

AKΦ

THE ALPHA KAPPA PHI REVIEW

ANNUAL JOURNAL OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
IN THE HUMANITIES

VOLUME VI
SPRING 2020

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PREFACE

An institution puts forth a mission statement to capture its primary purpose, center of attention, and dedication. Lindsey Wilson College shows the depth of its love for education and the student body with its statement, “Every Student, Every Day.” The *Alpha Kappa Phi Review* is an extension of this mindset, with an interest in the work of all students at Lindsey Wilson College.

This journal contains a broad range of student essays. These essays span a wide variety of topics and academic disciplines, including detailed analyses of works by major authors and solutions for pressing societal concerns that have major implications on our world today. All of the essays that appear in the *Alpha Kappa Phi Review* have gone through a rigorous peer-review selection and revision process resulting in the inclusion of only works that achieve the highest excellence. All of the essays rely on secondary research and/or extensive textual evidence to support their analyses and claims.

The *Review* has sought to include a wide variety of writing from Lindsey Wilson’s student body with this grouping, encompassing the work of sophomores to upcoming graduates. This volume includes nine student essays on a variety of topics from politics to literature to methods of academic writing. The reader will find the essays organized thematically, not alphabetically, into four different groups.

The three foremost essays included in this volume address the topic of discord in politics. Although Kaylie Butler, Zack Settle, and Richard Nichols each approach the topic from diverse viewpoints and disciplines, each essay discusses the importance of considering varying political approaches. The next three essays, by Macy Rattliff, Avery Crews, and Hannah VanArsdale, examine the implications and stakes of representation when making art from or memorializing a time period or historical event. The authors, through the incorporation of critical theory, examine facets of culture such as news media portrayals of 9/11, governmental responses to in the Salem witch trials, and artistic representations of the Holocaust, respectively. The next two essays—by Justin Sturgeon and Emma Turner—both perform textual analyses of literary works that emphasize the role of reader empathy in interpretation. The final essay included in this volume, written by Paige Enlow, is a hybrid form of academic writing combining secondary sources with the genre of a diary entry to question and challenge conventional academic style.

The *Alpha Kappa Phi Review* is devoted to publishing the best student scholarly work that Lindsey Wilson College has to offer. We believe the broad range of topics and arguments within this volume showcase the excellent writing and research skills of Lindsey Wilson’s student body.

—Emma Turner
Editor-in-Chief
April 2020



The editorial board would like to thank the following English and History faculty members for serving as Faculty Reviewers for this volume:

Ms. Mary Baker
Dr. Tim McAlpine
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Each submission to the *Alpha Kappa Phi Review* undergoes an extensive review process in which it is anonymously evaluated by both student editors and faculty.

We are grateful to Dr. Paul Thifault for founding and establishing the *Alpha Kappa Phi Review* in 2015, the sole undergraduate research journal at Lindsey Wilson College. Special thanks also to Dr. Tip Shanklin for continuing his legacy by editing and publishing the second volume. Finally, the last four volumes of the *Review* would not have been possible without the mentorship of Dr. Steffens.



Critical essays in the Humanities, broadly defined as the fields of English, History, Women's and Gender Studies, Philosophy, Theology, Theatre, Film, Political Science, and Art, are welcomed and encouraged from current or recently graduated Lindsey Wilson College students.

For more information, please contact Dr. Karolyn Steffens, Assistant Professor of English and Faculty Editor: steffensk@lindsey.edu.

Communication and Collaboration in American Politics

Kaylie Butler

Abstract

It is important to examine the power and presence of the Democrat and Republican parties within American politics. In an effort to understand the politics of American government, this paper explains the purpose of political parties, the origins of parties in America, the evolution of the dominant bi-partisan parties, and the current state of American politics through a variety of scholarly sources. By exploring extent literature, this paper dissects the various issues presented within the bi-partisan American political landscape. Additionally, through the exploration of the interrelationship between the American political research and critical thinking and communication concepts, this paper provides an approach to resolve the American political issues of present day.

The political landscape of modern America has been dominated by two prominent political parties: Democrat and Republican. For better or worse, these parties have become the backbone and driving force of political America. Originally intended to unite individuals and make positive change, it is ironic that the majority of the issues presented within American politics today appear to have arisen as a consequence of congressional members' loyalty to their respective political party or personal agendas rather than to the betterment of the United States and its inhabitants. This train of thought is apparent through politicians and their actions in discussion of recent political events, such as President Trump's immigration policy attempts. The pre-existing tension between the two parties is increasing at an alarming rate due to this misplaced loyalty. Further, the tension between the political parties and their members has escalated to the point that the United States government, and its multitude of employees, has had to endure a shutdown that lasted approximately a month.

In order to find a solution, the attention should be directed toward understanding the purpose, origins, and goals of the political parties throughout history. Tracing the original intent of the parties and its members will bring enlightenment concerning their strength and function within society today. Further, by gaining a firm foundation of knowledge regarding the parties, the formation of a prescriptive plan to benefit their functions can begin to take place. This solution to the various issues posed by the modern American political party system can be alleviated through

the application of the critical thinking and leadership concepts to the party leaders and also the voting public. Overall, by applying these concepts within American politics, the leadership of the bipartisan parties will become more collaborative with one another. Additionally, the leaders of the parties and their backing voters will have a more harmonious relationship in which voters will feel better represented.

Literature Review

Through extent literature, a variety of research has been provided regarding the purpose, origins, evolution, and current state of the American political system. The sources reveal various foundational issues within the American political system and demonstrate the translation of these problems into contemporary society. By tracing the roots of political parties and understanding the current divisions within modern American politics, a foundation will be provided for the application of a solution to the multitude of issues found within the contemporary political landscape.

Origins and Purpose

As discussed previously, it is vital to have a firm foundational understanding of the intended purpose for political parties. The original intent of political parties is discussed in *Political Parties and Political Development* by Joseph Lapalombara and Myron Weiner (1966). In the chapter entitled “The Origin and Development of Political Parties,” the authors discuss the reasonings and purpose for the existence of political parties. Lapalombara and Weiner (1966) credit the emergence of political parties to the rise of a complex political system and the idea that the public must participate or be controlled by political power (p. 3). In simpler terms, the existence of political parties “implies that the masses must be taken into account by the political elite,” whether it be in response to the notion that citizens have the right to participate or because the governing elite realizes that there must be system in place to provide control (Lapalombara & Weiner, 1966, p. 4).

Additionally, Lapalombara and Weiner (1966) assert opinions concerning the purpose of political parties. The authors contend that the expectations for parties are to organize the ideas of public opinion and to effectively convey those ideas to the central, decision-making government power. The authors push the subject further and state that a party “somehow... must articulate to its followers the concept and meaning of the broader community even if the aim of the party leadership is to modify profoundly or even to destroy the broader community and replace it with

something else” (p. 3). Essentially, Lapalombara and Weiner (1966) contend that the original goal and purpose of the political party is to act as a mediator for the public interest and their concepts of community.

This idea of the origin’s purpose is also discussed in “Parties and Nation-Building in America” by author William N. Chambers. In agreeance with Lapalombara and Weiner (1966), Chambers takes their ideas and elaborates to contend that there are four criteria of basic conditions that the government has to meet in order for political parties to emerge. The first criterion is a political arena in which power can be attained through the influence of a decision-making center. The second pertains to the complexity of the political system in terms of both conflicting opinions and government function. The third criterion depends on the rise of social structure and its effect on popular politics. Lastly, the fourth and final criterion is the shared sense of a felt need to better the structure of the political system in order to create connections or parallels “between leaders and popular followings” (Chambers, 1966, p. 82). Chambers asserts that this list of criteria must be met in order for political parties to emerge. In addition, it is this list of conditions that help to mold the overall goals and purpose of mediation that the political party is intended to uphold.

Origins of Parties in America

When applied to American politics, the initial purpose of political parties and the rise of their prominence is demonstrated similarly to the writings of Lapalombara and Weiner (1966). The beginnings of political parties in America can best be explained by the late United States President James Madison (1792) in his speech "Political Parties." According to Madison (1792), the existence of parties in political societies is unavoidable because of conflicting interests and ideas. He continues by saying all parties should share a vested interest in combating evil in five ways: advancement of equality, ensure fair economics, the greater good of citizens, fair mindedness in operation and proposal of policies, and utilizing a system of checks and balances. Madison further claims that this is not just the voice of reason but also the voice of republicanism. While Madison warned future policymakers from partaking in parties, he felt that if necessary, they must be handled in a moderate and progressive manner.

In the 1790s, during the constitutional debates that the first political parties would begin to form. Author William N. Chambers discusses the beginnings of the American political parties in “Parties and Nation-Building in America.” The main two parties formed were the Federalists and the Republicans. These groups differed in economic ideas and various constitutional propositions.

The constitutional aspect was of utmost importance when examining the differences between the two. The Federalists and Democratic-Republicans fundamentally disagreed in concern to the degree to which power should be given to the new national government, policies that promoted economic growth, government developed capitalism, and foreign policy (Chambers, 1966). While these parties played a crucial role in political and governmental development, neither of these factions survived. Despite their ultimate failure, these two parties paved the way for all the political parties that would later emerge.

Evolution

Now that a mutual understanding of the origins of political parties has been achieved, it is pertinent to understand how the American political thought has evolved. Because this paper's primary focus is on the Democrat and Republican parties, the process of evolution will only be discussed within the limits of the prevailing polarized parties. The evolution of American politics throughout history is separated into six distinct party systems labelled in sequential order such as First Party System, Second Party System, and so on and so forth. Each of these systems are distinguished by major turning points in American politics. From the beginning of their formation to now, the Democrat and Republican parties have virtually switched their ideologies. When searching for prominent political happenings that altered the goals and values of the bi-partisan parties, scholars tend to credit this shift to the Democratic Convention of 1968.

Author John S. Jackson (2015) in "Party Politics in the Reform Era" discusses the debate at 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. According to Jackson (2015), "political parties... will do what they deem necessary to survive" (p. 2). In other words, leaders of the Democrat and Republican parties will do whatever is necessary to advance their respective parties, this includes changing their beliefs. It is in Jackson's opinion that it was the debate concerning the presidential decision in 1968 that began the questioning of values. Jackson (2015) goes on to claim that the 1968 Democratic National Convention had "many ripple effects" but the most important was "the transformation of the presidential nomination process" especially its impact on the Reform Era of the early 1970s (p. 22). It is since this shift in thought that the political parties have been in charge of the electoral structure and organizing the candidates to be presented before voters. This aspect of the transformation still reigns true to this day. When examining this information, one must keep in mind that this specific form of change, in combination with the various others, caused each of the political parties to begin restructuring their platforms and beliefs. Moreover, it

is because of the restructuring that the Democrat and Republican parties have adopted the views and beliefs that they hold today.

