Did Not Know Me: A History of the Polish-Americans," *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 2 (1988): 64.

ideals."[45] The movement certainly met with some success, especially among the younger generation, who around this time were found to be disagreeing with their parents' "stubborn polishness" and unwillingness to Americanize.[46] An article in the Greenfield Recorder from 1920 claims that after the war, most Poles in Turners Falls who had been planning to return to their homeland decided against it, and that the only two who had left "plan[ned] to come back to the land of liberty," suggesting a growing patriotism during the war years. The article also mentions that the "Polish children [who] in large numbers attend the schools… not only become better educated themselves, but diffuse their learning among their parents, giving them new ideas about this land and its people."[47] Such language implies that public school efforts to indoctrinate Polish children into American lifeways were yielding fruit.

There is ample evidence to suggest that by this point, many Poles actively wanted to Americanize. Many adult immigrants were very excited about the prospect of becoming American citizens, industriously attending night classes to learn English so they could pass their citizenship exams. Edie Bourbeau described in an interview how her father had proudly undergone this process, and she illustrates the point by recalling an instance where he became frantic and was reduced to tears after having briefly lost track of his papers.[48] Walter Bakula shared similar sentiments in his account, claiming that acquiring citizenship gave Poles a feeling of belonging as well as something that could prove their right to live and work in America.[49] Some were even ashamed of their Polish identity in the face of American hegemony. Carol Gritz remarked in her interview that her aunts Ninnie and Mildred changed their names to Monica and

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[45] "Coming of Poles to America," *Springfield Republican,* February 15, 1914.
[46] Kantowicz and Bukowczyk, "And My Children Did Not Know Me," 72.
[47] "Will Visit Native Land," Greenfield Recorder, January 17, 1920.
[48] "Interview with Edie Bourbeau," interview by Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and Sara Campbell, Montague, Massachusetts, United States of America, April 7, 1994.
[49] "Interview with Walter Bakula," interview by Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and Sara Campbell, Montague, Massachusetts, United States of America.

Amelia respectively to make them sound more American – they were embarrassed to tell people they were Polish at all.[50]

This suggests that Poles had come to embody Gordon's identificational and structural forms of assimilation, in the sense that they were starting to identify with American nationalism and were being formally admitted into the nation with full rights. Behavioral assimilation is also present, manifesting through the general "adopt[ion of] American modes and fashions with regard to dress and manner of living," and the behavior of Polish schoolchildren: "the casual observer in the schools sees no differences in the aptitude or general behavior of the children, and the teachers are not conscious of any notable differences."[51] As for civic assimilation, which Gordon defines as the elimination of resentment among immigrants regarding the power structure of the core group, there is no evidence to suggest that Poles ever harbored this sort of feeling about Yankees, despite their structural disadvantage upon arrival. Hardin concludes his thesis with the claim that "thankfulness lies close to the heart of their patriotism." He believed that the Poles were grateful for the economic opportunities they had access to in the Valley, which suggests that even initially they did not harbor resentment for the power that the Anglo-Americans held over them.[52]

Puerto Ricans arrived to the Valley in large numbers for agricultural labor after the Second World War due to a cooperation between the Puerto Rican Department of Labor and the Federal government, who jointly created a program providing seasonal contract labor for Puerto Rican migrants stateside. García-Colón writes that because of the socio-political climate at the

[50] "Interview with Carol Gritz," interview by Gabriel Proia, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States of America, July 26, 2023.
[51] Dillingham, "Immigrants in Industries."
[52] Hardin, *Poles and Puritans*, conclusion.

time, importing Puerto Rican labor was almost universally popular among Americans. Similar to the social pattern among Yankee farmers at the end of the 19th century, around the mid-twentieth century urbanization and improving economic means meant waning interest in agricultural work among the second and third generation of Eastern European immigrants.[53] One newspaper source claims that a contributing factor to this was growing union power following the war, which ensured that factory jobs in the Valley, especially skilled ones, came to offer much higher wages for locals. This provided an attractive alternative to farm work, thereby increasing demand for agricultural labor.[54] Puerto Rico, meanwhile, had very few jobs to offer. Unemployment on the island was high and the population was beset by crippling poverty due to centuries of economic exploitation and, according to García-Colón, a failure on the part of the Puerto Rican government to develop their own manufacturing sector.[55]

The solution for all parties was to encourage migrant labor, which would alleviate some of the island's poverty by exporting the unemployed, while theoretically infusing more money into its economy when workers returned with their earnings. It would also allow for the continued profitability of the tobacco industry in the Connecticut River Valley, and satisfy political tensions arising from importing truly foreign immigrant labor, such as from Mexico or Jamaica, which was a common practice prior to the popularization of Puerto Rican labor. A Valley farmer is quoted in the Springfield Republican: "the U.S. Department of Labor told us, 'What are you doing, hiring Jamaicans? There are thousands of people in Puerto Rico who need work desperately. They are American Citizens. Hire Puerto Ricans.' So, we hired Puerto Ricans."[56] Writing about the phenomenon from the perspective of the island's government,

[53] Ismael García-Colón, *Colonial Migrants at the Heart of Empire: Puerto Rican Workers on U.S. Farms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 52.
[54] Steven D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 2: Long Hours And Backbreaking Work; Invisible Workers In Invisible Camps," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* November 10, 1969.
[55] García-Colón, *Colonial Migrants at the Heart of Empire*, 12.
[56] Springfield Union. "Job Hunting." May 6, 1959.

Carvalho wrote the following in his work on the Puerto Rican Community in Western Massachusetts.

> The Puerto Rican Department of Labor established its Migration Division in 1947 in order to arrange contracts between unemployed Puerto Ricans and mainland farmers. According to accounts, Migration Division recruiters would travel all over the rural island roads in cars with bullhorns and distributing leaflets. They also placed frequent advertisements in island newspapers announcing good jobs on the mainland. By 1955, the Migration Division had also established offices in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. The initiative helped make the 1950s the period of greatest Puerto Rican migration in the twentieth century, with over 470,000 individuals leaving Puerto Rico to come to the mainland during that decade.[57]

The system described here bears a striking similarity to the practices of the labor agents who had recruited Polish laborers from New York and Eastern Europe fifty years earlier, and in many ways the politics and economics were similar as well.

There was significant economic exploitation of Puerto Rican farm workers in the Northeast, and although the contract labor system that began in the late 1940s introduced labor regulations that improved the situation, the problem was never solved. When hiring workers immediately after the war, Northeast farmers would intentionally sell more tickets to their farms than there were jobs available, as they hoped to keep wages low by maintaining a large labor pool that competed for limited work.[58] As a result, many migrants could not make enough money to earn a living. The Puerto Rican government quickly caught wind of the situation and this led to the creation of a regulated program, where workers would sign contracts that stipulated minimum standards for working conditions, wages, and hours. However, this system was still rife with exploitation, in part because the Puerto Rican Department of Labor did not have the resources to enforce their regulations, but also because of the supposedly virulent discrimination

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[57] Joseph Carvalho, "The Puerto Rican Community of Western Massachusetts, 1898-1960," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 43, no. 2 (2015): 16-17. Accessed January 23, 2024. https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-3810400531/the-puerto-rican-community-of-western-massachusetts.
[58] Carvalho, "The Puerto Rican Community," 55.

Puerto Ricans faced in the States, despite their theoretically equal legal status.[59] Irwin Fleishman, who wrote a thesis on migrant laborers in the 1960s, claimed that "a lot of workers don't like contract work. There's a lot of red tape." He identified that contracts written in English posed a large problem, as most of the Puerto Rican workers could not read them and therefore were unaware of their rights. For instance, the contracts required employers to cover the cost of one-way travel from the island to the mainland, but workers who were unaware of this often ended up arranging for transit on their own.[60]

As a result of the frustrations surrounding the contract system, many Puerto Ricans seeking work chose to eschew written agreements altogether and establish unofficial relationships with farmers in the Valley, although statistically this was more likely to lead to their mistreatment. Statistics from the Holyoke Transcript-Telegram report that in 1969 there were 1,200 Puerto Rican farm workers in the Connecticut River Valley in Massachusetts, and 7,000 in the full geographic range of the Valley, although the article claims that this number is almost certainly a vast underestimate based on how unregulated the program had become by that time.[61] Carvalho claims that "tens of thousands of other Puerto Rican workers came through illegal private contracts or with no contract at all."[62] Such workers were chronically paid under the minimum wage of the time,[63] were sold second-hand goods for far more than they would have been new, and were housed in abysmal conditions.[64]

The Valley's Puerto Rican agricultural laborers were generally housed by their employers in camps on or near the farm premises, or else in a centralized Connecticut camp in Windsor

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[59] Steven D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 4: Many Reasons Account For Migration; Once Here-Low Wages, Discrimination," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* November 10, 1969.
[60] D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 2".
[61] D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 2".
[62] Carvalho, "The Puerto Rican Community," 51.
[63] García-Colón, *Colonial Migrants at the Heart of Empire*, 54.
[64] D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 4".

Locks owned by the Shade Growers Association, where from they would be trucked to a farm in the region to work for the day. There were 60 migrant labor camps in Massachusetts alone, the biggest housing 360 workers. A 1969 newspaper article claims that conditions at these places were barely policed, especially at the more remote camps, which were rarely if ever visited by authorities. Some official reports referred to in the article claimed that while most of these camps did in fact fall within guidelines, these minimum standards were nevertheless "spartan in terms of creature comforts."[65] One source describes such "good" conditions as follows:

> [The] barn was plain but clean and comfortable as a Boy Scout Camp or an army barracks. Four metal frame cots sat on the concrete floor, three were in an adjoining room. The furniture looked second-hand. Four men were sitting around, some drinking cheap wine, watching television. It was cold, foggy, and drizzly outside, but a wood-burning Franklin stove kept the room warm.[66]

However, not all camps maintained even this modest standard. One unlicensed camp in Hatfield run by a Polish man named Zgrodnik had 100 migrant laborers, four of whom were Puerto Rican and lived apart from the rest.

> Officials found the four had been living in a hut. A piece of sheet metal had been installed above their heads to divert rainwater when it came down from a leaky roof. Bare light bulbs hung from the ceiling. Paper was stuffed in the broken windows to keep the cold out. The bathroom was an unpainted outhouse and a woodburning stove the source of their heat. The official complaint, however, was the contaminated well which was the workers' sole water supply.[67]

Important to note is that the farm work offered to Puerto Ricans was strictly seasonal. By November the tobacco and potato seasons were over, but nevertheless many migrant laborers stayed in the Valley and found work in industrial centers like Holyoke and Westfield.[68] Housing was very cheap in the urban slums, especially after cities like Holyoke underwent

[65] Steven D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 3: Their Condition Is Called A Disgrace And Health Code Enforcement Inadequate," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* November 10, 1969.
[66] Steven D'Arazien, "The Migrant: What Is Being Done Part 1: Reporter Visits Two 'Good' Camps; At One, Men Say Conditions Good; At The Other, A Farmer Is Wary," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* December, 1969.
[67] Steven D'Arazien, "The Migrant: What Is Being Done Part 2: Fire Destroys Quarters At Albert's; Polluted Well Closes Zgrodnik Farm," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* December, 1969.
[68] D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 2".

deindustrialization, and this allowed large Puerto Rican families to move in year-round.[69] Those who could not find factory work stayed to collect welfare and unemployment in the off-season. Their income in either case was not substantial by any means, but it was nevertheless significantly higher than what they could hope to earn in Puerto Rico.

The Massachusetts Legislative Research Department reported that in 1967 the average migrant laborer family earned $868 per year, making them the most impoverished group in the country.[70] The minimum wage for farm labor during the growing season at the time was just $1.50 per hour when it was granted, but this almost invariably beat wages on the island, which were reported to be $0.85 per hour. Welfare was available in Puerto Rico, but the benefits in Pioneer Valley cities like Holyoke were far better, which encouraged many to stay in the region indefinitely. Some fathers who had settled there with their families even separated from their wives and children to give them a legitimate reason to claim public assistance, as this was more profitable than whatever income the father could bring in on his own.[71]

In this way, the Puerto Rican community in the Valley slowly set down roots and ceased to be a "temporary" labor force by the 1960s, when sizable Puerto Rican communities emerged in cities such as Westfield, Springfield, and Holyoke. One source estimates that between 5% and 7% of the farm workers that came to the area ended up staying permanently, branching out into "manufacturing jobs, employment in the service industry, and in small businesses."[72] Understandably, Puerto Ricans preferred anything to the temporary farm work where they had faced such abuse, and they abandoned their agricultural work as soon as they could.[73] By the 80s,

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[69] Springfield Republican and Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance, *Nuestra Historia: The History of Latinos in Western Massachusetts,* 2013, 35.
[70] D'Arazien, "The Plight of the Migrant Worker: Part 3".
[71] Barry Werth, "Holyoke's Puerto Ricans: Money Stakes High for Holyoke, Low for Hispanics," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.
[72] Carvalho, "The Puerto Rican Community," conclusion.
[73] Carvalho, "The Puerto Rican Community," 20.

these communities had made some social and political inroads into their urban environments, including desegregating schools, the development of a small middle class, and some participation in city politics.[74] In Westfield and Holyoke, social justice organizations emerged to help advocate for Puerto Ricans and protect their social and political rights, which met modest success. The Puerto Rican Social Club in Westfield put voting rights on their "lengthy social justice agenda,"[75] and in Holyoke education took primacy, as it was recognized as the best way to achieve greater integration into city society.[76]

These economic and social outcomes for Puerto Rican immigrants represent a stark contrast with the Polish immigrants from fifty years earlier, which had significant implications for their assimilation to the host culture within the first few generations of living in the Valley. A significant indicator for Puerto Rican economic difficulties was their collective lack of property ownership, even after several decades of being reasonably well-established in the area. Their circumstances were especially shocking when compared to Polish real estate holdings achieved in a similar time frame after their arrival. A Holyoke Transcript-Telegram article from 1983 claims that at the time only 2% of hispanic people owned their own property in the city. Puerto Rican families, statistically among the largest in the state, tended to live in rented, overcrowded tenement-style apartments in Holyoke. In comparison, 41% of white people and 21% of black people in the city owned their own homes. This housing disparity is clearly linked to income inequality. In 1979 Puerto Rican families had an average annual income of $8,158, while

[74] Barry Werth, "Holyoke's Puerto Ricans: Streets Are Proving Ground for Young, Disillusioned," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.
[75] Springfield Republican and Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance, *Nuestra Historia*, 30.
[76] Barry Werth, "Holyoke's Puerto Ricans: Severing Ties Can Be Cost of 'Success,'" *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.

comparable white families made $21,158 a year. “Puerto Ricans were… five times more likely than whites to live below the poverty line, and three times more likely to be unemployed.”[77]

Sources from the turn of the century regarding Polish immigrants stress time and time again how successful these people were at acquiring property and profiting off of it, which provided them with significant social capital in the eyes of Yankees. It even became a part of the standard narrative of Polish newcomers for them to buy their own farmland with earnings they thriftily saved after years of near-indentured servitude. As early as 1900, the Greenfield Gazette and Courier was reporting that “there have been many, who after a few years of work as hired men on farms, have seen good chances to buy out little places of their own. The records of the local registry of deeds will show that a considerable number of these people are securing little farms.”[78] Katra typified this progression for Polish immigrants in three phases outlined in his survey of the Polish population of Northampton. The first phase was “the laborer,” where the Pole was a farmhand in the employ of a Yankee farmer, generally trying to pay off debts incurred from his travel to the Valley. Next came the “tenant phase,” where the Pole achieved some amount of autonomy. At this point he would slowly rent more and more land to cultivate at his own discretion until he saved enough to buy his own modest farm plot, likely old abandoned Yankee land of a dozen or so acres. If they were not able to save up the required money, Katra claimed that it was relatively easy for Poles to procure small loans or mortgages from Yankee banks, as they had developed a reputation for thrift, honesty, and persistence in the region that established them as safe investments.[79]

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[77] Barry Werth, “Holyoke’s Puerto Ricans: Opportunity Beckons Puerto Ricans to a New Land, New Life,” *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.
[78] Greenfield Gazette and Courier, “The Incoming of the Poles,” May 26, 1900.
[79] Katra, *Survey of the Polish Population*, 22-25.

Poles were not particular about the land they purchased. In fact, if there was no desirable land available, along the Connecticut River or in the lowlands where the soil was deemed superior, then Poles were known to purchase cheap plots in the hinterland, either far from the water or in the hilly regions on the periphery of the Valley. Initially Yankees laughed at Poles for this practice, but as Hardin writes, once the brush was cleared, all of this land proved perfectly capable of cultivation, and some was even highly fertile and profitable. In this way the Poles were responsible for vastly increasing the amount of land utilized in the region and improving the local economy significantly.[80] It was contributions such as these which earned the Poles the respect and even gratitude of the Yankee population over time – as Blejwas writes, "the immigrants' economic impact was readily admitted, even praised, as were the traits which contributed to that success."[81]

While Puerto Ricans made modest gains in integration into the host culture in Pioneer Valley cities, it would not be accurate to say that they had "assimilated" within two generations as had the Poles. A series of articles from the Holyoke Transcript-Telegram written in 1983 featuring the city's Puerto Ricans offers an illustrative portrait of the population a few decades after they had first become established in the area. These pieces portray the community as being very distinct from any other population in the city, in both their self-conception and in the way they were perceived outwardly. At a cultural level, most Puerto Ricans in Holyoke maintained their traditional behavior and beliefs. "Puerto Ricans are a proud people who rejoice in their language, music and art, their very personal relationships, their abiding spirituality, and their particular way of viewing themselves and the world that stresses individual respect and dignity."

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[80] Hardin, *Poles and Puritans*, 22.
[81] Stanislaus A Blejwas, "Puritans and Poles: The New England Literary Image of the Polish Peasant Immigrant," *Polish American Studies* 42, no. 2 (1985): 62.