While the previous opinion concerning the 1968 Democratic National Convention and switch in party ideology is a common belief among scholars, there are other compelling arguments. One such assertion is discussed by author and scholar Barbara Sinclair (2010) in her book *Party Wars*. In the first chapter of her work, “From Sam Rayburn to Newt Gingrich: The Development of the Partisan Congress,” Sinclair discusses the switch and separation of the bi-partisan parties within the limits of leadership and voters. Unlike Jackson, Sinclair argues that the switch can be seen as a gradual shift between the House Speakers, Sam Rayburn and Newt Gingrich. To the author, this polarization in ideologies can be attributed to the members of Congress who all share a variety of goals including, “re-election, influence in their chamber and perhaps in the wider Washington political community, and good public policy” (Sinclair, 2010, p. 14). Essentially, Sinclair (2010) argues that it was because of both the individual’s and political party’s goals of re-election and power that the party ideology switched. Specifically, the author pinpoints the switch to the rise of conservative presence in the Republican party after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Overall, Sinclair’s assertion is compelling because it fits with and explains the actions exhibited in the current state of the political landscape.

Current State of American Political Parties

The maelstrom of the evolution of the two political parties has led to the current state of American political turmoil. The contemporary state of unrest within American politics can best be summarized by John S. Jackson (2015) when he asserts that “We live in an era of remarkable polarization” (10). The political system within the United States is saturated with radical liberal and conservative ideas that are supported by the Democrat and Republican parties. Because the bi-partisan parties dominate the political landscape, together they should represent and support the overwhelming majority of American views and beliefs. However, according to a poll done by *The Guardian* in 2016 “Sixty-one percent of [their] survey respondents say neither [prevailing] political party reflects their opinions” (para. 5). The results of this survey suggest that the purpose of political parties has become undermined.

While this is the likely state for American politics today, the majority of scholars believe that political parties are an essential aspect of a successful democracy (Jackson, 2015). This commonly held belief of scholars is repudiated by a poll conducted in 2015 by the *Pew Research*

Center which reported that “just 19% say they can trust the government always or most of the time... Only 20% would describe government programs as being well-run... [and] 55% of the public says, ‘ordinary Americans’ would do a better job of solving national problem” (para. 2). Assuming that this poll is an accurate representation of the American populous, it is clear that the American public does not trust their policymakers. The startling statistics of this poll are indubitably a result of the current era of political unrest in America. Furthermore, this idea of uneasiness and apprehension is upheld by various other surveys. In 2017, *Washington Post* posed the question: “Do you think problems in America’s politics right now are similar to most periods of partisan disagreement, or do you think problems have reached a dangerous low point?” (para. 3). An inordinate amount, approximately 71 percent, responded that they think America is at an all-time low.

These surveys uncover the terrible truth concerning the American political system: it is not working. Thus far, this issue has yet to be resolved. The most recent headlines concerning Trump’s immigration policy attempts and the government shutdown do not appear to suggest a break amidst the controversy. If anything, the reality is quite contrary. Because of this, American legislators and officials need to take measures to ensure proper collaboration and citizens need to work at becoming actively aware of the American political state.

Analysis

As shown by a variety of surveys, the American public feels as if the political parties are not serving to advance their voice. This is mostly due to the fact that the American parties have started to serve their original purpose too well. The idea of communicating collective beliefs has turned into the pushing of individual party agendas, financial and associatively backing candidates aligned with the collective belief and serving as election organizers for the public. In their functioning, they are upholding their purpose and taking it to new levels. In theory, the political parties serving their purpose sounds like an ideal, perfect world, but in reality, this effective function is anything but optimal.

By the parties fulfilling their duty, the intentions within the political system have become less concerned with the interest of the United States of America and more concerned with the advancement of the party ideology. In other words, the political system controlling the American government is not serving the benefit of the general public but rather the agenda of the political party. To make matters even worse, the parties are causing divides within the government and

public sectors. Government decisions vital to the functioning of our country have been debated and left unresolved simply because the party's and individual's unwillingness to budge from their respective agendas. It is for these reasons, that an overwhelming majority feel that America is at its all-time low (Washington Post, 2017).

The polarized American political system's failure to benefit the public is partially a consequence of sociocentric and egocentric thoughts present in society. When looking at the premise of the political parties, one finds that they generally function in the realm of sociocentrism. According to Elder and Paul (2015) in *The Thinker's Guide to The Human Mind*, this concept is "the native human tendency to see the world from narrow and biased group-centered perspectives, to operate within the world through group rules, group interest" (p. 12). The entire idea behind political parties plays on this human tendency to buy into group thought. It stimulates sociocentric thought so well that in spite of the American public's overall disappointment with the bi-partisan parties, they feel as if they have no choice but to uphold the agenda of either the Democrat or Republican parties to be politically involved.

On the opposing end of thought spectrum is egocentrism which also holds a place within politics. According to Elder and Paul (2015), egocentrism "is focused on the pursuit of one's own desires and needs of those outside the group" (p. 11). While the ideas of egocentrism and sociocentrism seemingly appear juxtaposed, in reality, specifically in the political realm, they overlap. It is here that the attention can be turned to the individual's personal wants within the parties. Each individual has their own set of motivating factors and these goals and desires are amplified by the individualist cultural idea of valuing the self and independence that is prevalent in American society. While the parties on a large scale serve to promote sociocentrism, this tendency is egocentrically aligned with the individual's desires and wants for power and wealth. Further, because these ideas have aligned within the polarized party system, the parties have adopted an individualistic mindset of pursuing authority and monetary gain.

The manifestation of these innate human irrational tendencies stifles the use of rational capacities and promotes the use of fallacious thought. According to Elder and Paul (2012) in *The Thinker's Guide to Fallacies: The Art of Mental Trickery and Manipulation*, "To be a human thinker is often to be a 'self-deceived' thinker and hence a 'fallacious thinker'" (p. 6). In other words, human sociocentric and egocentric tendencies doom one to a fate of deceptive, fallacious thinking. These inherent tendencies in combination with an individual's frame of reference and

the generalizing functions of the human brain are what lead to fallacious thinking. The use of fallacies is simply a result of innate human self-serving and group-focused nature, and “This can be verified in the history of politics, economics, religion, and war — indeed in any history that deeply plumbs the human mind in action” (p. 7). When looking at the bi-partisan parties, the use of Argumentum ad Hominem is a rather common approach. This particular “dirty trick” is an attack to the person rather than the argument. By reading the audience and attacking the person subtly, the fallacious thinker can manipulate the public opinion of the person with whom they are arguing. This is just one example of forty-four different fallacies discussed by authors Paul and Elder that are employed by politicians in pursuit of their goals. These generalizations have been used by politicians to back their supporting parties’ point of view and to further gain individual and group power and authority. Because such fallacious generalizations are inherent within human thinking, individuals of the general public and politicians must be aware before this mode of thought can be amended. Through acknowledgement of both the causes of generalizations and their use within the American Political system, the public and politicians can learn to avoid their use and ground their arguments in truth and fact rather than fallacy.

To address the issues presented by the American political party system, it is appropriate to look into the application of leadership approaches and concepts. The first concept of importance is proposed by psychologists Robert Blake and Janet Mouton through their managerial grid. This grid shows the effectiveness of five leadership styles based on concern for production versus concern for people. The leadership styles include impoverished style, country club style, middle-of-road style, produce or perish style, and team style. Of these, leaders should strive to host concern for both production and people, echoing the ideas presented within the team style. When applying this idea of the team style to the political system, it is obvious that parties are falling short of this goal of concern, especially in regard to the production and people under the jurisdiction of the government as a whole. The leadership style of each party would be considered impoverished. This means they each show little concern for the people and the production. In order to address the issues presented, leaders should shift their thinking to include the thoughts and welfare of the American people rather than their personal party’s power. In doing so, the parties will be taking steps to combat the inherent tendencies of egocentric and sociocentric thought.

Unfortunately, American politicians are not the only ones at fault for the failure of the political system. A partial responsibility can also be placed upon the voting public. Consequently,

in addition to a reformed way of thinking among the political leadership and representation of America, the American public needs to encounter a similar change. This idea can best be discussed through the concept of followership. According to Mumby and Kuhn (2019), the concept of followership “takes seriously the idea that leaders do not exist without followers and that a dialectical relationship exists between the two; that is, leaders and followers mutually define one another” (p. 290). In other words, leaders are only as important as their followers allow them to become. This concept is vital to recognize because the majority of the American population will never become political leaders. Thus, this means that an overwhelming majority of the average population will be stuck in a role of followership. Researcher Robert Kelley contributed to research on this topic through his creation of the Model of Followership Roles. Kelley’s model details five different types of followership roles based on four characteristics: negative energy and/or passive engagement; dependent, uncritical thinking; independent, critical thinking; and positive energy and active engagement. Within these characteristics, the followers fit into five different types including alienated followers, sheep or passive followers, pragmatic followers, yes person or conformist followers, and star or exemplary followers. Of these types, the latter is considered to be the ideal follower. Star or exemplary followers are positive, actively engaged, independent, critical thinkers. People who fall into this category are highly committed to the cause and willingly “provide honest, independent, and constructive critique to leaders; and hold themselves to higher performance standards than others do” (Mumby & Kuhn, 2019, p. 292). However, due to the innate tendencies of egocentric and sociocentric thought within humans, the majority of followers would naturally fall into one of the four negative types discussed within the model. This means that individuals need to work toward achieving this type of followership.

Once the respective party’s leadership and followership styles have shifted, their approach will hopefully lead to rational thinking. Rationality is defined as “[a] way of thinking and acting in which intelligence and sound reasoning are used to serve justice” (Elder and Paul, 2015, p. 12). Despite the fact that the human mind is innately irrational, as demonstrated through egocentric and sociocentric tendencies, the capacity for rational thought is within the individual. Rational thinking, unlike our native tendencies, requires the active fostering and improvement upon fair-minded traits and critical thinking skills. By taking the active measures through leadership to achieve a team style approach within the party system, they will be fostering the cultivation these skills within the party and the public. In their success to implement such approaches, controversies such as

immigration control can be discussed critically in a fair-minded manner. The aspect of fair-mindedness in critical thinking will allow and encourage the leaders and general public to think about such issues independently from party and pursue the interest of the greater good. Additionally, encouraging the public to assume a star or exemplary followership role will allow for more accurate civic representation in American politics. Through the implementation of such theories, the parties will better benefit the American public as a whole and to begin serving their greater purpose. Moreover, the political landscape will aid in advancing the prosperity of America rather than hurting the present and future with party ideologies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the political landscape of modern America has been dominated by the polarized Democrat and Republican parties. Originally, political parties were created for the purpose of communicating collective beliefs to the government. In serving their original purpose, the parties have ended up neglecting the greater interest of the American public. As a consequence, data suggests that the public feels misrepresented and pessimistic in regard to the American political landscape. To combat this, there must be a shift from innate egocentric and sociocentric thought to rationality. The leaders of the respective parties must strive to pursue both concern for people and production and the followers must seek active engagement with the political system. By doing so, the American government and its political system will be more efficient and representative of the beliefs of the populous rather than the party.

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Why Populism Takes Hold in Highly Developed Democratic Countries

Zachary Settle

Introduction

Since the end of the Second World War, countries across the globe have decided to globalize their economies, turning away from a history of isolationism to increase their prosperity. A result of this move toward globalization has been the creation of the European Union and the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement. These two entities over the past decade have come under increased scrutiny. At the same time, NAFTA is not as controversial in Canada. The question must be asked: has widespread public anger and resentment towards the political establishment and globalization contributed to the rise of populist movements in economically developed, democratic systems?

The answer is clear that the increase in globalization has caused much anger and resentment towards the political establishment in countries including the United States and the United Kingdom. In these two powerful countries, people supported populist movements that rejected globalization and the political establishment. Trump supporter Brandon Craven from Louisiana supports Donald Trump because, “he is going to try to bring jobs back to the United States, and I think that’s something, especially in this economy, in this day, is something that we really need” (Horwich, 2016). This common theme of discontent with globalization has a basis in the US and UK along with anger towards the political establishment. This anger was illustrated by a pro-Brexit march in London in March 2019 which included signs saying, “politicians worth their weight in cow dung.” Another said, “Parliament? A hive of scum and villainy” (MacAskill, 2019).

This trend, however, does not extend to Canada which still has not felt the sting of populism. Unlike many people in the United States and the United Kingdom, Canadians do not support the idea of doing away with the results of 20th-century globalism. The most notable example is NAFTA. Canadians overwhelmingly support NAFTA with 74% of the population approving of the deal, according to IPSOS. This fact is not the case in the United States where 58% of people support NAFTA (Bricker, 2017). These statistics and quotes speak to the great differences between these three very similar countries with many of the same problems.

Literature Review

Previous scholars and authors have not published much academic material on the state of populism in the United States and the United Kingdom while comparing their situation to Canada's lack of popularity for populism. Despite this fact, there has been academic research done on populism in general and analysis of the countries separately. John Morelock's book, *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*, discusses the current age of populism. The author cleverly points out that populism is not isolated in one country or unique to one ideology.

According to Morelock, the influence of populism reaches across the globe and has a diverse group of supporters, populism from the right has reached as far as the election of Narendra Modi of India in 2014 to the election of Trump in the United States. Morelock asserts that the left also has been known to house populist movements including the Arab Spring, which struck the Middle East, and the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Leader of the Labour Party in the United Kingdom. The common trend of all of these movements is the populist attitude that the current legislative representatives not only fail to work in the interest of the people but working instead to undermine them (Morelock, 2018, 49-50).

In *The Trump Phenomenon: How the Politics of Populism Won in 2016*, Kivisto illustrates why people voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election despite grave warnings from many prominent establishment figures. The author cites research that was done following the election of Donald Trump. A major factor in Trump's victory was that many people felt that their prosperity had been taken from them and they were willing to back anyone to help take it back. The population of those who felt left behind by the political establishment was far larger than anyone expected. The parallels could be drawn to Brexit in the UK where people who wanted to leave the EU felt the same way as Trump supporters which is a phenomenon Kivisto describes (Kivisto, 2017, 54-55).

Chaos in the Liberal Order, written by T. Long and M. Friedman, details an issue which is often tied to populism and anti-globalism: immigration. The author of this book details Donald Trump's argument he made during the 2016 election against immigration and globalist policies. Trump's rhetoric appealed to the American people's anger at the rest of the world for taking advantage of the US. Immigrants from Latin America became the unique target of Trump's attacks. Mexico was candidate Trump's villain of choice leading up to the election, accusing them of supposedly sending criminals disguised as immigrants across the border. This was Trump's

justification for demanding that a wall be built along America's Southern border by Mexico paying for it (Long, 2018, 251-252).

Trump has repeatedly launched warnings and attacks on the Salvadorian MS-13 gang. He claimed MS-13 gang members were coming to the United States through the Southern border and posed a significant threat. These two issues of immigration and NAFTA are very much intertwined. Trump used the argument often that America ships our jobs overseas and foreign countries send their worst people across the border. Trade deals with America like NAFTA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership are the core of Latin America's economy and Trump's threats of withdrawal during the campaign caused tremendous unease throughout the region (Long, 2018, 252).

Research Design

The dependent variable that has been used in this paper is populism. This dependent variable has been operationalized by seeing how much public support there is for populist parties and distrust in other parties. This operationalization will occur by looking at the three countries' most recent elections or referendum in which a populist candidate, party, or policy was on the ballot. The 2016 US presidential election, the 2016 UK EU referendum, and the 2019 Canadian federal election will be used to test the popularity of populism in each of these countries.

The independent variable for this paper includes discontent, anger, and fear of the current political system. This independent variable will be operationalized by exploring the reasons why people believe populism is the answer to political problems. To better understand this, we will look at analyses following these three events as to why people did or did not support populism. Common themes will be sought out in the US and UK which has endorsed populist ideas, and differences will be discovered between those two countries and Canada.

The cases that will be used throughout this paper will be the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. These cases were chosen because of their similarities in being major economic powers. All three countries are considered to be in the top ten economies in the world, the US being number one, UK being number 5, and Canada being number 10. Each of these three economies were expected to grow between 1.5 and 2.5 percent in 2019 despite all having various challenges which gave cause for concern throughout the year. These statistics make it clear that the cause of populism in these cases is not a lack of an advanced post-modern economy (The World's Largest Economies, 2018).

Being in the top twenty-five democracies is something else the US, UK, and Canada have in common. According to the Democracy Index in the Economist Intelligence Unit, these three countries have some of the most strong and stable democracies in the world. The study evaluated five criteria: 1) whether elections are free and fair, 2) governments have checks and balances, 3) whether citizens are included in politics, 4) whether citizens support their government, and 5) whether citizens enjoy freedom of expression. The three countries had an average rating of 8.56 for their democracies. The lack of an effective democratic system is not the appropriate reason as to why populism is gaining popularity in the US and UK and not in Canada (Ma, 2018).

The constant factor in this paper is the fact that all three countries are considered to be similar in their democratic and economic behaviors. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada are each highly developed democratic countries and economic powers. Given the similarities between the countries, why is Canada not facing a major populist movement like the US and the UK? In the forthcoming analysis, I utilize journalistic accounts and public opinion polls to illustrate the state of populism in the US, Canada, and UK while also tracking public anger at 'establishment politics' in these countries.

The hypothesis for this paper is that as public discontent with mainstream or establishment politicians and skepticism of globalization grows, populist sentiments will rise in tandem. As the independent variable rises so does the dependent variable. To test this hypothesis, research will be done to determine whether in Canada the anti-globalization and anti-establishment have risen at the same rate as the other two countries. The similarities between the rhetoric used about populism in the United States and United Kingdom are very prevalent in analyzing the state of political discourse in all of these countries.

Findings

The popularity of Donald Trump's populist message was illustrated through his victory in the 2016 Republican primary and general election. None of the previous twenty years-worth of Republican candidates had ever run for president with a populist message. Every other Republican candidate had shied away from appealing to the American people's fear of globalization and immigration. This break with decades of traditional Republican moderation led the way for populism to be adopted since so many people felt left behind by the establishment.

Despite Democratic President Bill Clinton signing NAFTA, Republicans had lent their support to the effort as well. This included Clinton's Republican predecessor President George

H.W. Bush who negotiated NAFTA before he left office. The nomination of Donald Trump in 2016 showed the shift in opinion of globalization in the Republican Party and the political and non-populists. Trump as a candidate rejected the view that countries benefit from the importation of goods and argued that globalization's only benefactor was the elite. What millions of workers got from globalization was "nothing but poverty and heartache," according to Trump. (Corasaniti, 2016, A1)

The public anger towards globalization and NAFTA, in particular, has manifested itself through public opinion polls. In 1999 a study done by the Program on International Policy Attitudes found that 44% of Americans thought that NAFTA was good for the US. By 2004, that percentage had dropped to 35%, according to the Wall Street Journal. When Donald Trump was running for President in 2016 only 29% of Americans thought NAFTA was good for the US economy. This rise in public discontent and anger with NAFTA was at its peak on the eve of Trump's election which caused him to capitalize on those feelings (International Trade, 2019).

In the 2016 EU referendum in the United Kingdom, 17.4 million people voted to leave the biggest and most prosperous trading bloc in the world. These people went against the leaders of the three largest political parties: the Conservatives, Labour, and the Liberal Democrats who all supported staying in the EU. Brexit was also opposed by trade unions, major business leaders, scientists, economists, President Obama and celebrities like David Beckham. The characteristic that all of these people have in common is that they aren't populists; instead, they are seen as the establishment. The leaders of the Brexit supporters including Nigel Farage and Boris Johnson encouraged a more populist image of their campaign which more people supported (Chu, 2016).

The anger at the EU in the United Kingdom didn't just appear in the referendum but also in public opinion polls leading up to 2016. According to a February 2012 YouGov poll, 48% of people in the UK wanted to leave the European Union. Another YouGov poll in November 2014 showed support for leaving the EU at 43%. By July 2016, just weeks before the referendum, the poll shows 45% wanting to leave and 45% wanting to remain in the EU. The difference in these polls from 2012 to 2016 is that the answer to "don't know" dropped from 17% to 6%, as people became more aware of the specifics of both arguments. These polls show that anger and disapproval towards the EU has been present in the United Kingdom for much of the past decade (The EU Referendum, 2019).