It was often noted in these articles that assimilation was often consciously rejected, as it would mean severing important community ties and accepting some amount of loneliness and loss.[82]

Many Puerto Ricans were identified as having a strong desire to return back to the island, even years after settling in the area. Many suffered from what the paper refers to as "revolving door syndrome," which refers to frequent and relatively easy travel back and forth between the island and Holyoke. The Transcript-Telegram claims that due to discrimination, loneliness, and feelings of alienation, many Puerto Ricans would have returned to the island indefinitely if they had the economic means, but were paralyzed because the United States represented opportunity, albeit at the cost of homesickness and one's "integrity." One individual was quoted as bitterly remarking that he wanted to return home because he was sick of being treated like a foreigner in Holyoke.[83] In rare cases, Puerto Ricans did achieve enough success to return to the island permanently, such as the case of Jesus Tanon, who lived in Holyoke for thirteen years before moving back to his hometown, partially in order to take care of his mother. He claimed that he had never intended to stay in Holyoke permanently, and that after he had "made his mark" there by working as a community leader advocating for school desegregation, the forty-six year-old man had found himself drawn back to his home.[84]

The transitory nature of the Holyoke Puerto Rican community is perhaps one reason why its assimilation to the host culture was prolonged in relation to their Polish counterparts, who were far less likely to travel back and forth across the Atlantic. Barry Werth of The Transcript-Telegram believed that such constant movement of people hampered the growth and development of their community in the city, and while this is likely true, it certainly was not the

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[82] Barry Werth, "Severing Ties".
[83] Barry Werth, "Harsh Realities".
[84] Barry Werth, "Holyoke's Puerto Ricans: They Left Mark on Holyoke, but Are Pulled to Puerto Rico," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.

only cause of their social isolation. There was significant discrimination against Puerto Rican Holyoke residents, much of it manifesting in negative stereotypes perpetuated by their economic vulnerability and dependence. One article contends that "Puerto Ricans often are called a drag on economic development. Some whites claim businesses that might locate here are deterred by fears of racial tension and street crime." Other complaints focused directly on the tax burden Puerto Rican residents posed by their reliance on the welfare system, although the author of the article is quick to point out that the state government provided block grants to cover unemployment, meaning that welfare money never came out of the pockets of Holyoke residents.[85] Furthermore, the welfare money distributed to Puerto Ricans was almost invariably spent at local businesses within the city limits, therefore directly contributing to the local economy and likely benefiting all its residents.[86] Therefore, because these economic arguments against the Puerto Rican community are unfounded, it is clear that discrimination ran deeper than resentment over unemployment.

According to Archdeacon's resistance/accomodation framework for assimilation, the host group's willingness to accept a group of immigrants plays a role in the extent to which they adapt to their new circumstances. This much can be inferred from the different ways that Puerto Ricans and Poles were received in the first few generations after their arrival, in relation to how the populations were observed to change in that time. Although both groups faced discrimination and harsh conditions upon their arrival in the Valley, the Poles came to be appreciated fairly quickly by the Yankees, while even after more than twenty years of permanent presence, Puerto Ricans continued to be maligned by other groups. This is almost certainly correlated to the

[85] Barry Werth, "Holyoke's Puerto Ricans: The Long Road to a New Land, New Life.," *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram,* September 1983.
[86] Barry Werth, "Money Stakes High".

differential rates of assimilation between these groups, although the explanations for why Poles were ultimately more welcome than Puerto Ricans is multifaceted.

A large portion of this differential treatment was due to geopolitical circumstances and evolving attitudes towards race in America over the course of the twentieth century. Such attitudes can be traced through changes in immigration policy. For instance, immigration was virtually unrestricted to Europeans up until the 1920s, when the quota system was introduced due to rising anti-immigrant sentiment and a growing popularity of American isolationist ideology. However, cutting off the flow of new immigrants is theorized by Archdeacon to have shifted public attention, and therefore discrimination, onto the immigrants that were already in the country. He claims paradoxically that this increased the rate at which they assimilated, as the American public could focus its efforts on integrating those that were already present instead of on advocating for new restrictions. This theory is supported to some degree by the Americanization campaigns targeting slavic people which emerged in the country at around the time Archdeacon notes.

However, this notion relies on the idea that Polish people were considered assimilable to begin with, which was not a luxury that Puerto Ricans enjoyed. Although Polish people were subject to discrimination due to racial conceptions and ethnic and religious prejudices,[87] it is evident in journalistic material from the day that the true enemy was the culture they brought with them from the Old World, which was seen as something that could be ameliorated in time. It is Roediger's contention that Yankees believed Eastern European immigrants could eventually become settled and assimilated into American society. He quotes Ellwood Cubberly, a known eugenicist: in regard to the new immigrants, it was the duty of the Teutonic race "to break up these groups or settlements, to assimilate and amalgamate these people as part of our American

[87] Anti-catholic, anti-jewish sentiment prevalent

race, and to implant in their children so far as can be done, the Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law and order and popular government."[88] In support of this idea, Roediger also points out that in the 1910 census, the children of immigrants were considered white, albeit in a different category than the children of US citizens. However, the second generation became legally indistinguishable from any other native born American.[89]

Puerto Ricans, however, were racialized entirely differently, and were considered "unassimilable."[90] In Erman's work, he explores how in regard to Puerto Ricans, the United States saw itself as dealing "with a people whom the nation could not assimilate, exterminate, or exclude."[91] This is to say that regardless of their economic or political success, Puerto Ricans would likely never have been seen by white Americans as capable of full incorporation into their society. Undoubtedly, developing social capital would have helped to some degree, but another large obstacle to the Puerto Ricans' assimilation were the economic circumstances in the Valley in the 1950s. It was simply not a conducive environment for immigrant prosperity, as it had been when the Poles arrived. A lack of available land for purchase meant Puerto Ricans did not have the same opportunities for social mobility as the Poles did. In general, agriculture was moving westward by that time, and manufacturing was leaving the country altogether. Even between the 60s and 80s, while the Puerto Rican community was developing and immigration rates were still high, there was a steep decline in industrial work available in Holyoke. For this reason, the Transcript-Telegram identified Puerto Ricans, in relation to other immigrant groups, as "unique in that they have come as the city's economy was shrinking and changing from an industrial to a

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[88] David R Roediger, *Working toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (Hachette UK, 2006), 19.
[89] Roediger, *Working toward Whiteness,* 20.
[90] García-Colón, *Colonial Migrants at the Heart of Empire*, ch. 1.
[91] Sam Erman, *Almost Citizens: Puerto Rico, the U.S. Constitution, and Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), 81.

service and commercial base. That means there are fewer entry level jobs, making it difficult for them to gain a foothold."[92]

There is also the resistance aspect of the resistance/accomodation framework to consider, which is to say that on average, Poles *wanted* to assimilate more than Puerto Ricans. As discussed, there was a fervor among Poles to learn English and become naturalized. They attended night classes so they could pass their citizenship exams,[93] even if it meant trudging through snow in the middle of the winter.[94] There is evidence to suggest that American ideals of individualism had significant influence on Poles in some areas, such as in the urban centers of Northampton and Greenfield, where by 1929 the power of Polish enclaves had diminished.[95] Even in the small town of Sunderland, Brunner claims that there was a notable decline in fraternal organizations and participation in Polish community events like parades and holiday celebrations. For instance, although Sunderland Polish residents had once relied on benefit societies like "The Sunderland Society of Sons of Poland and Lithuania" that had additionally provided social cohesion, Brunner notes that at the time of publication, Poles had begun to subscribe to insurance companies instead.[96] Although this trend is contested by first hand testimony which suggests that in other areas, like the rural town of Turners Falls, Polish community values and organizations maintained their strength at least until the 1970s,[97] most evidence suggests that the broader area was seeing a decline in Polish community identification well before this time.

Even if it were only urban centers that were witnessing such a decline, this demonstrates a stark contrast with the acculturation outcomes of the Puerto Rican community in the Valley.

[92] Werth, "Harsh Realities."
[93] Greenfield Gazette and Courier, "Aliens in New England," December 7, 1912.
[94] Boston Herald, "Back to the Soil with the Poles," April 14, 1912.
[95] Brunner, "Sunderland," 231.
[96] Brunner, "Sunderland," 227-8.
[97] Jeanne Sojka, zoom call with author, May 22, 2024.

The Puerto Rican population surveyed in the city of Holyoke was shown to have a strong commitment to their collectivist and community-centered cultural values, even going so far as to reject economic opportunity in order to maintain what they considered to be their "ethnic integrity."[98]

Taking into account the personal desires of individual immigrants alongside larger structural forces and population trends is essential to understanding why assimilation follows certain patterns. It is not enough to explain these phenomena in terms of a single factor, such as attributing the whole of the Puerto Rican social system in Holyoke to racialized, post-colonial dynamics. This approach does not treat Puerto Ricans as individuals with their own desires and agency, and therefore erases their commitment to interpersonal relationships and cultural practices. In many instances these highly personal beliefs were the primary reason why someone would reject American culture altogether and return to Puerto Rico, for example. A framework centered on race is also inadequate to explain how the Polish experience differed so significantly from that of the Puerto Ricans. To assume that monolithic discrimination was the exclusive cause of economic disadvantage ignores the effects of subtle and complex environmental and social changes. Urbanization and shifting agricultural practices such as the gradual weakening of the tobacco industry in the Valley caused much larger changes in Polish fortune than the temporary discrimination they faced upon their arrival.

[98] Werth, "Severing Ties."

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Two Houses Divided?
The Parallel Histories of the Casa de Contratación and the Casa da Índia, 1500-1580

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This paper seeks to investigate the histories of the Spanish *Casa de Contratación* and the Portuguese *Casa da Índia* in relation to one another, identifying possible ways in which each drew inspiration, or imitated the other during the period from 1500 to 1580. Though there is existing research into the individual Casas, comparative approaches have generally been avoided. This work synthesizes the literature and tracks interactions or trends between the Iberian empires from both an institutional and interpersonal perspective. Through analysis of bureaucratic charters, letters, and other documents, it outlines the time periods, possible reasons, and results of this imitation game. Ultimately, after decades of trial and error, each empire settled into a model more suited to its imperial situation on the ground: for the Spanish, this was a more privatized model, while for the Portuguese it was statist in the East and more privatized in Brazil.

Introduction

Imitation is not just the sincerest form of flattery; it's the sincerest form of learning.
- George Bernard Shaw

In the early modern period, a time defined by remarkable maritime exploration and imperial pursuits, the Spanish and Portuguese empires emerged as formidable contenders for global dominance. Following the expeditions of Christopher Columbus (1492) and Vasco da Gama (1498), the Iberian Empires began a meteoric rise to wealth and power, decidedly shifting the economic center of Europe from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.[1] Even so, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain and Portugal were heading into uncharted waters, as the mission of designing an empire that spanned oceans and continents was a daunting one. Both empires needed to create an administrative infrastructure that regulated, advanced, and made profitable their colonial pursuits overseas. The Portuguese *Casa da Índia* ("House of the Indies") and the Spanish *Casa de Contratación* ("House of Trade"), among other institutions, sought to accomplish these goals. At first glance, the two empires' colonial strategies seem distinct to the point of almost being opposite. Generally, while the Spanish pursued a more land-based, exploitative empire in the Americas, the Portuguese opted for a "factory and fortress" empire based on maritime trade along the coasts of Africa and the Indian Ocean.[2] This popular contrast, though an oversimplification, has become entrenched in the modern historiography. In tracking the histories of the two *Casas,* it becomes clear that from their inception, despite the apparent differences between the Iberian empires, there were processes of mutual learning, shared

[1] Kenneth Maxwell, "Portugal, Europe, and the Origins of the Atlantic Commercial System, 1415–1520," *Modern Humanities Research Association*, Portuguese Studies, 8 (1992): 1-6.
[2] Carla Rahn Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade in the Iberian Empires, 1450–1750," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires*, (1990), 74.

wisdom, and imitation taking place. In this essay, I will analyze and compare the *Casas*, exploring Spanish and Portuguese colonial dynamics and discussing possible ways in which the two influenced or learned from one another on both an institutional and interpersonal level.

The academic literature directly comparing the two Iberian empires, not least their *Casas*, is limited, particularly in English.[3] It is worth noting that while scholars writing in Spanish and Portuguese have created an extensive and detailed literature on their respective empires and Casas, they generally avoid comparative analyses.[4] Nonetheless, leading scholars such as Ângela Barreto Xavier, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Pedro Cardim, and others have pioneered this burgeoning field of scholarship. In his celebrated article, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640," Sanjay Subrahmanyam applies the term *translatio imperii*, which refers to the transfer of imperial models and notions, to the context of Portugal and Spain. Though usually used to describe the succession of rulers or dynasties within the same empire, he offers a new understanding of *translatio imperii* "in the sense of movement across a group of competing empires."[5] It is in the spirit of this interpretation that I approach the following discussion of influence, imitation, and exchange between the Iberian Empires and their *Casas*.

[3] Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade" (1990), 35.
[4] Ângela Barreto Xavier, Federico Palomo, and Roberta Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada: (Séculos XVI-XVIII): Dinâmicas Imperiais e Circulação de Modelos Político-Administrativos*, (1a edição Lisboa, Portugal: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2018), 17.
[5] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500–1640," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 5 (December 1, 2007): 1359–60.

Commerce, Colonies, and the *Casas*

The discovery of a maritime route to India and its lucrative spice trade, achieved by Vasco da Gama's rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, was a major turning point for the Portuguese. They could now bypass the Venetians, Mamluks, and other costly intermediaries who had for centuries monopolized trade with the East and access these markets directly.[6] In 1500, the Portuguese Crown established the *Casa da Índia* to act as a central hub for overseeing commercial and trade matters in the newly unlocked Indian subcontinent. However, this kind of colonial institution was by no means unprecedented in the empire. Since the time of Prince Henry the Navigator, Portugal had established the *Casa da Ceuta* (1415), the *Casa da Guiné* (1443), and the *Casa da Mina* (1482), each building on the previous with similar fiscally focused missions.[7] This rich history in colonial administration informed the structure of the new *Casa da Índia*, whose main functions would be managing commercial transactions, merchant contracts, the appointment and transportation of officers, the collection of duties and taxes, and importantly, directly controlling trade monopolies through the vast network of Portuguese state-run *feitorias* ("factories", or trading posts) across the Indian Ocean.[8]

While the *Casa da Índia* enjoyed almost complete jurisdiction over commercial matters, there were other governmental institutions that complemented it. The *Armazéns da Guiné e Índia* ("Warehouses of Guinea and India") were charged with the production of nautical instruments, captains' training, maritime cartography, and other technical issues of overseas voyages. The

[6] William S. Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 18-20.
[7] Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 78.
[8] Ângela Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration in the Portuguese Empire," *Journal of Early Modern History* 22, no. 5 (October 2, 2018): 328.

Casa and the *Armazéns*, together with the *Ribeira das Naus* ("Shipyard"), and the *Armaria* ("Armory"), worked to support the ever-expanding empire.[9] Portugal, with nearly nine decades of colonial experience, entered the sixteenth century possessing a diversified, cohesive system of institutions which the Spanish would not come close to rivalling for many years.

Columbus' arrival in the Americas, and the subsequent papal allocation of much of the allegedly 'undiscovered' land to Spain through the Treaty of Tordesillas, had major repercussions for the developing empire. It catalyzed the development of Spain's own system of imperial administration. In 1503, the *Casa de Contratación* was established by royal decree in Seville to handle commercial and other matters concerning the New World.[10] As the first colonial institution of its type in Spain, the *Casa* drew inspiration from its Portuguese counterpart in terms of its structure and operation.[11] Being the first also meant that it lacked the supportive administrative infrastructure that the *Armazéns* and *Ribeira das Naus* offered the *Casa da Índia*. The *Casa de Contratación* therefore, needed to have a wider scope. Like the *Casa da Índia*, it managed overseas trade, the collection of taxes and duties, and private merchant contracts. It also resolved commercial disputes. Like the *Armazéns*, it oversaw captains' education, maritime cartography, and other scientific endeavors. Additionally, it had a political dimension to its jurisdiction, at least during its earlier years, as it became the means by which the Spanish Crown would communicate with and send appointed officers, soldiers, missionaries, and other groups to the New World.[12]

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[9] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration" (2018): 332-3.
[10] Ramón María Serrera Contreras, "La Casa de La Contratación En El Alcázar de Sevilla (1503-1717)," *Boletín de La Real Academia Sevillana de Buenas Letras* 36 (2008): 133.
[11] Serrera Contreras, "La Casa de La Contratación En El Alcázar de Sevilla" (2008): 136.
[12] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1374.

In comparing the two *Casas* during their earlier years, it is crucial to note the differing roles each one served within their empire: whereas the *Casa da Índia* specialized in commerce, the *Casa de Contratación* centralized various commercial, political, and scientific functions under one organization. Indeed, the creation of both *Casas* led to the emergence of a science of administration in Spain and Portugal.[13] Any person wishing to travel to or conduct business with the colonies, whether a private merchant, government agent, or explorer, had to be cleared by Lisbon for the Portuguese and Seville for the Spanish.[14] Meticulous records were kept of every overseas voyage; individuals and goods onboard each ship were noted on departure and scrutinized again upon arrival. These records were stored and cross-referenced at various points to spot any incongruencies and to ensure that each Crown was paid its fair share.[15] As stated in the *Casa da India*'s 1509 set of rules: "the book of expenses must be matched with the book of contracts."[16] Using double-entry bookkeeping and other methods, the *Casas* sought to bureaucratize and track developments with their new imperial frontiers. Moreover, all ships returning to the mainland had to dock and report to the *Casas* in Lisbon or Seville, which henceforth exercised monopolies on colonial trade. Both cities would consequently become among the richest and most populous in Europe over the course of the sixteenth century.[17]

Each Crown's choice of appointment for their *Casa's* first Chief Officer provides some insight into the priorities and character of the two Iberian empires during the early stages of

[13] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration" (2018): 328.
[14] Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 26.
[15] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration" (2018): 340.
[16] Damião Peres, *Regimento Das Cazas Das Indias e Mina*, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, Instituto de Estudos Historicos Dr. Antonio de Vasconcelos (1947), chap. 6.
[17] Serrera Contreras, "La Casa de La Contratación En El Alcázar de Sevilla" (2008): 157.

overseas expansion. In the case of Portugal, in 1501, King Manuel I merged the old *Casa da Guiné e Mina* with the new *Casa da Índia*,[18] placing it under the control of Chief Officer Fernão Lourenço. His previous tenure as Chief Officer of the *Casa da Guiné e Mina*, coupled with his authority over the *Casa dos Escravos* ("House of Slaves") and the *Torre do Tombo* ("Royal Archive"), underscores a Portuguese commitment to consolidating control over the expanding Atlantic slave trade and the *Carreira da Índia*, or "Indian Run."[19] It further reflects Portugal's wealth of experience and desire for a coordinated approach to empire-building. Conversely, Spain's appointment of Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, the Archdeacon of Seville and Chaplain with close personal connections to Queen Isabella I, highlights the relatively nascent nature of the Spanish overseas empire. Fonseca's robust background in the Catholic Church[20] likewise points to Spain's dedication to religious conversion as a key element of their colonial mission.[21] Just over a decade after driving the Moors out of Iberia, expelling the Jews, and initiating the Spanish Inquisition, religion was clearly at the forefront of the Spanish imperial consciousness.[22] This is not to say the Portuguese were not religiously motivated as well—they also sent missionaries across their empire, after all.[23] Rather, it should be emphasized that the Portuguese and Spanish overseas empires were fundamentally different, and what worked for one empire need not necessarily be compatible with the situation of the other. It is thus important to frame the purposes and histories of the *Casas* within a broader colonial context.

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[18] Some now refer to it as the '*Casa da Índia, Guiné, e Mina'*, but for the sake of brevity I will hereafter refer to it simply as the *Casa da Índia*.
[19] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration" (2018): 334–5.
[20] Fonseca also served as Bishop of Badajoz, Córdoba, and Palencia. For his life, see John F. O'Hara, "Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca: First President of the Indies (1493-1523)," *The Catholic Historical Review* 3, no. 2 (July 1917): 131-150.
[21] Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 92.
[22] The reigning monarchs were Ferdinand and Isabella, "the Catholic Kings". On religion see Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 13-5.
[23] Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 29-30.

On the home front, Spain had a significantly larger population than its Iberian neighbor. It outstripped Portugal by a factor of four or five, according to census data from the early sixteenth century (see Figure 1).[24] This superior endowment of human resources allowed it to support a vast, land-based empire in the New World through settlement. There were few if any established empires in the Americas when the Europeans arrived, save for the Aztecs around modern-day Mexico and the Incas in the Andes, both of which the Spanish subdued in 1521 and 1532, respectively.[25] This relative absence of centralized powers on the continent made large-scale settlement possible for the Spanish, which it should be noted was not an option for the Portuguese in the East.[26] Moreover, although the indigenous populations had gold and systems of exchange, "their commercial arrangements had little in common with the sophisticated trading networks of Asia, Europe, or Africa."[27] Since the preexisting trade networks of the Caribbean were neither stable nor extensive enough for Spain to support an overseas empire, a strategy of settlement and economic exploitation was the only way the Spaniards could construct a financially viable empire. Early on, there was a move to reinvent the *encomienda* system in the Caribbean context to organize, govern, and develop the region, which would have catastrophic consequences for indigenous populations.[28] Settlers and conquistadors were given vast swathes

[24] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1365.
[25] Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 52-8.
[26] While the Portuguese did establish footholds in the East such as Goa and Macau, these examples represent strategic trading posts and administrative centers with small permanent populations rather than large-scale colonial settlements. The presence of centralized powers, such as the Mughal Empire in India and the Ming Dynasty in China, limited the possibility for extensive Portuguese settlement. The Portuguese primarily acquired these outposts through negotiation with local powers, treaties centered on trade, and limited military engagements, as in Goa.
[27] Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade" (1990), 74.
[28] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1366.

of land, and by leveraging native labor for resource extraction, they began to make the business of colonization a highly lucrative one for Spain.[29]

The *encomienda* model showcases the degree to which the Spanish relied on private participation for their colonial project. The *Casa de Contratación* thus took a more hands-off approach. Generally, it invited private actors to develop the territories of the New World themselves, collecting payments and imposing penalties on any who failed to comply with its policies.[30] These included condemnations for smuggling, bribery, and various taxes. By far the most significant source of revenue for the *Casa* and the Crown was the *quinto real*, or "royal fifth", an aptly named tax on twenty percent of all bullion (gold and silver) and precious metals extracted from the colonies. It often also included additional fees for assay and coinage.[31] Merchant families and banks from all over Europe, notably the Italian city-states and southern Germany, were well represented in Seville. They participated heavily in the financing of voyages *extra territorium*, such as the historic expeditions of Columbus, Vespucci, and Magellan.[32] The mercantile class in the city would later create the *Consulado de Mercaderes* ("Merchants' Guild") in 1543, which adjudicated commercial disputes and worked closely with the *Casa* to facilitate private investment in the colonies.[33] Even before the establishment of the *Casa* and the *Consulado,* Seville had become a hub for trade with Northern Africa, Portugal, and the Canary Islands. Boasting a long mercantile tradition and a sheltered port on the Guadalquivir River, Seville became the ideal placement for both organizations.[34]

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[29] Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 96.
[30] Serrera Contreras, "La Casa de La Contratación En El Alcázar de Sevilla" (2008): 136.
[31] Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade" (1990), 84.
[32] Maxwell, "Portugal, Europe, and the Origins of the Atlantic Commercial System" (1992): 8.
[33] Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade" (1990), 76–7; see also Eufemio Lorenzo Sanz, *Comercio de España Con América En La Época de Felipe II* (Valladolid: Institución Cultural Simancas, 1986), 168-9.
[34] Serrera Contreras, "La Casa de La Contratación En El Alcázar de Sevilla" (2008): 137.

Figure 1: [35]

Table 1

Spain		*Portugal*	
Region	*Population*	*Region*	*Population*
Castile	4,513,000	Trás-os-Montes	178,000
Catalonia	312,000	Entre Douro e Minho	275,000
Valencia	300,000	Beira	334,000
Aragon	290,000	Estremadura	262,000
Navarre	152,000	Entre Tejo e Guadiana	244,000
Alava	50,000	Algarve	44,000
Others	132,000	Lisbon	65,000
Total	5,749,000	Total	1,402,000

SOURCES: For Spain, A. W. Lovett, *Early Habsburg Spain, 1517–1598* (Oxford, 1986), 245–247, quoting Felipe Ruiz Martín, "La población española al comienzo de los tiempos modernos," *Cuadernos de Historia* (Madrid) 1 (1967): 189–202. For Portugal, Orlando Ribeiro et al., *Geografia de Portugal*, vol. 3: *O povo português* (Lisbon, 1987), 735.

Portugal encountered a different set of circumstances in its own overseas empire, which at first spanned the coasts of Africa and the Indian subcontinent. The combination of a smaller territory and population with an experienced seafaring class predisposed Lisbon to pursue a more maritime, trade-focused strategy. Legitimized by papal bulls, the Portuguese began their empire along the West African coast, establishing *feitorias*, such as that of São Jorge da Mina in the Gulf of Guinea, in 1482.[36] By 1510, Portugal had full control over the sea routes that would sustain its trade in Asia and Africa, with "seven forts in two captaincies, one for the Red Sea and the other for the Malabar Coast of India."[37] Even without the demographic deficit the Portuguese

[35] Table drawn directly from Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1366; For Spain, see A. W. Lovett, *Early Habsburg Spain, 1517-1598* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1986), 245-7, quoting Felipe Ruiz Martín, "La Población Española al Comienzo de Los Tiempos Modernos," (*Cuadernos de Historia* 1, Madrid 1967): 182–202; For Portugal, see Orlando Ribeiro, Hermann Lautensach, and Suzanne Daveau, *Geografia de Portugal* (1a. ed. Lisboa: Edições J. Sá da Costa, 1987), 735.
[36] Maxwell, "Portugal, Europe, and the Origins of the Atlantic Commercial System" (1992): 4-5.
[37] Kirti Narayan Chaudhuri, "The Portuguese Seaborne Empire in the Indian Ocean," in *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 67-73.

faced relative to the Spanish, they would have struggled to sustainably maintain a colonial settlement of any real significance given the existence of more established empires and polities in the East. Portugal's presence in these regions was characterized more by negotiation than conquest.[38] While they could (and did on occasion) utilize the superiority of European firepower at sea, the existence of their small, coastal entrepôts depended heavily on the consent and interests of the regional authority.[39] This necessitated a centralized, state-run model of trade which could negotiate and project naval power to protect its interests when threatened by rival empires, such as the Ottomans.[40] It also meant that instead of 'creating their own trade'—as the Spanish had been forced to do in the Americas—the Portuguese could tap into the established trade networks of the Old World. For example, they became heavily involved in the African trade of slaves and melegueta pepper, known in Europe as "grains of paradise."[41] The Portuguese Crown sought to maintain monopolies on many such goods through the *feitorias*, which were themselves under the authority of the *Casa da Índia*. After docking and reporting to the *Casa* authorities in Lisbon, goods could be reshipped to other *feitorias* to be sold. For instance, many shipments were sent to the *feitoria* in Antwerp, which supplied much of the Western European market at the time.[42] Profits from these sales would flow directly to the Portuguese Crown and the *Fazenda Real* ("Royal Treasury"). Though there was some private participation in these ventures,[43] it was mainly the *Fazenda Real* and the *Casa da Índia* that stood at the helm of Portugal's 'state capitalist' trading network.[44]

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[38] Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 59.
[39] Carlo Maria Cipolla, *Guns, Sails and Empires: Technological Innovation and the Early Phases of European Expansion 1400 – 1700* (6th pr. Manhattan, Kan: Sunflower University Press, 2002), 106-9; see also Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 59.
[40] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1367.
[41] Barreto Xavier, Palomo, and Stumpf, eds, *Monarquias Ibéricas Em Perspectiva Comparada* (2018), 89-95.
[42] Charles Ralph Boxer, "From Lisbon to Goa, 1500–1750: Studies in Portuguese Maritime Enterprise," 1984, 17.
[43] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance (2007): 1374.
[44] Pierre Chaunu, *Conquista y Explotación de Los Nuevos Mundos* (Barcelona: Ed. Labor Sa, 1973), 102-3.

Rules and Regulation

In exploring the charters and royal edicts that governed each *Casa*'s goals, daily operation, and bureaucratic processes, it becomes easier to clearly identify similarities between the two. When the Spanish established the *Casa de Contratación* in 1503, they issued a founding charter consisting of twenty-two rules. One of these rules outlined what the staffing of the *Casa* was to look like: the Spaniards would employ one Chief Officer, one treasurer, and one clerk, who would later be called an accountant.[45] Interestingly, this was almost identical to the model of the *Casa da Índia* (which by this point had existed for three years), except the Portuguese employed two more clerks.[46] While one cannot definitively prove that the Spanish were replicating the structure of the Portuguese *Casa*, overt similarities such as this one reinforce the almost unanimously held belief in the historiography that during the early years of the sixteenth century, Spain drew inspiration from Portugal's empire to some extent. The Portuguese were more advanced in colonial management than the Spaniards at this point, after all. This makes the fact that the *Casa de Contratación* issued a founding charter *before* the *Casa da Índia* issued its own in 1509 incredibly striking. Granted, this later Portuguese set of rules did not seek to establish new parameters for a fledgling enterprise, as in the Spanish case; rather, it would formalize and codify practices that had been in use in one *Casa* or the other for decades.[47] But it raises the question: why now? Did the Portuguese do this as a response to the *Casa de Contratación*?

[45] Eulalia Maria Lahmeyer Lobo, "Processo Administrativo Ibero-Americano (Aspectos Sócio-Econômicos—Periodo Colonial)," (São Paulo: Biblioteca Do Exército, 1962), 112.
[46] Peres, *Regimento Das Cazas Das Indias e Mina* (1947), chap. 3.
[47] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration" (2018): 336.

I would argue it highly probable that the *Casa da Índia*'s 1509 charter was simply a natural next step in a continuous process of imperial bureaucratization. The growth of the Portuguese Empire began to place greater strain on the institutions that managed it, and this increased demand would have required a response. In the King's own words, the work of the *Casa* "could not well be done […] as it was done until now," i.e., with only a Chief Officer, a treasurer, and three clerks.[48] The charter was initially comprised of 65 chapters but would undergo additions to it over the course of the decade. In a letter to Estêvão Vaz, the Chief Officer of the *Casa da Índia* at the time, the King expressed his desire to "assemble the old statutes that were dispersed,"[49] which is to say, codify the already existing rules and practices of the *Casa*. The extremely specific nature of these rules further highlights the newfound importance of this 'science of administration' and bureaucracy in the Portuguese Empire. They concerned themselves with operational minutiae such as the registration of officers' daily hours of arrival and departure (Chapter 2), and even had an entire chapter dedicated to the "ordering" of letters arriving from India,[50] in the hopes that this systematization would streamline Portugal's colonial management. Moreover, much of the information gathered by the *Casa da Índia* came from the transcontinental network of *feitorias* it administered. Each *feitor* provided registers of commodities exchanged, predictions about local markets, and reports on daily life in the colonies. This kind of information allowed the Portuguese Crown to track its losses, to spot opportunities, and crucially, to plan future trips.[51]

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[48] Barreto Xavier, "The Casa Da Índia and the Emergence of a Science of Administration (2018): 335; as drawn from Peres, *Regimento Das Cazas Das Indias e Mina* (1947), chap. 3.
[49] Peres, *Regimento Das Cazas Das Indias e Mina* (1947), 84.
[50] Peres, *Regimento Das Cazas Das Indias e Mina* (1947), 40-41.
[51] Susannah Humble Ferreira, *The Crown, the Court and the Casa da Índia : Political Centralization in Portugal, 1479-1521* (Brill, 2015), 66-8.

The expansion of Spain's empire likewise necessitated a myriad of administrative changes to the *Casa de Contratación's* operation. These would serve to bureaucratize its processes and subtly steer it away from the Portuguese model it had initially drawn inspiration from. Though both enacted a considerable amount of minor record-keeping-related policies, the Spanish approach began to reflect the distinct territorial nature of its empire. For example, the Spaniards placed paramount importance on tracking the movement of pearls, raw gold, silver, and other precious metals from the New World.[52] This is unsurprising given that all bullion was taxed by the *quinto real*. Between 1555 and 1600, the *quinto real* from one Spanish colony, Tierra Firme, accounted for a staggering sixty percent of royal income.[53] In meticulously documenting these goods, the *Casa de Contratación* sought to safeguard the Crown's interests and its most valuable source of revenue. Similarly, we can observe an emphasis on preventing fraud in the burgeoning colonial economy. According to the ordinances of 1531, the treasurer and clerks were to note all expenses, record transactions in separate, duplicate record books, and sign the other's copy to certify that "they see and know that the charge is truthful and accurate" so that "at the time we order accounts to be taken, [the accountant] may agree the one book with the other and there be no confusion."[54]

By charting the progression of institutional rules in the *Casas,* it becomes evident that though there seems to have been some imitation by the Spanish of the *Casa da Índia* in the early sixteenth century, both *Casas* thereafter seem to diverge due to the distinct profiles of their overseas empires. This emerges as a central theme in my analysis. Spain's primary objective

[52] Francisco Fernández López, "La Memoria y El Registro de La Real Hacienda de Indias En La Casa de La Contratación," *Revista de Humanidades* 0, no. 22 (2015): 108.
[53] Lorenzo Sanz, *Comercio de España Con América (*1986), 166-72.
[54] Fernández López, "La Memoria y El Registro" (2015): 109.

revolved around the extraction of wealth from private trade with the Americas, and so they tailored their *Casa*'s operation to meet these needs. In a letter addressed to the king in 1503, the factor Francisco Pinelo and treasurer Sancho de Matienzo defend the Spanish model, saying "that it is not convenient for the Reyes' own ships, because the flights will be cheaper, and that it will also be more profitable, to give permission to [private parties] to go on their own account to the islands of the Pearls."[55] Conversely, it seems the Portuguese empire prioritized establishing a more networked, statist system that was information-driven.

It is important to note that institutions, by their very nature, can be rigid and resistant to change, particularly when it comes to capturing the nuanced sentiments of a society. However, history shows that change can emerge naturally, driven by practicality. In 1555, double-entry bookkeeping became standard practice in the *Casa de Contratación*.[56] Curiously, there was no royal commandment that required this, and yet, the revolutionary Florentine accounting method seamlessly made its way into the operations of the *Casa*. This transition illustrates two important principles. Firstly, that if a system proves itself efficient, it is likely to be implemented or replicated. Secondly, it demonstrates that *translatio imperii* need not occur by royal intervention at the highest level; as in the case of the Florentine merchants that brought this system to Seville, everyday people can play a pivotal role in instigating change within institutions and societies more broadly.

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[55] Lahmeyer Lobo, "Processo Administrativo Ibero-Americano" (1962), 114; drawn from Ernesto Schäfer, in *El Consejo Real Supremo de Las Indias: Su Historia, Organización y Labor Administrativa Hasta La Terminación de La Casa de Austria, T. I, Historia y Organización Del Consejo y de La Casa de Contratación de Las Indias*, Sevilla: M Carmona (1935): 11-12.
[56] Fernández López, "La Memoria y El Registro" (2015): 104.

Interpersonal Interactions and Influence

A closer look at the Spanish maritime workforce of the early sixteenth century would reveal, paradoxically, that a significant portion of it was formed by Portuguese mariners. As was the case with colonial institutions, Portugal's human capital and collective expertise in navigation and overseas empire far exceeded that of Spain at first.[57] This is perhaps best evidenced by the fact that of the *Casa's* first three Chief Pilots, none were Spanish.[58] These movements of professionals internationally may have, even if subconsciously, shaped the *Casa's* approach and management. Humans, after all, have the potential to be effective vectors for *translatio imperii* behind the scenes. Nationality seems to have been a less controversial factor at this point, and experience was held in higher regard. This may also be explained by the fact that during the initial stages of exploration, each empire's sphere of influence was not yet well-defined. There was interest from the Spanish in Portuguese navigators who understood certain regions of the world, and vice versa.[59] The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 helped to delineate a provisional boundary for Madrid and Lisbon to follow, but with growing empires and expanding horizons, there would inevitably be conflicts.