Populism in Canada has not taken hold, despite the opposite happening in the United States and the United Kingdom. In Canada's recent federal election in October 2019 this fact was illustrated by the disappointing showing of the People's Party of Canada. The PPC only received 1.6 percent of the national vote and didn't win a single seat in the House of Commons. Even the leader of the PPC Maxime Bernier didn't win the seat in his constituency. This decisive win for the political establishment shows that populism isn't in the mainstream of Canadian life (Stranger-Ross, 2019).

The issue of immigration played a role in both the 2016 presidential election and the EU referendum, two events where the populist option won. It is important to look at what the feelings are on this often-controversial issue in Canada to see if this populist issue has significant popularity. In a 2019 Environics Institute Poll, 63% of Canadians disagreed with the notion that there is too much immigration in the country. Also, only 2% of respondents said immigration was the most important problem in Canada today. This data shows that Canadians aren't as concerned with immigration as other countries like the US and UK are, which proves that.

The idea of the US and UK's recent populist victories being very similar is not a unique thought. The article by Coleman details the parallel in the rise of populism in the US through the election of Donald Trump and in the UK because of Brexit. Populist ideas that were once seen as on the fringe of political thought are now in the mainstream in developed democracies. The reason for this change according to Coleman is that the rise of globalization leads to anti-immigrant views and global trade skepticism (Coleman, 2019, 26).

Coleman also contends that during the 2016 presidential election and the EU referendum, populists used the same arguments. Trump and advocates for Brexit painted the political establishment who have argued for globalization through the passage of NAFTA and membership of the European Union as not working for the people. Populism relies on the perpetuation that the prospering political elite are fighting against the struggling working class. Coleman's article says that liberal politicians such as Justin Trudeau of Canada have been able to avoid the reality of populism by being able to "publicly emote and engage in touchy-feely politics." I would disagree with the author's insistence that all supporters of globalization are liberal since conservatives were at one time in the US and UK some of its loudest supporters, and still today in Canada the Conservative Party supports NAFTA (Coleman, 2019, 26).

The journal article by Spruyt suggests that populism structures a social and political space by dividing it between ordinary people and the elite. The ordinary people experience vulnerability, deprivation, and frustration. These characteristics exist in every society, but populists seek to capitalize on these feelings and if enough people have these low spirits then populists will be in power. Populists in the United States and United Kingdom have sought to achieve their goal of getting into power by using the methods described by Spruyt (Spruyt, 2016, 336).

To explain why people support populism I will use the cases of the US, UK, and Canada. The United States elected a populist, Donald Trump, in the 2016 presidential election. One of then-candidate Trump's favorite targets during the campaign was the recent victories of globalization. NAFTA was used as the populist Trump's target to explain why the Washington elite had left working people behind. During one of his debates with Hillary Clinton, whose husband signed NAFTA, Trump called it the worst trade deal the US has ever signed. Since it was signed, it has killed and continues to kill American jobs by sending them to Mexico, according to Trump (Gandel, 2016).

The reality of the current trade relationship is that Mexico and the US were balanced before NAFTA, unlike today. Now a quarter-century after NAFTA was signed, the US trade deficit with Mexico is the highest it has ever been. This situation is caused by the fact that NAFTA makes moving companies from the US to Mexico easier than before. A prominent example of this, also during the presidential debate was when Trump claimed that Carrier had moved 1,400 jobs to Mexico. These statements are made to capitalize on people's anger, and Trump's promises to bring jobs back from Mexico helps to sway minds also. (Gandel, 2016)

The United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union through a referendum in 2016 had the characteristics of a populist movement. Immigration which is a key target to those fed up with globalization was used in the campaign by those wanting to leave the EU. Since 1997 when Tony Blair came to power, British society has been transformed because of a wave of immigration without parallel in its history. Over the ten years Blair was in office, twice as many immigrants arrived in the UK than in the previous fifty years (Salam, 2016).

In the early 1990's, seven percent of England and Wales' population were minorities, but now that number has increased to fourteen percent. This new reality is something that Blair's four successors Gordon Brown, David Cameron, Theresa May, and Boris Johnson have had to grapple with. Before Blair's entry into Downing Street, the political conflict in the United Kingdom was

driven by class conflict. Now in the years since Blair, the divide is between cosmopolitans who embrace the new open immigration policy and those largely outside London who do not. Former Prime Minister David Cameron who was elected in 2010, tried to be on both sides of the debate which later became his demise through the EU referendum (Salam, 2016).

Eric Kaufmann who is a scholar of nationalism and its relationship to demographic change observed that the white population is sensitive to the rate of immigration. When immigrants come gradually, resistance to it is limited. On the other side, when it occurs very rapidly as it did under Blair, the level of resistance intensifies as does support for populist parties like the UK Independence Party. The overall point of Kaufmann's observation is that people do not mind if there are immigrants in their country, they just do not want to feel as if they are being overrun by them. (Salam, 2016)

The reason the issue of immigration is attached to the European Union is that one of its core principles is the freedom of movement. This freedom gives every EU citizen the right to live and work in any EU member state. When a number of countries from Central and Eastern Europe joined the EU, several countries put temporary limits on freedom of movement to ensure there wasn't an influx of immigrants. The Blair government decided not to put limits on new arrivals, but the reality of the number of immigrants surpassed their projections. This action led to even more anger from people skeptical of immigration (Salam, 2016).

When David Cameron became UK Prime Minister in 2010, he legitimized doubts about mass immigration and pledged to drastically reduce net migration. The problem which Cameron faced was that his government had the power to restrict non-European immigration but could not limit EU immigration without violating EU rules. This restriction on Cameron caused total immigration to increase during his time in office which infuriated members of his party. Leading Brexit supporters from his party, including Michael Gove and Boris Johnson, were able to point out that the EU had subordinated the British Prime Minister and Cameron had failed to deliver his promise. This argument of uncontrolled immigration would be one of the top reasons Britain voted to leave the EU (Salem, 2016).

While researching the rise of populism in developed democratic countries, it is important to look at Canada where populism has not taken hold. This action will allow for the justification for why Canada has not followed the same path as the US and UK. Just as the negative effects of globalization have led the United States and United Kingdom to populism, the positive effects

have kept Canada away from it. The majority of Canadians, including both of the major political parties, the Liberal Party and Conservative Party, support globalist initiatives such as NAFTA.

Canada's middle class, like those in the United States and the United Kingdom, has also suffered because of globalization. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation, each country's middle class has shrunk as a percentage of the population between the 1980s and mid-2010s. Many workers of Canada like those in the United States have become poorer and those with working-class jobs which have not been sent to other countries have been largely devoid of a wage increase. The nonpartisan Centre for International Governance Innovation insists that real incomes of the middle class of Canada have not increased in decades (Rubin, 2019).

The hardest-hit area of globalization in Canada is the manufacturing sector. Since 2000, according to Statistics Canada, half a million production jobs have disappeared. This is relatively the same amount as the United States' loss if you factor in population. NAFTA was likely a godsend for auto manufacturers who could pay workers in Mexico as little as 12.5% of what they would make in Canada or the United States. Between 2010 and 2015, eight new automotive assembly plants opened in North America, all of them located in Mexico. It could be assumed that this fact could persuade politicians to take a less pro-NAFTA view, however, this is not the case (Rubin, 2019).

To illustrate the Canadian politicians' passive attitude towards trade the article by Rubin gives a good example. In November 2018, General Motors announced it would be closing a century-old assembly plant in Oshawa. Despite the devastating news for the employees, there was not even a whisper of condemnation. No one dared blame open trade despite the door still being open for companies to leave Canada in the future. The response of "disappointment" and resignation to this being a fact of modern life might have caused something to change (Rubin, 2019).

The Liberal Party of Canada would seem to be the perfect candidate for adopting populism since it claims to represent the working class. Despite this, the Liberal Party's leader Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has made it clear that populism is not on the table. In August 2019, Trudeau gave a speech claiming that his more globalist world view was the only way to counter populism. Trudeau says that President Trump's threat to withdraw from NAFTA presented a serious challenge to globalism. The timing of this speech was very significant since it was made just before the 2019 G7 summit in France. This summit would be the first time that Trudeau would

sit down with both President Donald Trump of the United States and Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom, both arguably populists. Trudeau said that his Liberal government would continue to promote liberalized trade (MacCharles, 2019).

Even the Leader of the Conservative Party and the Leader of the Opposition Andrew Sheer of Canada in the most recent election failed to endorse populism. While Sheer's attitude towards populism did not match the condemnation of Prime Minister Trudeau's, it still was not an embrace. For example, during a rally in Kitchener, Sheer was asked if Justin Trudeau should be in jail for, among other things, supporting ritual child abuse. "Trudeau gave \$600 million to the Clinton Foundation," the man said at a town-hall meeting organized by the Conservative Party of Canada. Patriquin reports, "The Clinton Foundation is part of child trafficking and child sacrifice, if you study it." This very unconventional question came from a populist, but Sheer's answer to it ignored the intent for him to endorse that populist view. This occasion reiterates the fact that populism is not alive in Canada because its major political leaders decline to endorse it (Patriquin, 2019).

If the level of anger existed in Canada over globalism, that is in the US and UK, then it would be expected that a major party would capitalize on it. Since no major party has done this, the point of anger in Canada is less than in the other countries is proven. Canadians, regardless of their politics agree that NAFTA is a good thing for their country. According to a 2017 Global Attitudes Survey, 82% of Liberals and 83% of Conservatives endorse NAFTA, which is an essential globalist doctrine in North America (Views of NAFTA, 2017).

Conclusion

The hypothesis that was previously described was correct, as discontent, anger, and fear of the current political system increased, so did the popularity of populism. The expectations were correct that the increase in the independent variable would cause the same reaction to the dependent variable. It has become clear that in the United States and the United Kingdom the level of political discontent is higher than it is in Canada. However, there is a disconnect with the political establishment policies such as globalization in all three countries, but the strength of the disconnect varies. The reasoning behind this assertion is that if there was significant political discontent like in the US and UK, Canadian politicians would capitalize on it. The fact that the US and UK have active populist movements and Canada does not prove that it relies on hostility towards establishment institutions and people.