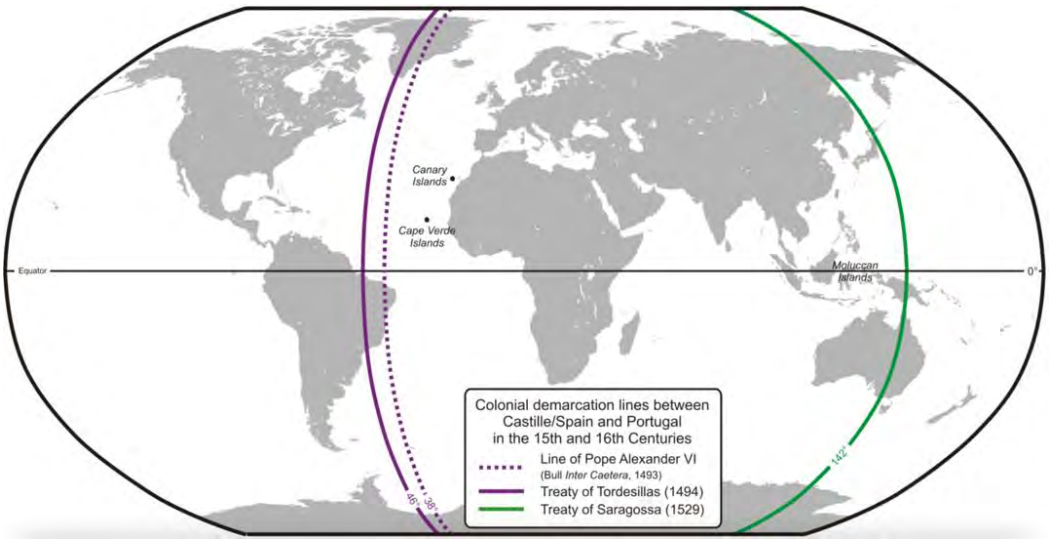
One of the most significant disputes between the Iberian empires during this period comes about regarding the Moluccas and Spice Islands of the East Indies. Discontent with the

[57] Granted, this was not a one-way exchange—while many Portuguese pilots assisted in the fledgling Spanish Empire, some Spaniards, such as Sancho de Tovar, commanded Portuguese fleets in Asia. But the former occurs on a much greater scale. See Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1364.
[58] The nationality of Juan Díaz de Solís (the second Chief Pilot) is contested among historians—many say that he was born in Lebrija, on the Spanish side of the border. However, it is uncontested that he received his training and led most of his life and career in Portugal before serving in the *Casa de Contratación*. See Edward Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación and the Examenes de Pilotos," *International Journal of Maritime History* 26, no. 2 (May 2014): 181.
[59] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 182.

Portuguese King Manuel I after he repeatedly rejected his voyage proposals, Fernão de Magalhães, known in posterity as Ferdinand Magellan, decided to leave Portugal in 1517 and join the service of the young King Charles I of Spain (later emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire). He claimed that the Spice Islands, until then under the influence of the Portuguese, in fact lay east (on the Spanish side) of the antimeridian established by Tordesillas and proposed an expedition to find a westward route (through the Americas) to the East Indies, something which never been attempted before.[60] Magellan's defection, seen by many in Manuel I's court as a betrayal, caused a large-scale migration of Portuguese mariners, cosmographers, cartographers, and others to the *Casa de Contratación*.[61] Additionally, his expedition would spawn a territorial crisis over the Moluccas which would only be resolved a decade later, with the Treaty of Zaragoza in 1529, in which Spain sold its claim to the islands to Portugal.[62] More interestingly from the lens of the *Casas*, the arrival of Magellan and many of his colleagues from Lisbon would noticeably feed a new trend of resistance by the Spanish to the presence of Portuguese in their fleets.

[60] Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 50.
[61] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 181.
[62] Malyn Newitt, *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400–1668* (London: Routledge, 2004), 98.

Figure 2: [63]



Amid many complaints from Spanish captains, the *Consejo de Indias* ("Council of the Indies") issued a series of reforms to address the 'Portuguese problem.' It was decreed in 1527 that "he who wants to be a pilot must be a native of these kingdoms of Castile" and "[*Casa* officials] will give no charge to any foreigner nor will they be given consent to own a nautical chart, or any image of the Indies… without our special license."[64] There were many who found creative ways around this nationality stipulation. Modern studies have found that there were many Portuguese in Magellan's fleet who claimed to be Andalusians, or commonly, disguised themselves as Galicians. The latter was not particularly difficult, given the linguistic and cultural similarities between Portugal and Galicia.[65] Tensions reached a breaking point in the 1550s, when a Castilian pilot, Alonso de Zapata, submitted a formal complaint to the *Consejo*, accusing the Portuguese of incompetence and endangering the safety of many ships on the *Carrera de*

[63] Map drawn from "Lines of Demarcation, 1493, 1494, and 1529," Princeton Online Libraries.
[64] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 182; drawn from Archivo General de Indias, Patronato, 251, R.22. "Método Para El Examen de Pilotos: Sebastián Cabot," August 2, 1527.
[65] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 182.

India.[66] In response, the 1552 Ordinances of the *Casa de Contratación* reiterated the nationality stipulation, created new standards for pilot training, and introduced new requirements for those applying for a license. Chief among these was the use of reports from witnesses who could testify to the personal history, character, and skills of the prospective pilot, which made it much more difficult for aspiring Portuguese mariners to join.[67] Nationality thereafter became a politically charged and exclusionary factor in the *Casa*, and exchanges of personnel became more infrequent.

By the 1530s, Spain had established itself as the leading Iberian power, and there were many within Portugal who looked to the Spaniards as an example of how to run an empire.[68] Ironically, this seemed to be a complete reversal of the situation just three decades prior. High-ranking members of the court of King João III, such as Martim Afonso de Sousa, began what would be a very slow movement towards the Spanish model, particularly in the then undeveloped territory of Brazil.[69] The establishment and old guard in Portugal resisted this trend, as can be seen in this letter from courtier and future governor of India, Dom João de Castro to the King in 1539:

> I would like to act as a seal to stamp documents and set them out in the *Torre de Tombo* of Lisbon, to affirm that in no circumstances should the Portuguese enter as much as a handspan into the interior [*pela terra dentro*] of India, because nothing keeps the peace and conserves our friendship with the kings and lords of India except that they believe

[66] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 182-3.
[67] Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de La Contratación" (2014): 183-4.
[68] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1371.
[69] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1372.

> and consider it most certain that we are content with the sea, and that we have no plans, nor do we imagine that we will ever come to desire their lands.[70]

The pro-Spanish-model sentiments of Sousa and others were largely kept at bay until the late 1560s, when the child King Sebastião I of Portugal came of age and assumed direct rule. Given his young age, he was perhaps more easily influenced by his advisors and his court than his predecessor. A slew of changes were effected, kickstarting the sugar-based plantation period in Brazil as well as creating a system closer to the Spanish *asiento* ("contract") arrangement for private trade and shipping.[71] This was a dramatic challenge to the *Casa da Índia's* traditional statist model. In Brazil, these changes led to the emergence of a landowning, slavery-run plantation economy which would prove highly valuable to Lisbon and the *Fazenda Real*. However, the attempt at a quasi-Spanish private contracting trade system in the East did not last particularly long, as ships from Portugal soon began to suffer raids from the Dutch, forcing the Portuguese to revert to their traditional statist model in these regions in the early 17th century.[72] These results further substantiate the observation that different strategies are not always compatible with varying colonial contexts—indeed, the more 'Spanish' model saw great success in Brazil, as the territory shared many of the characteristics of Spanish America, but it was unsuited to the Indian Ocean.

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[70] Letter appears in Luis de Albuquerque, *Cartas de D. João de Castro a D. João III* (Lisbon: Publicações Alfa, 1989), 12.
[71] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1375.
[72] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1375.

Conclusion

While success often begets imitation, the effectiveness of this emulation remains context specific. This was a lesson that the Iberian empires learned through trial-and-error, as at different points each borrowed certain ideas and norms from the other. Both institutionally and interpersonally, the *Casas* engaged in an exchange of knowledge and expertise, particularly in the first half of the sixteenth century. As bureaucracies developed and hostilities grew, they gradually influenced each other less directly, and instead focused on doing what was best given their situation on the ground.

The death of King Sebastião I of Portugal without a direct heir to the throne in 1578 caused a succession crisis which would end with Philip II of Spain being declared King of Portugal.[73] He would go on to merge the two Crowns, thereby creating the Iberian Union of 1580. Philip assured his Portuguese constituency that in the spirit of the Treaty of Tordesillas, he would keep the two kingdoms, and the two empires, administratively and conceptually separate.[74] Notwithstanding, the questions of *translatio imperii* and the dynamics between the two *Casas* after this unification of the crowns present an interesting avenue for future research.

[73] Maltby, *The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire* (2009), 112.
[74] Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance" (2007): 1360.

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The Potomac Ploy: George Washington's Secret Scheme That Shaped the Nation's Capital

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For over 200 years, historians have glossed over blemishes on George Washington's reputation, transforming the president into an almost mythological figure of the United States' national identity. This paper brings into focus one of the more overlooked narratives about the president, revealing that his choice of Washington DC and the Potomac River as the location for the national capital was driven by financial self-interest and not by a prescient vision of future national unity.

Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that Washington knew the Potomac River could not serve as a national waterway; he was well aware of impassible rapids, sudden drops that totaled 874 feet, and large mountains that completely obstructed the river. Despite this, Washington continued to pursue development along the Potomac for personal financial gain. By the early 1790s, the country had sent thousands of dollars to his private river company, promoted settlement in areas near Washington's land holdings, and begun the creation of a major city within walking distance of Mount Vernon.

The revelation of Washington's true motivations for choosing this location for the national capital complicates the myth of this founding father as the epitome of a perfect leader. It calls into question the legitimacy of the political, racial, and economic hierarchies that have transformed a self-interested slaveholder into a centerpiece of modern democracy.

In 1790, in his second year as president, George Washington was practically a living saint among Americans. Newspapers, speeches, celebratory toasts, and sermons attesting to his virtue filled colonial publications, with one minister, the Reverend Samuel Stillman, describing millions pledging their unanimous love and gratitude for the first president, a "visible manifest[ation] of…divine munificence" and a "happy union…[of] Genius and…candour."[1] Washington's alleged effectiveness as a visionary extended beyond guiding the country through daily politics; the president also had the prescience to predict the expansion of the country and capital along the Potomac River. With his prophetic wisdom, Washington asserted that the Potomac was a national "blessing," writing in 1784 that development of the river held "vast commercial and political importance" for Americans, and in 1791, chose a site along the Potomac to be the national capital.[2] Newspapers quickly heeded Washington's words, with one Wilmington writer, John O'Connor, struck by the power of the Shenandoah Valley floods that dwarfed the Thames or the Seine in size and swelled before converging into the Potomac. O'Connor stated that these waters "could contain the fleets of the universal world," and that "Providence has created…the illustrious President, [the] cause of every blessing of the human race…to make these waters navigable."[3]

But the true cause of Washington's Potomac fixation was not a divine premonition of Potomac-centered national development. Since his boyhood, Washington's life had revolved around the river, including his childhood plantation in Westmoreland County, the Ohio land

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[1] Samuel Stillman, "An Extract from an Oration of Samuel Stillman." *United States Chronicle* (Providence, RI) VII, no. 336, June 3, 1790. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*," 1. An Ode for Music In Commemoration of the Birth-Day of his Excellency General Washington." *New-York Daily Gazette* (New York, NY), no. 352, February 11, 1790. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*, 1.

[2] George Washington, "From George Washington to Benjamin Harrison, 10 October 1784," in *The Papers of George Washington, Confederation Series*. Edited by Dorothy Twohig and William Abbot. vol. 2, 18 July 1784 – 18 May 1785 (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1992), pp. 95-98.

[3] John O'Connor, "Description of the Potowmac." *Delaware Gazette* (Wilmington, Delaware) V, no. 256, February 20, 1790. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*, 1.

speculation company that his family invested in, and the nearby city of Alexandria that his brother Lawrence had founded. When Lawrence died four years after founding the city, the financial responsibilities of the Washington family lay in George's hands: maintain the city of Alexandria, develop the Potomac region, and keep the Ohio Company profitable.[4] By 1749, at the age of 17, Washington owned over 40,000 acres of Potomac-adjacent land; if the region succeeded, his personal finances would directly benefit.[5] Despite multiple warning signs that the river was treacherous and impassible, Washington relentlessly pursued government support for his unattainable vision over the next 40 years, receiving investments from Maryland and Virginia in 1784, and by 1791, was granted unrestricted federal power to choose a capital city at any location he desired along the river. In contrast to his popular portrayal as a figure of divine wisdom, George Washington's use of government funding to develop the Potomac River and place the national capital on its waters was motivated by self-interest, with the president circumventing democratic political processes and sharing hypocritical public messaging in an attempt to transform his geologically impossible Potomac dream into reality.

Washington grew up in a family with a long history of western land speculation. In the 1740s, his brothers Lawrence and Augustine helped found the Ohio Company to invest in lands west of Virginia and eventually connect them with the rest of the colony.[6] Lawrence believed that western development along the Ohio River could provide Virginia with more direct access to the northern fur trade and strengthen the colony's economic power. If Lawrence could encourage families to settle in the Ohio River Valley, his company's men would get a return on their investment. To the east, Lawrence founded the city of Alexandria in

[4] Kenneth R. Bowling, *The Creation of Washington, D.C.: The Idea and Location of the American Capital*. Fairfax, VA: George Mason University Press, 1993. p. 110.
[5] Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington: A Biography*. vol. 1, *Young Washington.* New York, NYC. Scribner's Sons, 1948. p. 236.
[6] George Mercer, "Introduction." In *George Mercer Papers: Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia*, edited by Lois Mulkearn, xi–xxii. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954. p. xi.

1749 near his new home at Mount Vernon to connect the developing western lands with a prosperous coastal city.[7] But later that year, Lawrence contracted tuberculosis and died. In the years after his death, George Washington took on the work that Lawrence had started, surveying the river, making frequent trips to Alexandria, and developing Potomac navigation legislation until he was interrupted to command the Continental Army in the 1770s. The frequency of his writings about the Potomac diminished during that time period, with the general sending 113 Potomac-related letters from 1762-1770 and only 21 from 1775 to 1783[8] But after the war, his Potomac activity reignited. Just three months after resigning his commission as commander-in-chief of the army, he sent a message to Thomas Jefferson with a detailed explanation of "the advantages of that communication [the Potomac] & the preference it [should have] over all others…in this State, & Maryland, to adopt & render it facile," claiming that Potomac River development was urgently needed to aid the nation's new economy.[9] He then began to pressure legislators in Virginia and Maryland to pass Potomac legislation, writing to Virginia governor Benjamin Harrison in October 1784 that the creation of Potomac canals under Washington's direction would "mark [Harrison's] administration as an important era in the Annals of this Country."[10]

While Washington portrayed his choice of the Potomac to state legislators and individual citizens as a venture that was economically sensible for the country during its early expansion, the former general knew that the river was inherently a geographically and financially disastrous place to attempt construction, with Washington's only reason for

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[7] Lawrence delivered a petition to the VA House of Burgesses on November 1, 1748:
John Pendleton Kennedy and Henry McIlwaine, *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1742-1747 1748-1749*. Vol. 7. Richmond, Virginia: Colonial Press, E. Waddey Co., 1909. pp. 264-266, quoted in Bowling, *The Creation of Washington D.C.*, p. 109.

[8] George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington, Confederation Series*. Edited by Dorothy Twohig and William Abbot, 6 vols. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1992.

[9] Washington, *Papers of George Washington*., vol. 2. "To Thomas Jefferson, 29 March 1784," pp. 237-241.

[10] Washington, *Papers of George Washington*., "To Benjamin Harrison, 10 October 1784," pp. 86-98.

encouraging river development being his nearby land investments. For one, the Potomac River was unnavigable for most ships; soon after Washington created the Potomac Company (a group of surveyors, politicians, and laborers tasked with clearing the river for commercial travel), the company's members reported back to Washington with accounts of treacherous rocks, the unpassable Great Falls, and sudden drops that totaled 874 feet as they attempted to fulfill the general's wishes.[11] Washington, as an experienced land surveyor in the Potomac region, was well aware of the rapids and sudden descents a few miles upstream from his birthplace; his omission of this detail to Virginia legislators was an act of deliberate negligence. As a result of the river's inherent destructiveness and impassibility, the project put an immense financial burden on the various organizations involved in its development. The Potomac Company, by 1799, shared in an address to stakeholders that nearly the whole stock of the company had been expended on rock removal and lock construction, yet much of the river still remained impassable. The state governments of Virginia and Maryland also squandered large sums by investing in river construction, allocating around $48,000 in 1785 to fund tentative plans for Potomac tolls and canals that remained uncompleted in 1812.[12]

Washington faced an uphill battle against these political, financial, and geographical roadblocks to Potomac River expansion, a project that was so physically improbable that his bills for the project consistently failed in the Virginia and Maryland assemblies for almost 20 years. In 1770, Washington's first Potomac bill, a joint effort with Richard Henry Lee, did not pass the Virginia Senate.[13] In 1784, Washington's dual bills in Maryland and Virginia were

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[11] James Keith, *Great Falls, July 2, 1799: Entrusted as We Are ... to Give You, as a Stockholder, as General a View of Those Interests*. Georgetown, D.C., 1799.

[12] The investment was $220,000 shares, of which the Virginia and Maryland legislatures invested 10%, which is a $44,000 stake. Washington urged several additional investments; the total reached around $48,000. Keith, *Great Falls*, and Corra Bacon-Foster, "Early Chapters in the Development of the Potomac Route to the West." *Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 15 (1912): 96–322. p. 148, 203.

[13] Bowling, *The Creation of Washington D.C.*, p. 111.

both deemed unsatisfactory.[14] Privately, Washington expressed frustration with the lethargy of the two legislatures, writing an exasperated letter to James Madison about his discontent with the "limping conduct" and maddening delays of the public hearing process as the lawmakers discussed his untenable proposals.[15] Washington knew that his bills would never pass without external coaxing. So he decided to interfere, using his reputation as a nationally-renowned war hero to his advantage.

The speed with which Washington developed his multi-pronged approach to persuade the Virginia and Maryland legislators in 1784 was nearly unfathomable. To convince the two legislatures to adopt his Potomac resolutions, he arranged a conference of delegates outside of official assembly hours, personally beseeched the state governor, and, along with local political allies, rushed the bill through both Virginia legislative houses in one day with, as he described, more "hurry than accuracy" for "fear of not getting the report to Richmond" in time.[16] After the sixth night of proceedings in Annapolis, Washington wrote to Madison and complained of an "Aching head" due to his relentless dedication to the passage of these proposals.[17] The initial resolutions passed, but for Washington, the speed was still not enough. In what is now known as the Mount Vernon Conference, Washington brought the legislative proceedings inside his own home in early 1785. The multi-state group of representatives at his estate soon authorized unrestricted Virginian access to Potomac navigation in a move that Washington veiled as a method of expanding interstate commerce.[18]

Washington was quite satisfied with the success of his lobbying efforts in the Maryland and Virginia legislatures. By December 1784, the former general achieved monumental gains;

[14] Corra Bacon-Foster, "Early Chapters." *Records of the Columbia Historical Society,* p. 136.
[15] Washington, "To James Madison, 28 November 1784," in *The Papers of George Washington.* vol. 2, pp. 155-157.
[16] Washington, "To James Madison, 28 December 1784," in *The Papers of James Madison*. Edited by Dorothy Twohig and William Abbot. vol. 13, pp. 231-235.
[17] Washington, "To James Madison… 28 December 1784," in *Papers of James Madison*, pp. 231-235.
[18] Bowling, *The Creation of Washington D.C.*, p. 120.

the committees had chartered Washington's Potomac Company, authorized state-funded surveyors to begin examining land around the Potomac, and invested $44,000 in the Potomac Company to develop roads and canals leading westward from the Potomac.[19] Each of these committees, of course, was no independent body; their members consisted of men like Samuel Chase, Horatio Gates, and John Calwader, who had served under Washington during the war and presented almost no opposition as Washington redirected thousands of state dollars towards his pet project.[20] Washington had almost everything ready to ensure his Potomac venture succeeded. All that remained were the people who would populate the river valley.

The future president's furious scramble of Potomac-related letters once again quieted down in the late 1780s as the Potomac Company commenced operations and Washington tended to governmental affairs as president of the Constitutional Convention. But five years after his resounding success in the Annapolis legislature, President Washington received the news he was looking for. On July 12th, 1790, he was presented with a bill from Congress that authorized him to locate the capital city anywhere he wanted along a 68-mile stretch of the Potomac.[21] Using his political and geographical expertise, Washington selected a site, created a commission of experienced local politicians, lawyers, and land dealers for land development, and, after an exhaustive tour through the local towns of the region in October 1790, chose a site near the Anacostia fork of the river. Washington's choice was commended both at the time and by many later historians, with many considering it highly beneficial for the country that our capital was chosen by Washington himself. Douglass Southall Freeman, in his 1948 biography of the President, wrote that "The wisdom of this counsel, with the

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[19] Corra Bacon-Foster, "Early Chapters." *Records of the Columbia Historical Society,* p. 148.
[20] Frederick Green, *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Delegates of the State of Maryland: November Session, 1784*. Annapolis, MD: Printed by Frederick Green, 1785. pp. 63-65.
[21] George Washington, "Diary entry: 12 July 1790" in The Diaries of George Washington. Edited by Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig. vol. 6, *1 January 1790 – 13 December 1799*. Charlottesville, VA: UVA Press, 1979. p. 94.

weight of Washington's popularity behind it, was…irresistible."[22]

But as in 1785, Washington, in reality, prioritized his financial interests when locating the capital, deciding, *before* he surveyed the land and obtained congressional approval, that the district would be located adjacent to Mount Vernon, encompass the city founded by his brother, and be developed by a commission of Virginia landowners who had invested in his Potomac Company. In the summer of 1790, three months before surveying the land for the capital city, Washington met with Madison and Jefferson to ask their advice about how to choose a capital given the restraints in the bill that Congress had passed. Several weeks later, the two responded with a set of recommendations for the president, which included methods for including his brother's city of Alexandria in the district's jurisdiction without directly violating the law. Madison, for one, noted that the Residence Bill passed by Congress did not specifically exclude the Western bank (Virginia) of the river where Mount Vernon is located, it just implied that, writing, "The legality of this seems to be decided by the clause confining the purchase…'to the East side of the river'… which imply that the *whole* district was not *necessarily* to be on that side."[23] Jefferson, too, in his letter, heartily endorsed Washington's inclusion of Alexandria within the district, recommending that Washington extend the district as far east and south as possible, with the new district encompassing all of Alexandria, incorporating more Virginian territory than was initially intended by the law, and ending with a border less than four miles away from the town of Mount Vernon. By March of the following year, Washington had surveyed the new location with his hand-picked commissioners, one of whom, Charles Carroll, allowed Washington to bypass the legal ambiguities of the Residence Act by introducing an amendment that extended the capital to

[22] Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington, vol. 7, First in Peace*, p. 300.
[23] Bowling, *The Creation of Washington D.C.*, p. 120.

Alexandria and greater Virginia.[24] Carroll, of course, did not choose the updated location solely to support the president's vision of a more united nation. He, along with the other commissioners, was a major investor in the Potomac Company.[25]

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of Washington's self-described "scheme" was that it went largely unnoticed by most of the oft-critical newspaper editors and politicians of the time. Washington, especially in his most ambitious career undertakings — fighting the Revolutionary War and navigating the sectional divides of the late 1790s — faced intense scrutiny from pamphleteers, newspaper editors, army officers, and politicians, receiving criticism about his foreign policy, military tactics, and interpretation of the Constitution.[26] But in 1784 and 1790, during the creation of the Potomac Company and Washington DC, respectively, Washington was at two of the apexes of his public image; any editorial attack on him was more a character judgment of the writer than it was on the national hero. In 1784, Washington had recently submitted his humble resignation as commander-in-chief of the army, and in early 1790, he had just returned from his October tour the previous year to "cordial enthusiasm…love and admiration" across the Eastern seaboard.[27] Washington was in such a position of national reverence that he could chuckle over the complaints of northern traders who were furious that their states would lose commerce to the new waterway. In November 1785, a merchant who dined at Mount Vernon described Washington nonchalantly shrugging off their criticism, writing, "he is quite pleased at the idea of the Baltimore

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[24] Bowling, *The Creation of Washington D.C*., p. 217.
[25] Peters, Richard. *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America, from the Organization of the Government in 1789, to March 3, 1845*. Vol. 1. Boston: C.C. Little and J. Brown, 1845. pp. 214-215.
See also: Costanzo, Adam. *George Washington's Washington: Visions for the National Capital in the Early American Republic*. The University of Georgia Press, 2018. p. 35.
[26] For a notable example, see Thomas Paine, "To George Washington from Thomas Paine, 30 July 1796," The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series. pp. 515-541.
[27] Woodrow Wilson, *George Washington.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1897. p. 282-283.

merchants laughing at him, and saying it was a ridiculous plan, and would never succeed."[28] Washington was not seriously concerned about minor political complaints; they were to be expected in any extensive land negotiation.

But perhaps the most compelling reason for the lack of criticism that Washington received for his Potomac scheme was that Potomac development appeared to be a genuinely beneficial political, economic, and military investment for the country made by the respected president, even if it also served his own interests. In September 1789, former army colonel Thomas Hartley summarized the situation succinctly, stating: "It is true he has a strong bias for the Potomac, but the rules of candor and honors which have ever governed him in life would not have been deviated from upon this occasion."[29] Modern historians continue to adopt this viewpoint, including biographers Edmund S. Morgan, Joseph Ellis, and Ron Chernow. Morgan, for instance, wrote that "Washington believed that as a private citizen pursuing his own interests he could still be working for the good of the nation."[30] Indeed, a successful capital at the nation's geographic center would provide the political and economic unity that the fragile country needed. Despite Washington's war victories, the nation was still surrounded by hostile enemies, with Great Britain, Spain, and Native Americans all encroaching on the country's borders. One writer for the *Pennsylvania Mercury* placed high stakes on the success of Washington's plan, stating on June 19th, 1790, that "the disputes of the residence of Congress...[are not] of a trifling nature. They amount to this: whether the United States shall be governed by Great Britain, or whether the middle states shall be sacrificed."[31]

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[28] John Hunter, "An Account of a Visit Made to Washington…in 1785," in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 17, no. 1 (1893): 76–82. p. 78 quoted in Wilson, *George Washington*, p. 252.
[29] Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington: A Biography*. vol. 6, *Patriot and President.* New York, NYC. Scribner's Sons, 1948. p. 232.
[30] Edmund S Morgan,"The Aloof American," in Higginbotham, ed., *George Washington Reconsidered*, 287–308. University Press of Virginia, 2001.
[31] "It is an egregious error." *Pennsylvania Mercury, and Universal Advertiser* (Philadelphia, PA), no. 563, June 19, 1790. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*, 1.

In addition, the benefits of river construction extended beyond national security; it could also encourage and strengthen western settlement that would support the new country. As a property owner of western *and* eastern lands, Washington understood Americans' desire for an independent lifestyle out West but saw firsthand how disjointed the country's two halves could become if they waited for the federal government to provide a sense of national unity. As a result, he supported a policy called progressive seating, where Americans would rapidly settle Western lands with the support of private investments (like those of the Potomac Company) before sluggish federal bureaucracy had officially made that territory into a state. Many historians, including Joseph Ellis, connect Washington's westward-facing governmental policy with his private business ventures, suggesting that "The Potomac River Company…was a private model for what the federal government should be doing publicly."[32]

Washington also hoped that a large, central river, in addition to encouraging Western settlement, could help address the growing divide between Western settlers and the Eastern urban elite, writing in a diary entry in 1784 that "To restrain the extension of the navigation of these rivers…would be a separation of the Western Settlers from the old and more interior [elite-led] government," thereby causing a gradual breakdown of American unity.[33] A large, powerful river blossoming with commerce could foster continuous connection between the West and the East, preventing the creation of even more geographically-based political divides that could plunge the nation into bloody conflict (as they did by the end of his presidency).

Washington's decision to invest in westward-facing Potomac River projects seemed to be chosen at an opportune moment in the nation's history, arriving at the convergence between a new era of American industrialism, expansionism, and political development. The

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[32] Joseph J. Ellis, *His Excellency: George Washington*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. p. 155.
[33] George Washington, "Diary entry: 4 October 1784," in *The Diaries of George Washington*. vol. 4*, 1 September 1784 – 30 June 1786*. pp. 57-71.

combination of the first national peace in more than a decade, the development of new transportation technologies, and the western boundaries of the nation no longer being dictated by the British meant that a flood of western American settlement was likely. In the fall of 1785, when the engineer James Rumsey presented a rapidly-moving paddlewheel steamboat to Washington, the future president was ecstatic, recognizing his invention as "one of those circumstances which have combined to render the present epocha…favorable above all others for securing…a large portion of…the Western Settlements," and soon hired Rumsey to work at the Potomac company.[34] If there were to be any waterway to the west that Rumsey's boat would traverse, the Potomac was the clear choice; Pennsylvania rivers, according to Washington, appeared to be filled with "rocks and rapids," and New York was facing "insurmountable" political obstacles at the time.[35]

However, Washington's internal letters highlight that the future president knew the reality of the situation: the Potomac was inordinately expensive to develop and impossible to be used as a gateway to the West. As early as 1770, he remarked that "the channel of commerce between [the colonies] and that immense tract of country...through illtimed [sic] Parsimony and supineness may be wrested from us & conducted through...the Susquehanna,"[36] suggesting that any frugal citizen would recognize the Susquehanna project's financial advantage over the Potomac. By late 1785, the Potomac Company's efforts to clear the river had rapidly deteriorated; their expenses sharply increased as they searched for alternative methods of river traversal. When Washington realized that Rumsey's steamboat was unable to navigate the challenging waters of the Potomac's Great Falls, Washington began desperately developing a plethora of proposals in response that spanned everything from procuring slave

[34] Washington, "Diary entry: 4 October 1784," in *The Diaries of George Washington*. vol. 4. pp. 57-71.
[35] Corra Bacon-Foster, "Early Chapters." *Records of the Columbia Historical Society,* p. 246.
[36] Washington, "To Thomas Johnson, 20 July 1770," *Papers of George Washington*, vol. 8, pp. 357-360.

laborers and hiring a European construction superintendent to purchasing "chains floated by buoys" to slowly pull boats up the river at a high expense.[37]

In addition to the Potomac's financial disadvantages that Washington failed to publicly admit, Washington also omitted many of the physical impediments within the river. In October 1784, he dismissed the mountains that obstruct the Potomac as a minuscule triviality, writing that "The only difficulty in the way (and that a very trifling one) is…[that] the River is hemmed in by…Mountains on each side."[38] Washington also privately acknowledged to Jefferson, too, that the river was not clear of obstacles, stating that in its present state, "navigation of Potowmac… [seems] impracticable, on account of the many falls, rapid water, and rugged banks which are to be found in its course."[39]

To the public, however, Washington described difficulties rapidly vanishing, writing to several senators in 1785 that "We have got the Potomac navigation in hand;" "no man who has any knowledge of the river Potomac, harbours a doubt of the practicability of its navigation," and began to ask for government funding for canals and locks, while just months earlier, wrote extensively about the expenses and impracticalities that would be incurred with canal construction.[40] "Canals & Locks, besides the natural decay of them," he had written in September 1785, would probably be…"choaked with drift wood—Ice—and other rubbish which would be thrown therein."[41]

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to Potomac expansion was that the river simply did not extend very far west, a problem that even the most cutting-edge paddlewheel steamboat could not solve. While his company could construct financially burdensome canals and locks to

[37] Washington, "To Benjamin Harrison, 10 October 1784," in *The Papers of George Washington*. vol. 2. pp. 250-252.
[38] Washington, "Diary entry: 4 October 1784," in *The Diaries of George Washington*. vol. 4, pp. 57-71.
[39] Washington, "To Thomas Jefferson…13 February 1789," in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 14, *8 October 1788 – 26 March 1789*, ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958. pp. 546-549.
[40] Washington, "To Robert Morris, 1 February 1785," in *Papers of George Washington,* vol. 2, pp. 309-315.
[41] Washington, "Diary entry: 3 August 1785," in *The Diaries of George Washington*. vol. 4, pp. 171-173.

traverse the existing river, no amount of investment would create Washington's powerful Appalachian floods and "great avenue into the western country" from the Potomac's true westward terminus of a stagnant creek that never extended outside of Virginia.[42] Today, the source of the Potomac remains nearly identical to how Washington would have seen it. Just one stone marks the river's northern limit, with the creek slowly trailing off into an uninhabited dead-end at the edge of a remote West Virginia forest.

Overall, a more careful analysis of Washington's involvement in the development of the Potomac reveals that our country's most revered founding father, at the height of his national popularity, was engaged in a scheme to redirect state funds towards his private investments. To the president, his Potomac land venture was merely an extension of his typical business dealings; it did not matter that he now carried the authority of the most powerful man in the country. Like Washington, many modern scholars dismiss the implications of his failed pet project, remaining firm in their belief that he was "incapable of illusion, fully attuned to the specter of evil in the world."[43] However, Washington's desire to put personal profit over the country's financial interests reflects more than just on his leadership in the 1780s, that the acclaimed "wonder of a world" and an "interposition of providence" would prioritize his own wealth over the nation's investments.[44] As the questionable business dealings of the nation's highest executive and judicial leaders increasingly come into question, Washington's Potomac scheme of 230 years ago highlights that our even wisest leaders today need to be reined in with checks on their power. Perhaps our founding days are not as distant as we make them out to be.

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[42] Washington, "To Thomas Jefferson, 31 August 1788." in *The Papers of George Washington*, vol. 6, pp. 491-495.
[43] Joseph J. Ellis, *His Excellency: George Washington*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. p. 272.
[44] Stillman, "An Extract from an Oration," p. 1.

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From “Defilement” to “Modernity”: How Japan's Encounter with the West Brought Beef to the Table

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The long Tokugawa – Meiji transition (1850s – 1880s) is arguably one of the most profound socio-economic transitions that Japan underwent in its history. This paper uses beef consumption in Japan as a lens to further investigate the players involved in this transition. Historically more eschewed than other types of meat and tightly associated with the notion of the “other,” beef became an embodiment of progress and modernity during the Meiji Period. Through tracing the historical shift in the Japanese perception of beef, this paper argues that the evolution of beef consumption corresponds to the radically shifting attitudes of the Japanese towards the West.

To address the current research gap in the reception and integration of beef into Japanese cuisine, this paper starts the investigation from the late Tokugawa period. The early story of a “beef culture” reflects that a large part of Japan's modernization efforts was initiated by pioneering merchants and curious individuals in the late Tokugawa treaty ports. The paper also examines the diverse reactions of common Japanese toward beef, an essential part of the larger “westernization” campaign during the early Meiji period. Through popular folk literature and artworks, journals from western visitors, and an array of sources on Japanese food market, this paper illustrates that as Japan encountered Western culture in the nineteenth century, her people simultaneously resisted and adapted to it, creating a unique blend of tradition and modernity that was embodied in dishes like *gyūnabe* (beef stew).

Introduction

Perhaps surprisingly, Japan, the nation that monopolizes one of the world's finest beef today, does not have a long history of beef eating. In fact, meat in general rarely appeared on Japanese dining table since the eighth century. It was not until the "forced opening" of Japan's ports after 1850s that this taboo gradually diminished with the introduction of Western cuisine. In January 1872, Emperor Meiji, the new figure head of Japan in replace of the Tokugawa shogunate, publicly announced that he and the Empress enjoyed beef and mutton regularly, marking an end to the centuries-old official ban on meat eating.[1] The Meiji government then actively encouraged the consumption and production of meat, which played an essential role in the national campaign of rapid modernization and integration of Western customs throughout the late nineteenth century.

Beef deserves particular attention in this radical dietary shift and the political transformation happening in the background. Several historians and archaeologists have noted that although meat consumption existed in the Tokugawa period, beef was almost always conspicuously eschewed.[2] There were indeed much fewer existing records of domestic consumption of beef before 1860 in comparison to that of other domestic animals. Within two decades, however, beef not only became closely intertwined with the notion of "civilization" among the progressive Japanese, but also appeared more frequently than any other type of meat in Meiji literary discussion and artistic works.

How did the Japanese change from reluctant recipients to active proponents of beef-eating? And why beef, in particular, experienced such a tremendous status change during this period? To answer these questions, this paper examines the historical shift in the Japanese notion of beef from a source of "defilement" to an embodiment of "modernity" in the

[1] Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power, and National Identity* (Wiltshire: Cromwell Press, 2006), 24.
[2] Hans Martin Krämer, "'Not Befitting Our Divine Country': Eating Meat in Japanese Discourses of Self and Other from the Seventeenth Century to the Present," *Food and Foodways* 16 (2018): 38.

Tokugawa - Meiji transition (1850s – 1880s). It argues that a close study on the evolution of beef consumption in Japan corresponds to the radically shifting attitudes of the Japanese towards the West in the latter half of the nineteenth century, serving as a historical basis to understand how Japan during this period resisted, embraced, and adapted Western culture.