Populism during the past several years has made some of the world's most powerful countries preoccupied with attempting to sooth political discontent. Decades before this innovation, leaders of many different ideologies endorsed the establishment through globalization and immigration. In reaction to this step, people have turned to populism, as in the election of Donald Trump and Brexit, in the hopes that changing politics drastically would make their country better. Only time will tell if the populists got it right or disastrously wrong.

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From 4 to 9 June: The Chinese Communist Party's Response to Tiananmen Square '89 and Hong Kong '19

Richard Nichols

Introduction

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) rule of China has been characterized by relatively few large-scale protest movements over the seventy years that it has been in power. This has been in no small part to the Party's uncompromising attitude towards protests, assemblies, petitions, and other expressions of liberal sentiment. The Party's Leninist approach to centralized control over domestic news, media, and information has played an instrumental role in preventing grievances over its rule to develop into popular expressions—it utilizes these avenues to present its interpretations of events that often markedly differ from any third-party or outside accounts. While these third-party and outside accounts are often widely available and accepted as reliable outside of China, one would be hard-pressed to find such contradictory accounts that challenge the Party narrative.

The Party generally utilizes its media apparatus to maintain its image in the context of public grievances and popular expressions through two paths of obfuscation: obfuscation of the nature of grievances and expressions, and of its response thereto. It often achieves the former through such methods as mischaracterization of any motivations and stated aims of these organized to semi-organized public expressions and engaging in straw-manning of public grievances; it achieves the latter by either preventing independent assessments of its responses or suppressing the dissemination thereof (to much greater success within China as opposed to outside) —and therefore establishing a monopoly over the narrative of its response—and downplaying or understating the negative outcomes and effects of the Party retort. This strategy has arguably achieved long-term success towards the aim of mitigating international condemnation—and often, knowledge—of its response to most historically significant organized to semi-organized public expressions in its seventy-year history.

I analyze how these methods of response utilized by the Party—in addition to violent, militaristic responses—were applied in two cases: the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, and the 2019 Hong Kong anti-ELAB(Extradition Law Amendment Bill) protests. I contend that the main reasons for this difference are the international visibility of Hong Kong as a global financial hub and (arguably) the center of global commerce in Asia; the effect that military intervention would

have on its long-term strategy of erosional incrementalism vis-à-vis the OCTS (One Country, Two Systems) relationship; and the relatively low level of credibility with which it views the anti-ELAB protests as a threat to its legitimacy and power.

Cases

1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre

Perhaps the most notable and effective employment of the above mentioned strategy was in response to the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests and subsequent massacre, referred to in China as the 4 June Incident. Amnesty International (2019) characterizes the protests, which began on 15 April 1989 as “peaceful call[s] for political and economic reform” that began with the gathering of mourners of the late reformist party leader Hu Yaobang. The mourners were soon joined by student protestors calling for, among other things, liberalization of the political and economic systems of the country, democratization, and a redress of corruption within the Party. Party officials, sensing the gravity of what would indeed prove to become “the most widespread pro-democracy upheaval in communist China's history,” authorized the People’s Liberation Army to suppress dissident on the night of 4 June. (Miles, 2009) The then-UK ambassador to Indonesia and China, Sir Alan Donald, reported in a May 1989 cable that:

In the course of a private lunch on 20 May, [a] Chinese contact had told [me] that in recent days Deng Xiaoping commented that “two hundred dead could bring 20 years of peace to China.” The implication clearly was that the sacrifice of a number of demonstrators [*sic*] lives now would stabilize the present situation [...] The Chinese government has decided that there is no way to avoid bloodshed [...] [and] the military has been instructed to do what is necessary to put down the situation.

The military did precisely that. In the early hours of 4 June, the PLA deployed hundreds of troops and armored vehicles to suppress the activities occurring in the Square. Despite an unspecified number of demonstrators reportedly being allowed to leave the Square upon initial arrival of PLA troops, the troops quickly proceeded to commit violent, murderous acts against the demonstrators, including firing on those fleeing and those too far away to pose any immediate threat. (Miles, 2009) Between the initial casualties of the night of 4 June and the subsequent crackdown on those involved in the demonstrations (which included unfair trials on charges of counterrevolutionary dissident), most journalists and experts have concluded that “hundreds, if not thousands” of people were killed.

The Politburo Standing Committee, in an editorial published in the People's Daily (a major Party mouthpiece within the state-party apparatus), described "abnormal phenomena" that occurred during the mourning activities of Yaobang, such as "an extremely small number of people spread[ing] rumors, attack[ing] party and state leaders by name, and instigat[ing] the masses to break into the Xinhua Gate at Zhongnanga." The Committee then describes how, in spite of its adopted "attitude of tolerance and restraint" towards the reported counterrevolutionary activities, this small number of people then "called for opposition to the leadership by the Communist Party and the socialist system" in an attempt to sow dissent and undermine political unity. The protests were additionally described as a "planned conspiracy" and a threat to a laundry list of reforms pushed by the Party and the general political and economic stability of the country. (Jianhui et. al., 1989)

Following the massacre, the protesters were officially described as rioters and the families of the deceased were disallowed from openly mourning. (Amnesty Int'l., 2019) Several prominent figures in the protests and the organizers thereof were imprisoned, exiled, and/or killed. Despite several Chinese media outlets initially appearing to be sympathetic to the students, those involved in the displays of sympathy (including two reporters that were fired for "displaying sad emotions" while reporting the massacre) were quickly fired, and any sympathetic reports were quickly retracted by the Party. (Wudunn, 1989)

The massacre is, to this day, a taboo subject in China. Authorities forbid discussion of the massacre; any mention of the phrase "1989 Tiananmen Square massacre" is censored by authorities. (Ruan et. al., 2016) Educational texts only fleetingly mention the massacre—when they do, what they say is in line with the official government description of events. The Party has never published an official death toll, or even acknowledged that any intentional killings were perpetrated.

2019 Hong Kong Anti-ELAB Protests

A newer strategy utilized by the Party in pursuit of image-maintenance has been exploiting its position as an intermediary between the Chinese middle class—an enticing and massively profitable customer base—and foreign corporations seeking to tap into this market. When foreign corporations that are either invested in or seeking to invest in China either directly or indirectly criticize policies or practices of the Chinese government (or whose employees or associates do so), the Party will severely criticize or force the company to divest in some manner from the mainland.

This strategy has been employed extensively in tandem with exerting similar pressure on foreign governments to suppress international criticism of the 2019 Anti-ELAB protests in Hong Kong.

The Anti-ELAB protests are (as of this writing) ongoing protests throughout Hong Kong that began in mid-March of 2019 in response to the proposal of an amendment to the Hong Kong extradition law that would allow those accused of crimes in jurisdictions that do not have a formal extradition treaty with Hong Kong to be extradited from Hong Kong on a case-by-case basis. (John, 2019) The protests, which have continued despite formal withdrawal of the bill, have evolved in their goals to include five main points, as summarized in an August 2019 CNN article: “withdraw the [ELAB] bill, Carrie Lam to step down, [initiate] an inquiry into police brutality, [allow] those who have been arrested to be released, and [institute] greater democratic freedoms.” These points evolved over the first few months of the protests as the nature and aims of the protest grew from simple opposition to the ELAB bill to aiming for wider, more general and ambitious liberal reforms.

The first protest against the bill, a sit-in at the Central Government Complex, occurred on 15 March 2019. Dozens of further protests occurred between then and November 2019, including a general strike on 5 August that caused the cancellation of hundreds of flights. The Hong Kong police have been accused of several acts of undue brutality in response to the protests, including use of bean bag bullets, tear gas, and rubber bullets in a way that was described by Amnesty International as “unnecessary and excessive;” the August 2019 shooting of an unarmed protester, resulting in an assault and rioting charge and no discipline against the offending officer; and a siege and attempted storming of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which protesters had occupied. (Ho, 2019) The Hong Kong police have reportedly become a symbol “what many protesters regard as the unchecked power with which Beijing governs the semiautonomous Chinese territory.” (Zhong & May, 2019)

The Chinese government has employed less overt, indirect methods in response to the anti-ELAB protests. Several prominent media figures and corporations have been on the receiving end of retaliation from the Chinese government in response to their seeming support of the anti-ELAB protests, or criticisms of the government. An October 2019 tweet by Houston Rockets General Manager Daryl Morey in support of the anti-ELAB prompted Chinese state television to “immediately investigate all co-operation and exchanges involving the NBA” and stop streaming all Houston Rockets preseason games. (Berliner, 2019) Several American fashion companies faced

boycott calls, which have been described as astroturfing by the Chinese government, in response to their selling of clothing suggesting that Taiwan and Hong Kong were independent countries. (Berliner, 2019)

In addition to this newer approach, the Party has also reemployed a response to Tiananmen Square in response to the anti-ELAB protests: obfuscation of the nature, aims, and motivations of the protests; and accusing the protests of being organized or incited by foreign actors. In August of 2019, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office described the protests as showing “the first signs of terrorism,” and the Chinese Foreign Ministry sent a letter to multiple foreign media outlets characterizing the protests as “violent activities that are aimed to trample the rule of law” and blamed “the ‘black hand’ of the U.S.” for instigating and inciting the protests to destabilize the Chinese government. (Martin, 2019) It has, through the state media apparatus, described the protesters as “[being] hoodwinked by the opposition camp and their foreign allies into supporting the anti-extradition campaign” and used as “pawns in maneuvers to reap political gains by damaging the SAR government’s credibility and reputation.” (Blanchard, 2019) The Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office have also likened the protests to a color revolution, implying that the real motivation behind the protests is a regime change. (Feng, 2019)

Despite several similarities in the Party response to the Tiananmen Square protests and the anti-ELAB protests, the fact remains that its response to the former was exorbitantly violent, swift, and merciless; its response to the latter has been comparatively muted, less swift, and it has largely left any direct horizontal suppression to Hong Kong security and police forces. This leads to the question why the Party’s response to the anti-ELAB protests has differed so starkly from its response to the Tiananmen Square protests. As mentioned in the introduction, the international visibility of Hong Kong as a global financial hub and the center of global commerce in Asia; the effect that military intervention would have on erosional incrementalism vis-à-vis the OCTS relationship; and the low level of credibility with which it views the anti-ELAB protests as a threat to its legitimacy are the biggest independent variables describing the variation in the Party’s response. This stands in contrast with Beijing as a well-integrated, tightly controlled mainland city with no special relationship to the government, and in contrast to how the Party viewed the Tiananmen Square protests as a legitimate, pressing threat to its rule.