While a growing number of scholars have taken up the role of food in Japanese history, most of them focused on its political implication in the Meiji and interwar periods. The "sudden" acceptance of meat since the Meiji period is frequently brought up in these discussions due to its tight association with the government's efforts in rapid modernization. Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, for example, elucidates in her book *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power, and National Identity* that the new Meiji government was actively involved in propagating and elevating meat-eating "into the symbol of Japan's transformation into a modern nation."[3] William Steele's study (2003) on Meiji diplomacy also includes the adoption of meat as one of the imperial government's creative attempts in participating equally in the international order.[4]

There is, however, not yet a scholar effort to differentiate beef from other types of meat nor examine its history thoroughly. Different from the common narrative, the fashion of beef consumption predated the formation of the Meiji government by at least a decade. To fully understand this story, one must also look at the treaty ports in the late Tokugawa era. As Simon Partner contends in his book *The Merchant's Tale*, much of the groundwork for Japan's spectacular leap into modernity during the Meiji period was in fact laid in the Tokugawa period.[5] Treaty ports like Yokohama acted as a conduit for foreign cultures, a laboratory for adaptation, and a catalyst for changes. More importantly, what drove the transformations in

[3] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 33.
[4] William M. Steele, *Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History* (Richmond: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 132.
[5] Simon Partner, *The Merchant's Tale: Yokohama and the Transformation of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 219.

these cities was not the elites nor officials, but "mundane profits seekers."[6] The early story of beef in Japan supplements this argument perfectly: the first foreign and Japanese butcher shops were all established in Yokohama, and Yokohama merchants were the first to promote beef to the Japanese. Through tracing the beef-eating culture starting from the late-Tokugawa treaty ports, this paper further consolidates the emerging claim that a large part of Japan's modernization efforts was not initiated by ruling elites in the Meiji period but by pioneering merchants and curious individuals in the late Tokugawa era.

Moreover, there is also a considerable absence in the existing study of how the non-elite Japanese perceived and reacted toward beef, an essential part of the larger "westernization" trend during the Tokugawa – Meiji transition. More than the state records and scholar pamphlet, the diverse reactions of common Japanese toward this dietary transition further speak to the complex facets that feudal Japan underwent in accepting western cultures. Akira Shimizu in his dissertation *Eating Edo, Sensing Japan* provides a successful model to analyze the role of Japanese merchants in driving the national taste for pork.[7] I fully align with his emphasis on the agency of ordinary masses in social transformation, and thus use his work as a guideline for my discussion on beef. Through the lens of folk accounts and popular artworks, this paper uses beef to illustrate that the Japan's "westernization" was not a simple "copy and paste" process but involved a complicated interplay of rejection, selection, and adaptation.

This paper is divided into three main sections. The first section draws a rough landscape of meat eating in pre-modern Japan, specifically investigating beef's relative absence and why it was historically tied to the notion of the "other." The second section is devoted to a close look into the emergence of beef-eating in the Tokugawa treaty ports, particularly Yokohama, in the 1850s. Numerous Japanese and English journals and woodblock prints provide

[6] Partner, *The Merchant's Tale*, 211.
[7] Akira Shimizu, "Eating Edo, Sensing Japan: Food Branding and Market Culture in Late Tokugawa Japan, 1780–1868" (Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011).

fascinating details on this cultural exchange. The third section then moves the setting to Edo (modern-day Tokyo) and examines the various Japanese efforts in "domesticating" beef in the Meiji period by analyzing a few intellectual and artistic works that discuss beef as a new way of life. In doing so, this paper concludes that the dynamic interplay between beef and modernization can be viewed as an epitome of Japan's active but selective integration of Western customs, a process that extended from the late Tokugawa to the early Meiji period.

Meat Consumption in Pre-modern Japan

In 675 C.E., Emperor Tenmu issued the first official decree prohibiting meat eating in Japan, outlawing the eating of beef, horse, dog, monkey, and chicken from late spring until early autumn, the height of the farming season. As the leading Japanese food historian Naomichi Ishige explains, the main purpose of this ban was to discourage the practice of eating beef and horse meat among the peasantry and "protect the livestock population that was already sparse to prevent drought, insect damage and famine."[8] Farming animals were essential for agricultural production, but for an island country with limited arable land, raising big livestock like cattle was also resource intensive. It was therefore in the best interest of the government to discourage consumption to ensure a steady output of grains.

Furthermore, Naomichi suggests that this decree could also be interpreted as a reflection of the Buddhist teachings considering the wide range of animals included.[9] Buddhism was introduced to Japan during the seventh century and most of its adherents, including Emperor Tenmu, viewed meat eating as a violation of the Buddhist principles of refraining from unnecessary killing. Additionally, Japan's native religion Shintoism considered blood and dead

[8] Naomichi Ishige, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food* (London: Kegan Paul, 2001), 53.
[9] Naomichi, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food*, 55.

bodies as "impure" elements that should be avoided.[10] Together, these two religions further bounded meat eating with the notion of defilement and bolstered the cultural taboo.

In the following twelve centuries, these economic and religious considerations motivated an expanding governmental prohibition and a public avoidance of all types of meat. Hans Martin Krämer's study indicates that since the time of Emperor Tenmu's edict, only the outcast communities that dealt with animal slaughtering continued to consume dead mammals openly. These groups were thus socially stigmatized and often referred to in the derogatory term *eta* 穢多(two Chinese characters that translates to "impure many" or "much filth"),[11] which corresponded to their inferior social status.

By the Tokugawa period (1603 – 1868), the government again reinstated and specified a series of meat prohibitions. The fifth shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (r. 1680-1709) even went as far as banning the "killing of all living creatures in any form."[12] An increasing number of Tokugawa literature included "not eating meat" as a unique defining component of the "Japanese identity," accentuating the narrative of Japan's cultural distinctiveness and supremacy. One voluminous work on Japanese food published early in 1697 says, "About China and the barbarian countries we say that if it is not meat, they don't eat it, while fish is what we desire."[13] Readers were thus advised to avoid eating meat because it is a foreign and inferior practice.

As another example, in response to the intrusion of foreign vessels in Japanese waters in the early nineteenth century, Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863), an important Confucian scholar who contributed to Japanese nationalist thought, similarly antagonized Westerners as "wily,

[10] Krämer, "'Not Befitting Our Divine Country,'" 36.
[11] Krämer, "'Not Befitting Our Divine Country,'" 37.
[12] Beatrice M. Bodart-Bailey, "The Laws of Compassion," in *The Dog Shogun: The Personality and Policies of Tokugawa Tsunayoshi*, 128-43 (University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 129.
[13] Krämer, "'Not Befitting Our Divine Country,'" 49.

meat-eating barbarians."[14] This phrase reflects how meat-eating was an undesired, if not detrimental practice, that was associated closely with the "other" with a culture less sophisticated than Japan.

However, it must also be noted these stringent government prohibitions and cultural taboos were mostly targeting the consumption "red meat," or that of domestic four-legged mammals. Game meat (the meat of an animal that is typically find in the wild) and that of large marine mammals like whales appeared more frequently in the Tokugawa cookbooks and beast markets.[15] In a travel diary to Ise shrine written in 1848, for example, the author provides a menu of the banquet that clearly features crane,[16] reflecting a rather ambiguous attitude toward game meat even among the pilgrims.

The Absence of Beef

Among all types of meat, consumption of beef was clearly more forbidden than others. In 1616, the Tokugawa shogunate announced an individual ban on the slaughter of cattle and the sale of those that died naturally. The "Edict of Mourning" in 1688 also deemed physical contact with dead cattle and horses as the most serious defilement, sentencing the offender to a period of 150 days compared to 70 days for those of other four-legged mammals, such as pigs, deer, and wild boar.[17] While most scholars agreed that these bans were primarily driven by the need to protect cattle for agriculture, the clear restrictions on handling dead cattle in the edict reflect that the shogunate hoped to reach such a goal not through accentuating cattle's

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[14] See Aizawa Seishisai, *Shinron* (New Theses, 1825); translated in Constantine Vaporis, *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life During the Age of the Shoguns*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 106: "Unless a Great Hero bestirs himself to assist Heaven's normative processes, all creation will fall prey to the wily, meat-eating barbarians…"
[15] See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*; Shimizu, "Eating Edo, Sensing Japan"; Jakobina K. Arch, *Bringing Whales Ashore: Oceans and the Environment of Early Modern Japan* (University of Washington Press, 2018).
[16] Anon, "Ise sangu kondate dochuki," trans. Laura Nenzi, in *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryo shusei*, vol 20, ed. Haraguchi Torao, Takeuchi Toshimi, and Miyamoto Tsuneichi, 601-620 (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobo, 1972).
[17] Akira Shimizu, "Meat-Eating in the Kojimachi District of Edo," in *Japanese Foodways: Past and Present*, ed. Eric C. Rath and Stephanie Assmann (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 93.

practical values, but through spurring deep social antipathy toward the consumption of beef. Consistent with the emphasis of these Tokugawa edicts, Akira Shimizu's investigation on the beast market in Edo reveals that although eating mammal meats was more common than generally believed, there was an obvious "preference for game animals and the avoidance of beef."[18] Kaneko Hiromasawa's archaeological excavation, similarly, indicates that while wild boar, deer, bears, dogs, and horses were all part of the Tokugawa period diet, beef is conspicuously absent from the list.[19] The ambiguous attitude toward meat arose in the Tokugawa period did not extend to beef.

In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry arrived unannounced in Edo Bay with a fleet of American warships, demanding Japan end its policy of seclusion to the West. The Tokugawa government had little choice but to comply, signing a series of "unequal treaties" that opened five ports to unimpeded trade and foreign settlements. As a result of this opening, a substantial influx of Western visitors arrived at Japan. Many noted down the peculiar meat-eating landscape in Japan with beef particularly avoided. In the chronicle of his travels in Japan in 1860 and 1861, the Scottish botanist Robert Fortune asserted that the Japanese do not live on vegetables and fish only as he encountered a few butcher shops on the streets of Edo. But he also remarked that he did not find any beef in these shops, "for the Japanese do not kill their bullocks and eat them as we do."[20] The French naval officer Dane Edouard Suenson also observed that although the Japanese in Yokohama "eat pheasant as people in Europe eat chicken," they "do not eat beef at all."[21]

Frustrations about the absence of beef were a constant subject of complain of the Europeans and Americans with culinary traditions that voiced a clear preference for it. Sir John

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[18] Shimizu, "Meat-Eating in the Kojimachi District of Edo," 94.
[19] Kaneko Hiromasawa, "San'ei-chō and Meat-Eating in Buddhist Edo," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 19, no. 2–3 (1993), cited in Krämer, "'Not Befitting Our Divine Country,'" 35.
[20] Robert Fortune, *Yedo and Peking: A Narrative of a Journey to the Capitals of Japan and China* (London: John Murray, 1863), 123.
[21] Cited in Shimizu, "Eating Edo, Sensing Japan," 145.

Rutherford Alcock (1809 - 1897), the first British diplomatic representative to live in Japan, exclaimed in his 1863 journal, "Have my reader ever realized what it is for months or years never to taste beef or mutton? If not, I can tell them the most robust philosophy quails under such a prospect."[22] When he finally managed to secure some beef, Alcock lamented on its low quality, as the only cattle that could be obtained were "taken from the plow" and "old and worn-out."[23] Only on rare occasions, foreign residents in the treaty ports were able to receive fresh beef imported from Shanghai.[24]

In sum, although it is inaccurate to simply generalize pre-modern Japan as a meat-free country, red meat was certainly never an essential part of the Japanese diet since the eighth century. There is an especially noticeable avoidance of beef due to cattle's agricultural importance, the notion of defilement, and its negative connotation with the "barbarian" civilization. By the late Tokugawa period, when the country was just opened to the West, the general population in Japan still did not eat beef, nor was there a local supply for it.

Beef and "Barbarians:" Resistance

Among the five ports that opened to the Western powers, Yokohama stood out due to its proximity to Edo and came to serve as the center of Japan's encounter with the West in the final years of the Tokugawa period.[25] Within a decade, the city quickly transformed from a shabby fishing village to a cosmopolitan emporium and "a byword for exoticism, glamour, and prosperity,"[26] attracting Japanese and foreigners alike. The intense curiosity and fascination of the rest of the country towards the influx of Westerners also prompted an outpouring of

[22] Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan* (New York: Bradley Co., 1863), 173.
[23] Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon*, 96.
[24] Hugh Cortazzi, *Victorians in Japan: In and Around the Treaty Ports*, Bloomsbury Academic Collections (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), 76.
[25] Partner, *The Merchant's Tale*, xxvii.
[26] Partner, *The Merchant's Tale*, 4.

woodblock prints, travelogs, and guidebooks in 1861-1863. They tended to dwell on the strange and exotic lives of the foreigners in Yokohama and are especially valuable in revealing the reaction of the common Japanese to their "first contacts" with the Westerners.

Western butcher shops and westerner's craving for meat appeared frequently among the list of the "bizarre" customs that Japanese artists and authors thought worthwhile to mention. In Hashimoto Sadahide's bestseller *A Record of Observations in the Open Port of Yokohama* published in 1862, there's an excerpt on a western butcher shop in Yokohama. The drawing depicts two hairy and strange-looking Westerners butchering cattle. Their hands and the knife are covered by blood, while their facial expression gives a sense of enjoyment. The text accompanying this drawing depicts the various reactions of the Japanese witnessing this scene: "Japanese who were watching commented on how gruesome, how unsightly, this was; in the meantime, the spectators grew in number…"[27] They also compare cattle slaughtering with that of pigs, as pork stew had become widely popular in Japan. The story eventually ends with the butchers setting loose ten black dogs that scare away the spectators. The caption beside the print reads that even as Americans, those who conducted the business related to butchering could only "live on the extreme edge of town."[28]

Both the text and the print reflect a strong cultural revulsion and bewilderment toward cattle butchering, and to an extent, toward those newcomers and their culture, among the Japanese public in its early contact with the West. The negative association between beef and "foreignness" and "barbarian" established by the Tokugawa intellectuals persisted, so people resisted to eat it as the westerners did. Nevertheless, it is also apparent that the taboo against general meat consumption had started to dismantle, and interest in meat was growing.

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[27] Hashimoto Sadahide, "From Yokohama Kaiko Kenbunshi (A Record of Observations in the Open Port of Yokohama)." In *The Japanese Discovery of America*, edited by Peter Duus (Boston: Bedford Books, 1997), 135-137.
[28] Hashimoto, "From Yokohama Kaiko Kenbunshi, 136.

Beef and Novelty: Embracement

The growing presence of foreigners in Yokohama and their insatiable demand for meat not only brought conflicts but also lucrative business potentials, which eventually motivated some pioneering Japanese businessmen to tap into this "meat business." According to "Yokohama shônin roku" (The List of Yokohama Merchants) published in 1862, seven merchants were registered to sell meat in the city and two of them specifically carried beef, the first in the country.[29] During the 70th anniversary of the Asiatic Society of Japan, Paul Charles Blum (1898 – 1981), an American intelligence officer born and raised in Yokohama, also testified to the development of local butchering with some anecdotes he gathered. According to Blum, one of the first foreign-style butcher shops in the Japanese part of town appears to have been established by a man named Isekuma, who had met intense objection from his wife on his nascent and "undignified" business at first:

> His wife objected to the disgusting innovation. In fact, she objected so strongly that the house had to be divided by a wall, her husband conducting his meat shop on one side while she operated a *meshiya*, or Japanese-style restaurant, on the other. The story has a happy ending. He succeeded; she failed; the wall was removed. [30]

There was limited information on whether these Japanese butchers consumed meat themselves, but the above instances reflect that the strong urge to seek new economic opportunities had surpassed social stigmatization, cultural aversion, and even political prohibitions on beef in the final years of the Tokugawa period. These Japanese butcher shops also brought beef closer to the Japanese residents of the city, normalizing its presence and stimulating public interest.

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[29] Shimizu, "Eating Edo, Sensing Japan," 171 (Table 5).
[30] Paul C. Blum, "Yokohama in 1872: A Rambling Account of the Community in Which the Asiatic Society of Japan Was Founded," in *Culture, Power & Politics in Treaty Port Japan, 1854-1899: Key Papers, Press and Contemporary Writings*, ed. J. E. Hoare, vol 1: Historical Perspectives (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 275.

While these early butchering businesses mostly supplied beef to Western consumers and legations, by the mid-1860s, Yokohama merchants sought to expand their business by promoting beef to the Japanese audience. This, of course, corresponded to the burgeoning curiosity and demand for Western products among the local population in Yokohama. As the volume of international trade skyrocketed, more Japanese in Yokohama had personal contacts with the Westerns, and invoked by curiosity, also tried Western technologies, clothes, lifestyles, and food, including meat dishes.[31] These experiences dispelled the stereotypes associated with the West, which had become a source for new knowledge. The shift in attitude thereby transformed the negative association between beef and the barbaric "other" into a synonym for novelty.

John Black (1826 – 1880), a keen journalist who observed the radical transformations around him in Yokohama, noted that by the mid-1860s "many [Japanese] began to eat meat and declare that they like it … thus giving the best proof of their approbation. As yet, none dared appear openly in foreign costume. Anyone who did so would certainly have been roughly handled. But it was not long before they adopted them without fear."[32] This passage indicates that although the official laws were still in effect, the cultural and social taboo against meat was much lifted among the general population in Yokohama.

In his comprehensive account on the transformation of Yokohama, Simon Partner investigates all sorts of Western influences evident in the port city during this period, pointing out that "not only new modes of transportation but also new habits of clothing, food, housing, and hygiene were taking root in the Tokyo-Yokohama area and spreading into the hinterland."[33] It speaks to the fundamental role of Yokohama, and treaty ports in general, in

[31] Partner, *The Merchant's Tale*, 153.
[32] John Reddie Black, *Young Japan: Yokohama and Yedo, a Narrative of the Settlement and the City from the Signing of the Treaties in 1858, to the Close of the Year 1879 with a Glance at the Progress of Japan during a Period of Twenty-One Years* (San Bernardino: Adamant Media Corporation, 2005), 400.
[33] Partner, *The Merchant's Tale*, 178.

fueling the emergence of a beef-eating fashion before the Meiji government renounced the ban of it. This happened as Japan navigated its transition from a relatively isolated and feudalistic society to an open and modernized one.

Akira Shimizu's study on the meat culture in Edo gives direct support to this assertion. In his discussion of the emergence of beef in Edo, he sheds light on a few anecdotal sources on Nakagawaya Kahei, the first Japanese merchant to handle meat (especially beef considering other types of meat appeared in beast market before) in Edo. Originally from Yokohama, Nakagawaya began to run advertisements for his meat shop in newspapers since 1867. One of those read:

> This person (Nakagawaya) recently opened up a store on the wharf side of the British legation in Takanawa, Edo and sells different kinds of meat. Meat is not only good for health; it is also good for people physically fragile and ill to regain vigor and helps them recover from illness. Moreover, [he will] select different parts [of beef] and make them available at the lowest possible prices. [34]

This advertisement is noteworthy for its promotion of beef as a healthy food option. This narrative is consistent with the promotion of other meats sold in the market. The advertisement also includes an illustration of a cow's body, which is divided into fifteen parts with appropriate methods of preparation, such as boiling, stewing, and roasting. These parts were further divided into five different classes, catering to Japanese customers with varying backgrounds.

Nakagawaya's thorough understanding of the cattle would most likely be result of his with encounters with the western butchers in Yokohama as there were no local precedents of professional cattle butchering in Japan; and his targeted advertisement reflects a rising demand for beef from diverse social classes in Edo. Considering the exceptional antipathy against beef-eating and butchering in pre-modern Japan, this gradual embracement of beef stands as a significant piece of evidence of the emerging revolution in Japanese lifestyle that took root in

[34] Translated and cited in Shimizu, "Eating Edo, Sensing Japan," 159.

the treaty ports as represented by Yokohama. These emporiums served as laboratories for foreign influence and catalysts for drastic cultural and political changes that eventually spread inland in the mid-1860s.

Beef and Modernization: Adaptation

The rule of the Tokugawa government came to an end with the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The goal of the restored imperial government was to break off from the "evil" Tokugawa traditions and modernize the country based on Western models. This goal could be best captured under the slogan: *wakon yosai* ("Japanese spirit, Western technology"). On this note, the taboo on meat eating was frequently brought up as an example of how the undesirable customs of the past prevented the Japanese from gaining equal status in a Western-dominated world, the most prominent advocator being philosopher and educator Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835 –1901).

In his famous piece "On Meat Eating" (1870), Fukuzawa contends that Japan's reliance on a grain-based diet resulted in widespread malnutrition and poor health, which he regarded as a "national loss." Drawing on a powerful metaphor, he then asserts that the Japanese must decide whether to become lions or continue living as sheep by embracing or rejecting meat as a crucial dietary component. He also employs dramatic language to urge his countrymen to accept meat and dairy products as means of strengthening national physique so that "for the first time we will not feel ashamed to be called Japanese."[35] While not eating meat was used as a point of distinction between the Japanese culture and the "other" to argue for Japan's cultural superiority in the Tokugawa era, not merely a century later, it was used by Fukuzawa to reflect the eminent need for reform.

[35] Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Nikushoku no setsu [On Eating Meat]," in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū* [Complete Works of Fukuzawa Yukichi], ed. Keiō Gijuku, vol. 20, trans. Michael Bourdaghs (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1963), 49.

Following Fukuzawa's principles, the issue of meat eating assumed a significant position in Meiji politics on a national level. The acceptance of meat and the shift towards a more protein-rich and Western diet was seen as a sign of progress and modernization, as well as a rejection of traditional dietary customs. Beef, inheriting its tight association with the "primitive" Western culture from the past, gained a new metonymy for "enlightening" Japan with the changing Japanese attitude toward the West. The new Meiji government actively encouraged the domestic production of beef and dairy products, and the emperor himself propagated his consumption of beef in 1872 to chip away at this centuries-old taboo. As Katarzyna J. Cwiertka analyzes, this act has "elevated beef into the symbol of Japan's transformation into a modern nation and translated the reforms of 'civilization and enlightenment' into a language that could be understood easily by the common man."[36] Eating beef was not only not "dirty" anymore, but also necessary for the vigor and survival of the nation: in 1877, on the occasion of the Satsuma Rebellion, canned beef was introduced in the Japanese Imperial Army and served as one the chief field rations of the conscript army ever since.[37]

Corresponding to this political trend, the nation witnessed the rise of a beef-eating fashion among progressive Japanese in the form of *gyūnabe,* a beef stew that was first invented by the chef of Isekuma in Yokohama in 1862.[38] Since Japan at that time lacked a systematic cattle butchering and processing system, the beef, as described by Alcock, was still tough and smelly. To adapt to the appetite of the local commoners, the beef used in this dish was sliced thinly and prepared with traditional Japanese condiments such as *miso* (soybean paste), sugar, and *mirin* (rice wine) to remove the odor.[39] Like many other foreign customs that were adapted

[36] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 33.
[37] More on this, see Colin Jaundrill, *Samurai to Soldier* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016).
[38] Kong Mi-Hee, 'A Consideration of the Characteristics and Historical Background of Japanese Fusion Cuisine Created Through Cross-Cultural Exchanges with the West in Port Cities,' *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures* 7, no. 2 (2018): 99.
[39] Ibid, 101.

in the Meiji period, this fusion dish incorporated beef, a Western ingredient, with Japanese culinary style as a form of successful domestication.

Eating *gyūnabe* emerged as the symbol of a new way of life. Many progressive Japanese rushed to beef stew restaurants and branded themselves as harbingers of enlightenment and advancements. Kanagaki Robun (1829 - 1894), a celebrated playwright of the Meiji era, crafted a satirical portrayal of this new beef-eating fashion in Tokyo in his illustrated monologues titled *Aguranabe* or "Sitting Cross-Legged at the Beef Pot." The novel, written between 1872 and 1873, captures the conflicted reputation of beef restaurants and pokes fun at those beefeaters, a metaphor for a larger group of people who blindly celebrated Westernization as the ideal of Japan's cultural transformation. The novel opens with an account of "Lover of Western Things," in which a young man carrying a Western-style umbrella comes to the beef restaurant and declares the following:

> Excuse me, but beef is certainly the most delicious thing, isn't it…. I wonder why we in Japan haven't eaten such a clean thing before? […] We really should be grateful that even people like us can now eat beef, thanks to the fact that Japan is steadily becoming a truly civilized country. Of course, there are some unenlightened boors who cling to their barbaric superstitions and say that eating meat defiles you […] In the West, they're free of superstition, and that's why they've invented amazing things like the steamship and the steam engine.[40]

In this monologue, Kanagaki plays with contrasting definitions and rhetoric, such as "defile" and "clean," "barbaric" and "civilized" to emphasize the drastic shift in the Japanese perception of beef and the Westerners who consumed it.

Certainly, Kanagaki was not the only one who used beef to illustrate the intense conflict between Japanese traditions and the newly introduced Western culture in the early Meiji period. The famous illustrator Kawanabe Kyosai (1831 - 1889) also used satirical drawings to ridicule this social phenomenon. *Gyūnabe* appears in his well-known triptych "Kaika injun" or "The

[40] Kanagaki Robun, "Things Heard around a Pot of Beef, 1872," in *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Modern Metropolis, 1850–1920*, ed. by Sumie Jones and Charles Shirō Inouye (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2017), 67.

Engine of Progress," which depicts a fight-to-death context between Western imports and native goods. A figure with a mask that writes 牛なべ *(gyūnabe*) appears on the upper right of the print, chasing another that says おでん (*oden*), a traditional Japanese version of the one-pot dish that features fish cakes, tofu, and vegetables but no meat. A man with the head of a cattle is arranged to hold the flag with the title of the print, stressing again the unique and novel role that beef played in Japan's modernization. In another of his drawing titled "The Enlightenment of Fudō Myō−ō", even the protector of the Buddhist Law, *Fudō Myō-ō*, is shown reading a newspaper (another western influence) while his fellow demons are cutting up beef to serve a meat delicacy to this newly "enlightened" beefeater.[41]

While all these literary works and illustrations mentioned above are mostly whimsical in nature and not without exaggeration, one can detect that the radically revolutionized narrative on beef consumption had deep political and cultural significance in early Meiji society. Whether or not to accept beef became a question associated with political and social modernity and an epitome of Japan's struggle with its newfound Meiji identity. Given the historical avoidance and prohibition constructed around beef, this transition was not an easy one. Nonetheless, the *gyūnabe* fashion thrived with the nation's determination to reform and modernize. From the 1850s to 1870s, Japan's capital transformed from Edo, where no beef was found, to Tokyo, the same city but with several hundred establishments that served *gyūnabe*.[42] This early popularization of beef reflects Japan's gradual embracement and adaption of elements of western culture as a part of its own identity. More broadly, this signals the start of Meiji Japan's active participation in a new international order led by the West.

[41] Steele, *Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History*, 34.
[42] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 33.

Conclusion

The journey of beef from a longstanding social taboo to a popular cultural icon in Japan offers valuable insights into the ways in which food can serve as a theoretical lens for analyzing how people perceive themselves in relation to others. Initially, not-eating-meat was viewed as a positive attribute that distinguished Japan from its negative foil, the "meat-eating" Western civilization. This resistance towards beef consumption was rooted in the belief that this was a practice of "barbarians" that were inferior to the Japanese. However, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Japanese began to view the West as a new center of civilization and a model from which to learn. The West was no longer the "other," it became the new "us" that Meiji Japan aspired to emulate and be a part of. Beef, with its prominent role in Western cuisine, became increasingly desirable and even essential as Japan sought to identify itself as a worthy member of the new international order established by the Western powers.

George Orwell once remarked that "the changes in diet are more important than changes in dynasty or even religion."[43] Particularly eschewed and tightly interwoven with the notion of the "other," beef, among all meat, became a central political and cultural symbol during this drastic social transformation. In addition to the common narrative that mainly focuses on Meiji intellectuals and state construction in facilitating this transition, this study demonstrates that this process was also built on the conscious efforts and selection of common businessmen, artists, and writers, and extended from the late Tokugawa to the Meiji period.

Today, *wagyū*, a type of high-end beef from specific breeds of cattle native to Japan, has become an intrinsic part of Japanese cuisine together with many foods with foreign origins, such as ramen from China and curry from India. *Wagyū* is now being exported back to the countries that brought beef to Japan's table. Paradoxically, as much as people want to believe that their "national cuisine" is rooted in the nation's own history and tradition, neither their

[43] George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 107.

dishes nor their national identity was static. They are in a constant state of flux under the influence of other civilizations, as shown in the case of beef in Japan. Whether in the form of an expensive delicacy in a Michelin-starred restaurant or an affordable bowl of *gyūdon* in *sukiya*, beef always stands as a testament to Japan's ongoing attempts to define and redefine its identity under cultural exchange and adaptation.

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À Propos Decolonization:
The "Affaire D'amour" Between The Renault Factory Strikes of 1947 and French Malagasy Discrimination

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In 1947, The Monnet Plan was introduced in France to reinvigorate the economy, which was still feeble after World War II. Its high demands of factory workers soon led to strikes, which quickly gained the support of the French Communist Party. Concurrently, the French government was rapidly decolonizing Madagascar. Newly independent Africans found themselves financially strained in the wake of decolonization and were enticed to immigrate to France in the hopes of attaining economic freedom and citizenship in exchange for labor. These laborers, who were employed by the stricken factories, also garnered the support of the PCF, much to the dismay of the Labor Party and the Rally of the French People. While negotiations ended the strikes, the surveillance state instituted to monitor French-African immigrants perpetuated the class divides, xenophobia, and racism that grew out of the original resistance to The Monnet Plan. Thus the complex power and class dynamics that dominated the French Cold War also played a key role in its creation, as the total submission to the nation via the surveillance state came about as a result of much earlier fears of Blackness, immigration, and migrant labor.

Introduction

French economic recovery after World War II created a dichotomy that saw the government attempt to unite French citizens while rejecting others for the same reason: the demand of the labor market. The Monnet Plan, introduced by Jean Monnet in the autumn of 1946 on the heels of the Second World War, aimed to create a financially independent France through a market stimulated by the state's mainland population. However, citizens began to strike due to the demands of the plan. Strikers soon gained support from the French Communist Party (Parti communiste francais, or PCF). The burgeoning Cold War meant that this made them enemies of the state, the labor party (Confederation Generale du Travail, or CGT), and the Rally of the French People (Rassemblement du Peuple Francais, or RPF), specifically the party's leader and future French President, Charles de Gaulle. The PCF's support extended to Malagasy immigrants who were arriving en masse due to decolonization. Owing to racist, xenophobic, and colonialist ideals compounded by Cold War era fears of communism, French Malagasy immigrants were marginalized and ultimately became victims of the surveillance state. The strikes of 1947, and the Cold War fears undergirded the French reaction against the movement, thus contributing to the discriminatory policies against Malagasy immigrants by the French government in the 1960s and 1970s.

The historical research in this paper requires navigation across two separate events as well as simultaneously occurring timelines, and therefore the guide for this paper will be presented here. Firstly, a brief labor history of France before the strikes will be given, followed by an explanation of the events that occurred during the Strikes of 1947. Then, the paper will discuss the events of French decolonization in Madagascar. Afterward, the two events will be synthesized and analyzed from April 1947 to the conclusion of the strikes in December 1947,

particularly concerning government policy and the role of the PCF. Finally, this paper will investigate the effects that the strikes had on Malagasy laborers in the decades following the strikes.

To properly analyze the history of labor in France, decolonization, and the impacts on Malagasy laborers, both primary and secondary sources were consulted. Academic articles studying the years before, during, and after the strike generally enumerate a great effort by the CGT and RPF to establish France as a global power through economic self-sufficiency or civil unrest in the postcolonial era. While previous research on both topics focuses on their contentious relationship due to the rapid decolonization that took place immediately following World War II, little is found linking the PCF's explicit support to the French state's discrimination of Malagasy laborers. It is also important to acknowledge that much of this literature, while useful in providing context, was manufactured in the United States or Western European nations during the late twentieth century and reflects the author's worldviews, prejudices, and beliefs. While biases are present in all of the sources consulted, great detail has been paid attention to regarding sourcing accounts from various sources. This paper aims to utilize these diverse perspectives to connect the strikes of 1947 to the maltreatment of Malagasy immigrants by arguing that they were due to fears of Communism because of the emerging Cold War.

French Labor and the Monnet Plan

In the aftermath of World War II, the French economy was in a dire state, having been ravaged by a series of battles and the oppressive Vichy regime. These issues were further exacerbated by ineffective efforts to decolonize, which was happening concurrently as a result of postwar economic ruin.[1] The rapid industrial growth of nations like the U.S.S.R and the United

[1] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," *The World Today* 3, no. 3 (1947): 134.

States, and the physical destruction of the state further compounded the grim condition of French industry.[2] However, while the dismal prospects for French industry might indicate total economic hopelessness, French economist Jean Monnet proposed a plan that would "enable France, through the full utilization of her man-power and natural resources, to become a highly developed 'modern' country which will take a full part in international life while at the same time ensuring her independence by the development of essential production and the lowering of costs."[3] French economic recovery was possible through the recomposition of industry which would entail active participation by the French population as laborers and within French industry. Monnet projected that this new labor force comprised of French citizens would make France a modern nation akin to the Soviet Union and the United States while creating an independent state. The independent state would then be able to protect its economy from future devastation comparable to the postwar period. French citizens who felt exploited by the events both during and into the postwar recovery period quickly took to the Monnet Plan, particularly due to the jobs and new economic activity it would create.[4] Thus, the Monnet Plan was established and quickly began to transform the French economy. However, while the reception towards the Monnet Plan was initially quite warm, the workforce soon grew agitated by the intense requests it placed on the very laborers who were meant to benefit most from the plan.

The primary issue many French laborers had with the demands of the Monnet Plan was that they were paid very low wages to grow the economy even faster, which led to a series of strikes organized by the PCF. The issues laborers had with the Monnet Plan were due to the large investment it required of them- citizens were expected to utilize their savings to revive the

[2] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," 134.
[3] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," 134.
[4] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," 140.

economy, as well as to accommodate a higher cost of living.[5] Many laborers felt that the Monnet Plan depended "on the goodwill… of the French themselves" and that relying on this alone was not sustainable.[6] Tensions between laborers and employers due to the stress of the demands of the Monnet Plan reached a climax only six months after its implementation when workers began to strike French factories in the spring of 1947.[7] The largest of these strikes took place in the Renault Factory, which involved nearly 30,000 men and quickly gained the support of The Metal Workers Union and the PCF.[8] This was significant, as party support meant that the strikers held more leverage against the French government in achieving their demands. The government appealed to strikers by urging them "to realize that the maintenance of purchasing power was far more important than increases in wage rates."[9] The government's strategy was to get workers to agree to stimulate the economy out of this "goodwill," and to forgo higher wages for the sake of faster industrial recovery. With the two parties at an impasse on how best to handle the wishes of the laborers with the needs of the Monnet Plan, the government turned to immigrant laborers to hopefully assuage the damage done by the industry strikes.

French African Decolonisation and the Malagasy Uprising of 1947

These immigrant laborers were primarily coming from Madagascar, where France was rapidly decolonizing. French government officials were worried that they could not economically support their colonies, but they could also not afford to lose them as they had lost Vietnam to Japan in 1942.[10] To retain power overseas while economically focusing on mainland France, government officials devised a plan to create what they dubbed territorial nation-states. These

[5] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," 141.
[6] F.L., "French Economic Recovery: The Monnet Plan," 141.
[7] "Chronological Summary of Events: April 21- May 11, 1947," *Chronology of International Events and Documents* 3, no. 9 (1947): 240.
[8] "Chronological Summary of Events: April 21- May 11, 1947," 240.
[9] "Chronological Summary of Events: April 21- May 11, 1947," 240.
[10] Frederick Cooper, "French Africa, 1947-48: Reform, Violence, and Uncertainty in a Colonial Situation," *Critical Inquiry* 40, no. 4 (2014): 468.

territorial-nation states were independent African nations run by French-appointed evolues: French-educated elite from French political institutions.[11] Thus, while these nations would be ruled by a separate government, their political system would still be dominated by colonial power via appointee's ideology.