Research Design

I utilize a Most Similar Systems Design for this analysis—my two time case studies, Tiananmen Square protests and the anti-ELAB protests, while drastically differing in regard to the intensity and specific methods utilized by Chinese authorities in their response, are still “most similar” in that they both occurred inside China. This, and that my analysis deals with the CCP’s response to both events. I analyze how a single dependent variable of the events—namely, the PRC’s response—differed in response to several independent variables.

Independent Variables

Hong Kong has, since the 1960s, become one of the most significant financial and commercial centers of the Asian continent. Albert (2019) notes that the city has become China’s largest source of foreign direct investment and its fourth largest trading partner, largely through the effects of low taxes (when compared to the mainland), significantly more robust privatization and economic maturity than the mainland, a high degree of economic competitiveness, and the presence of dozens of international corporations. Albert additionally notes that the city ranks second in the world in trade as a percentage of its GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and that numerous Chinese corporations retain “significant capital” in the city.

Beijing, on the other hand, represents approximately 3% of China’s GDP, in comparison to Hong Kong representing just under 18% at its peak, according to the International Monetary Fund. (2019) Despite the increasing economic weight that Beijing carries—the majority of which lies in the finance sector, which, according to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform (2007), accounts for 128.6 billion yuan—Hong Kong holds more significance as a financial center due to its world-class financial systems and the effect that the openness that the OCTS system has fostered.

China relies on Hong Kong through its position as a springboard from the global economic community into the relatively closed-off mainland for foreign corporations (it being the largest source of foreign direct investment, as aforementioned), and its position as a facilitator of the inverse: Chinese corporations use Hong Kong as a gateway to foreign markets. Indeed, Reuters notes that 33% of China’s \$165.9 billion in U.S. dollar funding in 2018 was funneled through Hong Kong. Additionally, Chinese companies made \$64.2 billion globally from initial public offerings, but only a third of it was made through Shanghai and Shenzhen—the remaining two thirds were made through Hong Kong. (Sin, 2019)

Sin notes that if the Chinese government were to either directly involve itself in suppression of the anti-ELAB protests, foreign investors would likely be motivated to search elsewhere, for other low-tax investment zones such as Singapore, which are free of economic and civil interference by an authoritarian power. (2019) Politically, US senators have threatened to revoke Hong Kong's treatment as a separate customs area than mainland China—their argument being that sufficient military and economic interference by the Chinese government would nullify any grounds for continued classification of the city as a separate customs area. There are fears that any changes to this status quo could negatively affect Hong Kong's credit rating, and negative international reaction to a crackdown in the city would likely lead to a mass capital flight from the city.

This stands in contrast to the economic effects of the Tiananmen Square massacre. The largest negative effect outside of the realm of foreign political relations was the stunting of the then-embryonic privatization of the Chinese economy. (Ping, 2015) Outside of that, the significant negative effects of the massacre were relegated to foreign relations and international sanctions. Beijing has never possessed any special status to China concerning the global economy; it has never enjoyed massive foreign investment on par with Hong Kong, or even with Shanghai or Shenzhen to a lesser extent. If anything, the majority of the economic effects of the massacre were positive. Nathan (2009) explains that due to the strengthening of surveillance and the further restriction of civil liberties that followed the massacre, the Party dedicated itself to stimulating economic growth as a way to quell grievances and gain legitimacy among the populace. He notes that:

With successful management over the years this policy has produced sustained high level economic growth which has enabled the regime to maintain popular support. Thus at the end of twenty years we see a regime that is apparently more secure than on the eve of Tiananmen [and] a general public mood that places less value on the idea of democracy than was the case twenty years ago.

Despite historical division and discord within the Party over practically every issue imaginable, its policy towards Hong Kong has remained consistent. As Overholt (1991) explains: “China recognizes that it has a vital interest in Hong Kong [and] repeatedly articulates its interest in Hong Kong's ‘stability and prosperity’ [...] [this is] one of the few areas of consensus for China's otherwise deeply fragmented leadership.” The extent to which foreign corporations,

investors, and nationals are entrenched in Hong Kong and utilize it as a springboard into and from the mainland is unique to Hong Kong, and the Party knows that it stands to lose this vital springboard if the international financial community loses its confidence in the guarantees of economic freedom provided to the city by the Party.

OCTS describes the formal relationship that the mainland Chinese government has with the cities of Hong Kong and Macao (and the relationship that it aims to institute with Taiwan, should Taiwan ever acquiesce to a takeover by the mainland). The relationship was instituted when the territories were ceded to China in 1999 and 1997, respectively, and enshrines western liberal values such as civil liberties, rule of law, fair and impartial due process, and open elections with wide franchise in the constitutions of Hong Kong and Macao (known as the Basic Law). The relationship was instituted largely because the Chinese government realized that sudden, full de facto control over the city and full integration of the territories into the mainland political system would cause panic among the populace and foreign economic interests, potentially causing a massive capital flight effect like the one previously mentioned. (A.K., 2019)

The Chinese government outlined in what respects Hong Kong would remain separate from China in its “twelve point plan” for the territory: 1.) The retention of Hong Kong’s capitalist system, 2.) that it would “remain a free port and financial center,” 3.) its retention of a convertible currency, 4.) its freedom from being controlled by Chinese emissaries, 5.) its freedom to elect a chief executive, 6.) that it would surrender its control over foreign affairs and defense to the mainland, 7.) that it would be guaranteed freedom to participate in the international community, 8.) the freedom to issue its own travel documents, 9.) the retention of its present legal system, 10.) it would be given responsibility for its own law and order, 11.) it would be allowed to tolerate political activity outside of the Communist Party, and that 12.) it would be allowed to institute its own social reforms. (Van Kemenade, 1998)

Despite the de jure existence of separate political and economic systems between the mainland and Hong Kong, the Chinese government has gradually eroded away specific liberties that the city enjoys and has incrementally increased the inextricability between the two systems. Beijing’s strict vetting of candidates for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong led to the Umbrella Movement in 2014, and the local government has, under pressure from the mainland government, removed pro-democracy legislators, banned the pro-democracy Hong Kong National Party, imprisoned protest leaders, and targeted those who are critical of the OCTS system. (Grossman,

2019) In 2016, several legislators were removed under pressure from the mainland after they changed their oaths of office in protest of encroaching Party hegemony, and the Party has been heavily involved in the push to change Hong Kong extradition laws to allow extradition to the mainland—the issue that has prompted the anti-ELAB protests. (A.K., 2019)

The Chinese strategy vis-à-vis the OCTS system, then, seems to be an erosion of the “Two Systems” half, and an emphasis on the “One Country” half, until only the latter remains. It relies on incrementalism to achieve this: gradual, incremental changes in various aspects of the system in favor of erosion of separation as opposed to sudden, more obvious power-grabs. A prime example of what the Party aims to avoid is a violent suppression of a protest movement by the PLA entering the city and potentially injuring or even murdering Hongkongers. This would effectively shatter all de jure appearances of separation and lay bare Beijing’s policy of erosional incrementalism. What fears by foreign interests, investors, corporations and other entities present in Hong Kong (either physically, financially, or symbolically) that have been allayed or avoided by Beijing’s implementation of this policy would be exacerbated to the point of inducing the aforementioned capital flight and ruination of the Hong Kong economy.

Therefore, Beijing’s approach to handling the protests thus far has been to allow the Hong Kong security and police forces to shoulder the responsibility of controlling and suppressing the protests, and therefore bearing the brunt of accusations of impropriety and brutality. The Party hopes that relying on this strategy, which worked to suppress the Umbrella Movement which preceded the anti-ELAB protests, will nullify whatever wider threat that it may pose to its legitimacy and power, and will serve to relegate the protests and the ideas that they represent to an isolated event in locale and time, much like the Tiananmen Square protests.

This stands in contrast to the lack of any special relationship between the city of Beijing as a political or territorial entity and the national government of China. There was no overarching strategy, such as erosional incrementalism, in pursuit of any long term policy goal that stood to be disrupted by the violent suppression of a protest movement within the city. Neither did international trade and the benefits thereof stand to be significantly affected outside of sanctions by such a suppression. Beijing is well-integrated into the Chinese political system and national authorities have substantially more jurisdictional power in Beijing than in Hong Kong.

The final aspect of the two events that must be analyzed and compared is to what extent did the Chinese leadership view each event as a clear and present threat to the legitimacy of its

rule; and to what extent it believed them to have the potential to evolve into national movements, or even resistance movements, against its rule. Rationally speaking, the greater the imminent danger to a group's legitimacy and right to rule that an antagonistic movement possesses, the more likely it would be to respond violently to quell it. Since there is no official record of the deliberations and decisions of high level Party officials regarding the Tiananmen Square protests, Liu (1990) relies on an assessment of the "major phases of the leaders' reactions to the demonstrations" to develop an analysis of Beijing's management of the crisis. (p. 505)

Liu explains that the initial assessments of the protest were fractured and misinformed—he quotes Deng Xiaoping's 9 June 1990 speech in which he explains that "we did not have a clear picture of the situation [at the onset], and this prevented us from taking some actions that we should have taken earlier." Liu also explains that although most major crises are accompanied by a degree of uncertainty at the onset, "the lack of [an initial] clear picture on the part of Chinese leaders [...] was caused by diffuseness in authority in the Politburo, differences in attitudes toward students and intellectuals among Beijing leaders, and the evolution of the student movement in post-Mao China." (pp. 507-508)

He also notes that Beijing's fractured initial management of the Tiananmen protests must be understood in the context of fracturing leadership and policy setbacks. He notes the "deflationary measures" instituted by the Chinese government "since the fall of 1988 [...] that resulted in hardships for many urban residents and rural migrants as a factor that "structure[ed] significantly the Beijing's leadership's response to [the] student demonstrations." (p. 507) Adding to the context of the situation, Liu notes that there had been "continuous student demonstrations on various scales in Beijing since the fall of 1986," and therefore it was difficult to judge whether the demonstrations of the summer of 1989 were substantially different than those ongoing. (p. 509)

Liu then explains that the fractured nature of the Party elite's initial assessment of the protests soon gave away to sidelining of the moderate voices in the assessment (such as Zhao Ziyang, who had experience dealing with student organizations and was thus not greatly alarmed at the outset); when the Politburo convened on 24 April for an assessment of the events, they were presented as a "conspiracy with the goal of toppling the party," that the students demanded the ouster of Deng Xiaoping, and that the protests had the potential to prompt a power seizure on the level of the Cultural Revolution. (p. 511)

The members of the Politburo ultimately unanimously agreed that the protests constituted counterrevolutionary activity. Liu thus concludes that the April 26 editorial was a “decision statement” rather than a warning.” He notes that until the publishing of the editorial, the Party’s official responses had been both mild and harsh (he cites the 12 April Commentator’s article and the Xinhua editorial, respectively); the April 26 editorial, however, was unambiguous in its assessment of the protests as having the same nature as the beginnings of the Cultural Revolution, and thus had the potential to present as serious a threat to the rule of the current Party that the Cultural Revolution had to the Party of its contemporaneity. (p. 512) Liu concludes his analysis by stating that “the perception of [the] student demonstrations threatening the very survival of the Party provided Deng and other rear line leaders with a rationalization that trivializes all other considerations, including moral responsibility for their action.”