The existence of colonial ideology in African governments led to revolutions as citizens were not willing to engage in this ideology in the supposed "postcolonial" Africa, evident in the former French colony of Madagascar. Madagascar had struggled with the conception of the nation-state and formed the Democratic Movement for the Renovation of Madagascar (MDRM), a militant party that openly discussed its quest for liberation.[12]The MDRM was a massive network of "educated and uneducated people, of people working within French institutions and Malagasy networks, of different idioms of solidarity and different forms of militancy."[13] If the population was instead comprised of undercover freedom seekers, French colonial powers no longer had any real control over former colonies and consequently could not monetarily benefit from them. Thus when a violent revolution broke out in Madagascar against remaining French militant forces, the French government was quick to blame the MDRM and brutally punished them, attempting to collapse the party.[14] This worked to quell the party, as well as unaffiliated Malagasy citizens who disliked colonial intervention. However, it came at the expense of weakening all political parties in Madagascar. The French government explicitly dictated who could and could not participate in government to benefit their own imperialist interests. For that reason, the governmental bureaus of Madagascar were rife with corruption and weak with uncertainty.

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[11] Cooper, "French Africa," 468.
[12] Cooper, "French Africa," 474.
[13] Cooper, "French Africa," 475.
[14] Cooper, "French Africa," 475.

The weakening of the Malagasy state was occurring nearly simultaneously with the strikes, which gave the French government the unique opportunity to attempt to solve one governmental crisis with another. Dissatisfied Malagasy citizens were more inclined to immigrate to France, as they were "'determined to remain linked to France,'" according to the head of the Rassemblement du Peuple Français (RPF) Charles de Gaulle.[15] Malagasy citizens knew that maintaining a relationship with France would provide them citizenship. Citizenship would allow them to work in Africa or mainland France, which allowed citizens to provide better economic realities for their families, particularly in the wake of the revolution. France benefitted from this relationship because they were able to project the image of a successful decolonization.[16] France thus was able to lead other countries to believe it to be a strong militant force, supplanting the main goal of the Monnet Plan which was to become a powerful independent nation and major world power. Furthermore, it built confidence in the state from mainland French citizens as they were able to reap the benefits of colonialism while taking pride in no longer being a colonial power. The death of the colonial empire in order to instead create a France that was "enriched, ennobled, and expanded" with "a hundred million citizens and free men" was important to the nation's projected image of independence.[17] France no longer wanted dependent colonial nations because their existence implied internal weakness and vulnerability; decolonizing allowed France to continue to benefit from their colonies without their explicit dependence.

Despite the fact that both the French state and the Malagasy immigrants were able to benefit from this relationship, it still very much negatively impacted Madagascar. The foremost

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[15] Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe After Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 160.
[16] Buettner, *Europe After Empire,* 159.
[17] Buettner, *Europe After Empire,* 124.

reason was the loss of African history, which was forsaken in order to create the narrative of a strong French nation. Malagasy citizens were also still suffering under colonial rule; however, the weakened state of the government made it even more difficult for them to revolt in the wake of the revolution. Furthermore, while Malagasy citizens stood to benefit from French citizenship, they were ultimately still beholden to the former colonial empire. The destruction of the MDRM combined with the internal weakness because of the incompetency of the evolues meant that many Malagasy immigrant laborers were forced to choose between their struggling home nation and their former colonizers. Thus, while the decolonial state of Madagascar benefitted both states, Malagasy immigrants entered into an unbalanced power dynamic that granted them the ability to work in France at the expense of prolonged colonial exploitation.

Malagasy immigrants thus came en masse to France at the urging of French officials in order to mitigate the effects of the strike. French officials retained wartime immigration policies that enticed Malagasy citizens to immigrate to France with the promise of citizenship and work opportunities.[18] However, these promises were not all of an improved life- due to the mounting pressure to suppress revolutionaries in Madagascar, labor immigration was a result of the French government utilizing a "firm hand" in their decolonial policies.[19] Essentially, many Malagasy immigrants felt that they had no choice but to immigrate due to the governmental weakness they were experiencing at home. It was thought that in mainland France, they would be better supported by a stronger central government that would be able to look out for their best interests. Therefore, while Malagasy immigration to France in 1947 was not entirely due to solving the strikes, it undoubtedly contributed both directly and indirectly. The French government utilized

[18] Catherine Collomp, "Immigrants, Labor Markets, and the State, a Comparative Approach: France and the United States, 1880-1930," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (1999).
[19] Tony Smith, "A Comparative Study of French and British Decolonization," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20, no. 1 (1978): 86.

decolonial weakness and remaining colonial power in order to incentivize Malagasy immigrants to labor in France during the strikes of 1947 in order to serve their own economic motives.

The PCF, The CGT, and The RPF: Cold War Complications

Decolonization, the strikes of 1947, and the economic tensions between the PCF and the government ultimately came to a head during the Renault strikes when the nation was forced to confront its divided state. As discussed, the Monnet Plan depended on an incredible output of manpower, which was not met in the wake of the strikes. The government decided to rectify the lack of laborers by recruiting immigrants, who would fill the factory positions that strikers had vacated.[20] While appearing to solve the labor shortage, the French government was soon at the mercy of the PCF. The PCF had previously supported Malagasy laborers, and now demanded that "they would not take part in any coalition Government of which the Communists were not members or in the majority supporting it."[21] The PCF's support of the Malagasy people was mostly political, as they wanted to publicly condemn the failure of French decolonization in Madagascar and point out the failures of the independent state due to the Monnet Plan. However, their support of foreign laborers who were intended to break down the very movement they were working so hard to support made it incredibly significant. Malagasy laborers were supported by the opposing party and were thus enticed to join the strikes. With these new strikers and a rapidly expanding party by the day, the PCF was in a position to make demands to the government regarding the involvement of their party. Thus, while the PCF could have solely protected their "own" workers, their movement to forge a relationship with the immigrant laborers created what

[20]F.L., "French Economic Recovery," 139.
[21] "Chronological Summary of Events: April 21- May 11, 1947," 241.

the CGT and the RPF feared the most; Communist solidarity against the government. This created tension, as France's complicated relationship with socialism led them to fear the impact of the PCF on their weak postwar government and in relation, the impact of those the PCF supported like the strikers and the Malagasy immigrants.

Thus the worker's strikes of 1947 were not concerning to France only because it meant a wrench in the Monnet Plan; it indicated a very real threat of losing control of their nation, whose independence and internal strength meant everything in terms of postwar recovery. The PCF's support of the workers was sufficiently concerning, as their storied history of union and labor activism meant that laborers would be more inclined to support the PCF. While the reason for support for the strikes from the PCF "was salary claims in the Renault car factories, the Communists had dissented from the government's colonial policy concerning" Madagascar and the treatment of Malagasy immigrants.[22] The PCF's declaration of support for Madagascar threatened the French government for a host of reasons. Firstly, they feared that the Malagasy immigrant laborers who were meant to intervene in the strike might become strikers themselves, as their position as workers meant that they were likely also experiencing economic hardship under the Monnet Plan. Secondly, the public condemnation of French decolonization directly contrasted with De Gaulle's declaration that France had a peaceful and successful decolonization process. Acknowledging the harm done in Madagascar both internally due to French interference with the MDRM, and externally due to the revolution, meant that the catastrophe of French decolonization would be brought to the attention of the populace. This would not do well to support France in the postwar era. Citizens would likely lose faith in the French government, and this loss of faith could mean greater losses of worker participation and economic stimulation. It

[22] Yves Beigbeder, *Judging War Crimes and Torture: French Justice and International Criminal Tribunals and Commissions (1940-2005),* (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2006), 83.

could also have international repercussions, with nations like Britain and the United States becoming aware of French weakness in the postwar period. They would likely be inclined to intervene, thus decimating the ultimate intention of the Monnet Plan, which was to create an independent and internally strong France. The strikes, therefore, symbolized much more than the internal failure of the Monnet Plan. The moment that the PCF lent their support to the Renault laborers and Malagasy immigrants was the moment that the French government was forced to reckon with the fact that both internal and external loss of governmental control was likely on the horizon if the strikes did not end.

France's complex relationship with socialism greatly contributed to the fears surrounding the growing PCF and ultimately contributed to their anxieties about the Cold War as a country that employed capitalism. While socialist ideals had roots in France before Karl Marx's landmark political pamphlet *The Communist Manifesto*, this point is often seen as the beginning of the formal French Socialist Party.[23] It first gained popularity with the peasantry before spreading to industrial workers, ultimately spurring a massive workers' strike that greatly frightened the French bourgeoisie in 1868.[24] The party continued to gain power, eventually forming The Commune, a revolutionary socialist government that seized control of Paris in 1871.[25] While they did not implement many reforms, The Commune did grant more power to workers' unions and in some cases, turned factory control over to them.[26] By the time the army of Versailles ousted The Commune in May of 1871, attitudes of the bourgeoise became "more conservative and less sympathetic to the workers" while workers became "more extremist."[27] More workers joined the Socialist party after The Commune, encouraged by the victories achieved for laborers

[23] Alan Bullock and F.W.D. Deakin, "Socialism" in *France 1848-1945: Politics and Anger*, edited by Theodore Zelkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 725.
[24] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 740.
[25] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 744.
[26] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 745.
[27] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 747.

and disillusioned towards the bourgeoisie. However, tensions arose within the party and by the late nineteenth century, members were divided as to whether capitalist reform was a better solution than a complete economic overhaul.[28] While eventually unified by French Socialist leader Jean Juares, the fractured nature meant that they had lost a majority of the support of both unions and the peasantry and thus a majority of their power.[29] However, moving into the twentieth century the party slowly began to gain more power in rural territories, as a compromise between radical anarchists and centrist Socialists meant that they slowly gained power again within their previous constituencies.[30] While cities that were traditionally anti-Socialist remained so, the influence of many cities voting Socialist meant that the party regained a great deal of support in the twentieth century.[31] Therefore, while Socialism was not consistently the dominant political party in France, it indeed held a great deal of power. Furthermore, it showed a potential to usurp the French government in power which greatly scared the bourgeoisie. Ultimately, the Socialist party's greatest strength was not consistency or strength but in numbers- its mass appeal to laborers and rural French citizens meant that it had the capability to gain the intense support it once had.

It was this exact loss of governmental control that the RPF feared, as they believed that the interests of the PCF lay not with French strikers, but with the USSR. De Gaulle believed that a solution to the strike was imminent, although this was complicated once the PCF became involved. He "severely criticized the Communists' tendency to penetrate and gain control of labor organizations."[32] The RPF disliked the Communist Party because they saw the

[28] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 756.
[29] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 766.
[30] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 786.
[31] Bullock and Deakin, "Socialism," 787.
[32] Lansing Warren, "DE GAULLE LIKENS AIMS TO TRUMAN'S: Says Their Policies in Present World Crisis Coincide in Defense of Liberties," *The New York Time,* April 24, 1947, 8.

Moscow-aligned movement as "foreign agents and separatists."[33] Once again, the PCF was seen as attempting to undermine French post-recovery efforts by weakening the government through foreign influence. The RPF believed that the PCF was supporting the strike not to alleviate worker exploitation but to gain control of labor unions and thus generate party support. The RPF and by extension, the French government believed that the foreign influence supposedly within the PCF would further weaken their state. It was therefore in the best interests of the RPF and by extension the French government to conduct negotiations with the strikers as quickly as possible, as they did not want to risk a further weakening of the state.

What ensued were several violent months of negotiations that eventually came to a close in December 1947. While De Gaulle declared that he felt that "by the people within all forms of national activity that French internal divisions could be overcome," what actually occurred was the strict exclusion of the Communist party from French political office.[34] On May 5, 1947, two weeks after the Renault strikes, the PCF was banned from governmental participation by President Paul Ramadier.[35] However, this did not quell insurrectional strikes, which reached another height in November of that year after the victory of the RPF in the municipal election.[36] These violent strikes were followed by aggressive discussions, wherein the National Assembly sided with the RPF and the CGT (French labor party)- workers were told to return to the factory.[37] The CGT and the RPF appeared to be victorious in the immediate aftermath of the negotiations. The strikes had ended and the workers were forced to return to the factories, which the CGT and RPF believed would once again create a unified France.

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[33] Robert G. Neumann, "Formation and Transformation of Gaullism in France," *The Western Political Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1953), 252.
[34] Warren, "DE GAULLE LIKENS AIMS TO TRUMAN'S," 8.
[35] Pierre Bois, "The Renault Strike of April and May 1947," *Lutte Ouvriere,* no. 143 (1971).
[36] Francois Tarrant, "The Stalinist Apparatus and the Renault Strike of 1947," *Jeune Revolutionnaire*, no. 26 (1971).
[37] Tarrant, "The Stalinist Apparatus and the Renault Strike of 1947."

However, the strikes only left France more divided and internally unstable, even shortly after the negotiations. Only two weeks after the discussions concluded, the CGT split and a majority of ex-party members joined the PCF.[38] This was troubling for the government not only because of the clear lack of support for the labor party and thus the Monnet Plan but also because of the increasing size of the PCF. Secondly, the PCF's outright support of the Malagasy people in the wake of French decolonization encouraged more frequent and more violent uprisings against French evolues.[39] This destabilized the territorial nation-state and had grave implications for the future of French economic and political success within their former colonies. It also meant that the French government was weakened politically and financially in the wake of negotiations, and had to dedicate the few resources they had to fight the counter-insurgencies. Thus in an attempt to grow stronger, firstly by implementing the Monnet Plan, secondly by decolonizing, and third by fighting the strikes, the French government had severely weakened its power.

Yet, rather than attempting to forge more peaceful relationships with members of the PCF and aligned parties, the French government only heightened its aggression towards members of the party. This strategy was remarkably similar to what they employed in Madagascar, which ultimately ended up resulting in harsher counter-rebellions in the wake of the strike. In order to retain a modicum of power, the French government needed a group to exercise power over. The PCF was at the height of its power, with over half a million members, and had just achieved its best polling results in history.[40] However, the French government was not deterred from alienating members of the PCF, specifically Malagasy immigrants. While racism and xenophobia certainly played no small role in the discrimination against Malagaasy immigrant laborers, the

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[38] Tarrant, "The Stalinist Apparatus and the Renault Strike of 1947."
[39] Beigbeder, *Judging War Crimes and Torture: French Justice and International Criminal tribunals and Commission,* 82.
[40] "November 1946 French legislative election," *Wikipedia*, MediaWiki, June 22, 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/November_1946_French_legislative_election

result of the strike can not be overlooked as playing a key role as well. The acts perpetrated against Malagasy immigrant laborers in France in the years following the December discussions were in part a direct result of the labor strikes of 1947.

French Malagasy Laborers and the Surveillance State: Aftermath of the Strikes of 1947

The French government excised control over Malagasy immigrants with the creation of a surveillance state, which mimicked the ways that French colonial rule had monitored Malagasy citizens prior to decolonization. Despite the transition to territorial nation-states, and then independent nations, France remained in control of "their foreign affairs, defense, currency, media, and communications."[41] French intervention in Malagasy affairs remained long after the two nations had technically decolonized. Thus when Malagasy citizens immigrated to France, the French state still saw them as members of the decolonized nation. The French state wanted to retain its control over Malagasy citizens while also monitoring their behavior with foreign forces. The xenophobic fear of Malagasy people was rooted in two causes. Firstly, the foreign-born status of many Malagasy immigrants created suspicion within the government, and this "intersected with the state's capacity to monitor… and control them."[42] Secondly, the notion that the Malagasy immigrants were intrinsically tied to the PCF and thus foreign influence from the Soviet Union motivated the French government to survey Malagasy immigrants, particularly as the Cold War reached a fever pitch. The conception of the Malagasy population as being influenced by foreign powers combined with racism and xenophobia created an air of suspicion from the French government that created a Malagasy surveillance state.

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[41] Buettner, *Europe After Empire,* 160.
[42] Gillian Glaes, "Policing the post-colonial order: surveillance and the African Immigrant Community in France, 1960-1979," *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques* 36, no. 2 (2010).

The surveillance state served another purpose, which was to track immigrants in order to better implement discriminatory policies. The primary focus was the residences and workplaces of Malagasy immigrants in order to understand how to better influence African immigrants to "conform to the values, standards, and norms of French society."[43] By focusing on the ways that Malagasy immigrants lived their lives, they could understand how to get them to assimilate. Assimilation was a solution for the Malagasy immigrants in the eyes of the French government, as by forcing them to conform to French culture they would have to give up the cultures they previously engaged with. This meant that they were no longer threats to the French state from either the colonial or communist perspective. French officials felt that full engagement with French culture was only achievable through total submission attained via the surveillance state.

The strategy of assimilation was rooted in Cold War anxieties and ultimately endeavored to destroy a fundamental part of Malagasy immigrants. Malagasy immigrants suffered under policies of assimilation. One such example was housing policies that discriminated against laborers in unions. The French government would exclude Malagasy immigrants from housing if they were in unions, incentivizing citizens to stay away from unionizing.[44] This was rooted in the fear of strikes created during the Renault strikes of 1947 and ensured that they would not happen again. Worker exploitation was common due to these discriminatory policies, yet Malagasy laborers risked this because they could not unionize. The state hoped that by conforming and not unionizing, Malagasy immigrants would assimilate and separate from both their African and communist identities.

The discrimination that Malagasy laborers faced can not be examined in a vacuum, and while it is certainly true that racism, xenophobia, and imperialist notions contributed to the

[43] Glaes, "Policing the post-colonial order."
[44] Abdou Aram Sy, "Les travailleurs africains et le logement," *Esprit,* no. 441 (1974), 1007.

formation of the surveillance state the nuances of the Cold War can not be discounted. Rather, the intense discrimination that Malagasy laborers faced was the result of numerous factors. The significance of the Strikes of 1947, therefore, is beyond that of a particular labor movement or even of a burgeoning governmental coup. The Strikes of 1947 demonstrate the severe lengths that the fears that eventually exploded into the Cold War penetrated the ideology of French citizens. In the immediate postwar era, French government officials were intensely fearful of Communism despite the fact that the Cold War had not yet materialized. Their fear gave way to a complex interplay of power and control within the governmental bureaus that manifested in discriminatory policies decades after the initial strikes. Historical moments, therefore, are never isolated affairs. Instead, they are comprised of a series of prejudices, fears, thoughts, opinions, and ideas, many of which have not yet been expressed in the global arena. The significance of the effects of the Cold War on Malagasy discrimination is that ideas that created a war existed decades prior, serving as justification for the French government to manipulate laborers in order to gain power. When a government takes action it is not acting alone: Governments act on, and depend on, the ideas of the collective. It is these ideas of the collective that allow us to trace the exchange of power, and the ideas that undergird it, as they could very well constitute the political decisions of tomorrow.

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