Due to the ongoing and developing nature of the anti-ELAB protests at the time of this writing, it is difficult to determine with what level of legitimacy the Chinese leadership views them as a threat to their power because there exists no publicly available historical record of the deliberations and decisions of Party officials. The only metric by which this may be currently measured is the rhetoric used by Party officials to describe the protests in state media and in public appearances.

Indeed, in a recent press conference in Brazil, Chinese president Xi Jinping characterized the protests as “challenging the ‘one country, two systems’ principle” and called for a halt to the clashes. (Leung, 2019) In an April joint symposium between the Hong Kong and Macao Office of the State Council and the Liaison Office of the Guangdong Central People's Government, Zhang Xiaoming, the director of the former agency, likened the protests to a color revolution: he explained that “the movement about the extradition bill has gone bad, and it has gone bad with clear color revolution characteristics.” Despite this ominous characterization of the protests, the Party seems to have confidence in the ability of the Hong Kong security and police forces to control and quell the protests—Zhang went on to say that while “if massive turmoil occurs in Hong Kong and the [Hong Kong Special Administrative Region] government cannot handle it effectively, the PLA will get involved to stabilize the situation,” he noted that Hong Kong authorities “have ample methods as well as sufficient strength to promptly settle any possible turmoil.” (Leung) Additionally, Starry Lee Wai-king, the chairperson of the pro-establishment DAB party, has said

that the best strategy for handling the protests is to “firmly support the police to conduct strict law-enforcement” (Leung)

Notable in its absence is any characterizations of the protestors or the movement as counterrevolutionary activity or a threat to Communist Party rule. While President Xi has characterized the protests as antagonistic to the OCTS system, he has not characterized them as antagonistic to the political order or political stability. There have been no accusations that the anti-ELAB protests are in “opposition to the leadership by the Communist Party and the socialist system,” or that they represent a “serious political struggle confronting the whole party and the people of all nationalities throughout the country,” or that “the whole party and the people nationwide should fully understand the seriousness of this struggle, unite to take a clear-cut stand to oppose the disturbance,” as the April 26 editorial so characterized the Tiananmen protests. (Jianhui et. al., 1989)

An additional potential reason for restraint in the Party’s handling of the anti-ELAB protests that has been extensively publicized is a supposed aversion among Chinese leadership to a repeat of the Tiananmen Square massacre; invocation of the negative consequences in the realms of foreign relations and international trade is used to portray the Chinese leadership as cautious in their assessment of the risks that the anti-ELAB protests pose in contrast to the risks that another Tiananmen square-style, militarized response may pose in said realms. However, from the research presented above, it is clear that the CCP of 1989 had no misconceptions about what level of international outrage a violent response would provoke.

The Party no doubt viewed the economic sanctions and international outrage that its response provoked as a necessary price to pay to avoid the spread of protests that Deng Xiaoping feared, the precedent that a soft response or concessions to the protestors would set, and the image that such responses would create for the CCP—namely that they were weak in the face of counterrevolution. If the Party leadership today considered the anti-ELAB protests to present such a clear and present threat to the stability of the Chinese political system or the legitimacy of its rule as it believed the Tiananmen Square protests to hold, I contend that it would quickly move to stage a repeat of its response to the Tiananmen Square protests. Its continuation of its counterinsurgency practices against the Uyghur Muslim population in Xinjiang in the face of significant international pressure is evidence of this much: the Chinese government will not hesitate to quickly and brutally respond to anything that it considers a threat to Chinese socialism.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges that the anti-ELAB protests pose to the OCTS system and the stability of Hong Kong as an economic hub vital to mainland Chinese access to the global economy, foreign investment access to the mainland, and insulation—or a chokepoint—between global capitalism and the Chinese economy, the Party has not reacted to the protests in any way approaching the violence with which the Tiananmen Square protests were handled. Contrary to media coverage confidently asserting that the main reason for this difference is fears among Party officials of a repeat of the international backlash following the Tiananmen Square massacre, the main reasons for this difference are clearly fears of investor, capital and commerce flight from Hong Kong in the event of such a violent response; the effect that such a response would have on the Party's apparent strategy of erosional incrementalism vis-à-vis Hong Kong; and the absence of the perception of a counterrevolutionary nature to the anti-ELAB protests among Party leadership. I contend that the lattermost reason is tertiary to the former two: if it were not for the said importance of the city and the long term erosional incrementalism policy in place, a protest on the scale of the anti-ELAB protests would no doubt be suppressed in a potentially violent manner (for example, if the same protests took place in Shanghai or Shenzhen). Conjecturally speaking, if the anti-ELAB protests gain a counterrevolutionary aspect in the eyes of the Party, their response will drastically change in due time.

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American Disaster Narratives: An Examination of Language, Race, Class, and Politics in 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech Shooting

Macy Rattliff

Tragedies, events causing great suffering, disrupt daily life, fragment thoughts, and leave individuals searching for a linear and singular narrative which makes sense of what has happened to them, their community, or perhaps an entire society. The process of healing from such disaster requires not only tangible repairs but must also include a psychological understanding and acceptance of the event. Consequently, when subjects are faced with chaos and turmoil, they are especially susceptible to narratives and rhetoric surrounding the event. The narratives following tragedies are rhetorical and affect the way individuals and societies process and react to these events. As the foundations of a culture's collective consciousness, narratives have long shaped the interpretation, expression, and memory of a people's most significant events. Once these narratives settle and a common understanding is formed, they become a culture's legends and even myths. Particularly in moments of extreme trauma, the existence of a defining narrative provides an identity for the event and the people affected and creates a method in which the trauma can be understood, responded to, discussed, and ultimately healed. By studying the motivations and factors influencing this rhetoric, one may begin to understand the events in an unbiased and analytical way. Through an examination of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech shooting, alongside an analysis of Trauma Theory and Structuralism, one may analyze the relationships between class, race, language, and trauma, eventually demonstrating that race, class, and politics influence trauma narratives, and therefore, influence the response to the trauma.

An examination of trauma narratives within the modern American conversation include the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech University massacre. These events not only span the two decades of a burgeoning digital information age but also encompass the spectrum of international terrorism, natural disaster, and domestic extremism that have each shaped the nation's consciousness in an increasingly connected world. Placing these horrific tragedies into the appropriate historical context is vital to understanding both the narratives behind the events and the way in which those narratives have evolved. Unfolding in the 24-hour news cycle and internet age, each story developed in real-time to the American public, complete with images, video, interviews, and reporting as they occurred. This relatively new phenomenon creates a dialogue that forms, shapes, and alters their narratives immediately, not in retrospect or after

consulting with and studying the victims of tragedy. Instead, the victims seemingly awaken from their shock into a world in which the narrative about their trauma already exists.

On September 11th, 2001, al Qaeda, an Islamic extremist group founded by Osama bin Laden, carried out calculated attacks against the United States. Nineteen militants hijacked four planes. Two of planes flew into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City while the third plane hit the Pentagon just outside of Washington, D.C. After American civilians attempted to retake the fourth plane from the hijackers, it crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. In these attacks, almost 3,000 people, who were citizens of seventy-eight different countries, were killed. Although unprepared, the United States reacted to the attacks immediately with investigations, legislative changes, military action and restoration projects. In *9/11: A Culture of Commemoration*, David Simpson illuminates, “In less than two years, we went from the fall of the Twin Towers and the attack on the Pentagon to the invasion of Iraq, a process marked by propagandist compression and manufactured consent so audacious as to seem unbelievable, except that it happened” (4). The total death toll for the War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, has been placed between 480,000 and 507,000.

The immediacy of narrative formation in the modern cable news and digital ages may be best exemplified by September 11, 2001. The images and stories from that day provided the initial structure into which every subsequent event was molded. Whether the invasions of Iraq or Afghanistan, or domestic policies such as the Patriot Act, the reactions that followed were pre-determined to be just and necessary due to the horrors of that day. Moreover, the 9/11 attacks allowed for a retroactive whitewashing of policies and events that may have either contributed to, or which could have possibly helped prevent, the attacks. Simpson explains, “9/11’s exceptionality has been taken to affront the sense we have our culture—that we do not engage in acts of terror and have not known them” (5). The prevailing narrative of an innocent beacon of light attempting to be snuffed out by an entity of terror skewed, omitted, and re-wrote any surrounding context or understanding. It was Victims vs. Attackers, Us vs. Them, Good vs. Evil—there was no room for nuance, and if anyone attempted to provide it, they were silenced.

While the reaction to the terrorist attack in September 2001 was overwhelming, one does not see this same reaction to all American tragedies. In August of 2005, thousands of people in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama were displaced from their homes when Hurricane Katrina, a Category 5 hurricane, struck the Gulf Coast of the United States. New Orleans was at particular

risk being that it is surrounded by water, and its levees were unreliable. Even more so, neighborhoods below sea level became increasingly vulnerable, and many of these areas housed the city's poorest people. New Orleans was the most desperate area affected during the hurricane, especially civilians located in lower-lying land, like the Ninth Ward. Hurricane Katrina decimated the city of New Orleans, destroying buildings and businesses with more than 250 billion gallons of water from rain, levees, and nearby bodies of water. Somehow, the media and government responses approached the same level of carnage as they sought to shape the narrative of the event. The response by FEMA, now a part of the Department of Homeland Security created in the aftermath of 9/11, fell drastically short of the necessary level of aid. Despite the Louisiana governor, Kathleen Blanco, issuing a state of emergency and following the proper protocol for requesting federal assistance well in advance of the storm, FEMA's delayed and inadequate response left the city's most vulnerable citizens without food, water, shelter and power for weeks after the hurricane made landfall. Overall, the government seemed unprepared for the disaster and almost 2,000 people died.

Following the disaster, there began to be speculation that the race and socioeconomic status of Katrina's victims played a role in how little concern the government showed in regard to their safety. In *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*, Michael Dyson argues, "Our being surprised, and disgusted by the poverty that Katrina revealed is a way of remaining deliberately naïve about the poor while dodging the responsibility that knowledge of their lives would entail. We remain blissfully ignorant of their circumstances to avoid the brutal indictment of our consciences" (3). If the government were to examine its consciences, it would have found there was no external enemy to blame; rather, it was to blame. The victims of Katrina were primarily black people of low socioeconomic status, meaning they likely could not afford to take proper precautions to stay safe from the storm. Since the storm itself cannot be blamed or forced to pay reparations, this left only the victims or the government responsible for the aftermath. Since the victims were poor, black people with little agency in a white supremacist and classist society, the government and media were able to use black stereotypes and frankly, blatant bigotry to blame the victims for their circumstances, relieving themselves of the responsibility of giving assistance. Compared to 9/11, the narratives surrounding Hurricane Katrina become less singular and become more fragmented. This fragmentation was caused by the influence of race, class, and politics on narratives.

Less than two years after the nation watched as New Orleans struggled helplessly to stay afloat, shots rang out on the campus of Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia. At the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Seung-Hui Cho, an immigrant from South Korea, shot and killed thirty-two people while wounding seventeen others with two semi-automatic pistols. Cho then committed suicide. Although a seemingly insignificant time had passed when viewed historically, the technological advancements in that brief gap were significant. The sudden boom of smart phones with recording capabilities, mobile data, and social media meant that not only was this tragedy being formulated and shaped in real-time like 9/11 or Katrina, but that the participants and onlookers were actively engaged in the shaping and formulating. As national reporters swarmed Blacksburg, students on campus were sharing their horrific experiences through the lens of their cell phone cameras. A graduate student at the university captured some of the earliest classroom shootings. His recordings were soon spread across the major news platforms, creating an avenue for viewers to connect with the horror and trauma in a way that secondhand experience had never allowed before. This immediacy in the narrative, however, is only possible when traditional filters and barriers are removed. In the same way that the events are not filmed by a news camera, the narratives are not exclusively shaped by journalists. This inclusion and communal dialogue provides countless voices the opportunity to be heard but also offers little in the way of discernment or evaluation. In the rush to be first (and therefore, more profitable), news outlets initially misidentified the Virginia Tech shooter as a recent graduate. It was reported that the shooter was Wayne Chiang, a Chinese American who roughly matched several of the early characteristics of the suspect. *In Tragedy and Terror at Virginia Tech*, Timothy Luke examines the complexity of such an event being portrayed in the media, explaining, “Even though these violent events took place on campus, the ensuing police swarm and campus lockdown rendered most individuals’ understanding, including my own, of this criminal attack into a layered media event, which was experienced mostly on television, radio, and the internet” (11). The narrative began to take form before the police had even begun to tape off the shooting’s crime scene. After the shooting, Tim Kaine, Virginia’s governor, had various experts and officials investigate the response and handling of the shooting. More than thirty pages of the report detailed Cho’s troubled history. Today, the Virginia Tech shooting remains the deadliest school shooting the United States.

In examining these events, applying critical theory allows one to analyze how language and trauma intersect to create narratives and concepts and to promote the acceptance process of those experiencing the trauma. Trauma theory provides the framework by which we attempt to answer the questions that arise after such tragedy. Its essence, which argues that such tragedy and trauma shatters and fragments our very ability to communicate and express such horrors, is a necessary lens to view such historically incomprehensible situations. Whether remembering the principles of trauma theory when reading a work written in the moments following the tragedy or years later, the truth of how we communicate about these events, and the ways our language fails in doing so, serves as unavoidable context to the conversation.

After his initial work posits the theory that all human behavior is driven by sexual instinct, Sigmund Freud works towards a more complex view in which he moves beyond that simple “pleasure principle” to include death in his drive theory. Within *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud discusses his belief about the mind, and the human struggle between these two drives: Eros and Thanatos, or life and death. Regarding trauma and memory, Freud theorizes that the mind is essentially shielded by a barrier that protects it from harmful stimuli. He argues that trauma breaches this protection, and that the mind, surprised by this sudden stimulus, goes into a type of emotional shock. He calls this shock, “traumatic neurosis,” explaining, “The clinical picture of traumatic neurosis approaches that of hysteria in its wealth of similar motor symptoms, but usually surpasses it in its strongly marked signs of subjective suffering—in this resembling rather hypochondria or melancholia—and in the evidences of a far more comprehensive general weakening and shattering of mental functions” (Freud 11). After trauma, this shock influences the way the events are both narrated and understood. It also leaves individuals especially susceptible to clinging to singular narratives amongst the chaos and unpredictability of the tragedy.

Another trauma theorist, Cathy Caruth, argues, like many historians and philosophers, that history is no longer a linear, straightforward reference and experience due to the overwhelming nature of trauma in the past century. In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, she engages with Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and explores how the language of trauma serves to communicate (or fails to do so) as it becomes twisted alongside the traumatic experience and memory itself. Further, she examines the connectedness between personal trauma and the collective trauma of the group, whether it be family, community, or nation. Explaining Freud’s work, Caruth writes:

But what seems to be suggested by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is that the wound of the mind-- the breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world-- is not, like the wound of the body, a simple and healable event, but rather an event that, like Tancred's first infliction of a mortal wound on the disguised Clorinda in the duel, is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known and is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor." (4)

Immediately following disaster, particularly when an individual undergoes an unexpected trauma, the individual is unable to fathom what has happened. It is not until a narrative is formed and accepted that the individual may begin to heal from the trauma. An understanding of this phenomenon lends itself to a study of why individuals are especially susceptible to narratives following trauma, why their narratives might be inaccurate, and why these narratives are important to both the individual and the nation.

Combined with trauma theory, structuralism allows for an understanding of the discourse surrounding such tragedy but also provides a sense of acceptance in the knowledge that this discourse will often be inadequate. The very concept of structuralism and the notion that stories exist relative to one another, or the idea that subjects attempt to mold stories into familiar, pre-existing frameworks, serves as a foundational theory to the dissection of these various narratives. Through structuralism, one can examine the narratives for common format, character archetypes, and perhaps even emotional reaction and news coverage. Additionally, inconsistencies, particularly among the reactions, relief and recovery efforts, and enduring narrative of the people affected, can determine if and how racial, cultural, or socioeconomic factors might have shaped the narratives of these events and the reactions to the events. In "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense," Friedrich Nietzsche explains that truth is "A mobile army of metaphors—in short, a sum of human relations which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are." Nietzsche is examining the nature of truth and language and how they influence the way concepts are created. In the same way that people forget that truths are illusions, they forget, or perhaps fail to realize, that narratives, especially those created in times of turmoil, are rhetorical interpretations rather than absolute truths. Statements such as, "America was innocent," "The victims of Hurricane Katrina should have found

shelter,” “The shooting was caused by mental illness,” become permanent in the minds of those seeking narratives in an effort to make sense of the trauma. However, they are often oversimplified or even inaccurate statements. In looking at these events and examining how language has affected both how the events are perceived and how individuals and governments respond to them, Nietzsche’s philosophy supports the notion that the narration following tragedy is rhetorical and should be further examined.

Much can be learned by examining both the way victims are treated and the language used in describing them after tragedies, such as 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech shooting. After experiencing a tragedy such as these, people are incredibly vulnerable whether that be in an emotional or physical sense. By examining the portrayal of victims of these events, it becomes apparent that the victims’ race and class influenced the way these sufferers were treated by the media, the government, relief efforts, and fellow Americans. After 9/11, there was a shift in the way obituaries were written and implemented in the media. In fact, *The New York Times* changed their obituary policy completely in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. In an attempt to memorialize the victims of these attacks, David Simpson explains, “The Times was declaring itself at this most tragic time as a paper for all New Yorkers and all Americans and attempting to pay proper homage to the ubiquity of death and the mournful democracy of grief” (22). These obituaries, which did not read as formal obituaries, served to individualize the victims while also emphasizing how their lives were taken suddenly and unexpectedly. They were named the “Portraits of Grief.” Together, these portraits served the function of “upholding the image of a flourishing civil society and a providential national destiny” (Simpson 31). The narratives surrounding the victims of 9/11 were unified because they functioned to create a singular cause: a national call for unity. This cause, however, was not without motivation as it supported the Bush administration in its desire to wage a war against terrorism. To speak frankly of the victims of 9/11, they were mostly people who simply showed up to their jobs that day. While first responders and others volunteered after the planes hit in an attempt to mitigate the damage and save lives, the individuals working in the towers and the Pentagon had not signed up to lose their lives for this cause. Despite this, they were called heroes. David Simpson comments on this language, arguing, “All these oddly imposed terms, such as heroes and ground zero, have been parlayed into an unjustified and internationally condemned military and political adventurism that not only arguably dishonors the dead in profound ways but also endangers the living across much of the

world” (88). The people who died in the terrorist attacks were to take on the role of both innocent victims and brave heroes, in an attempt to represent America as a whole and to make their deaths have some sense of meaning to a mourning country and the victims’ mourning loved ones. To examine this language, along with the vulnerability of those facing the trauma of such an attack, through structuralism and trauma theory is to analyze the symbolism of the words chosen to represent the victims. It is also, perhaps, to accept some painful truths: that these so-called heroes simply wanted to do their jobs on that dreadful day and their portrayal by the media and government was perhaps more related to a political agenda than an intent to honor them.

While much can be said about the victims of trauma, the same is true for the perpetrators of tragedy. After the terrorist attacks in September of 2001, a strong movement of “us vs. them” swept across the country. Not only was Al Qaeda demonized in the media, but so were people who even just appeared to be from the same region or culture. In *Regulating Aversion, Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*, Wendy Brown examines tolerance in many contexts, such as the war on terror. She explains the way America treated Arab Americans following the attack: “The state detained thousands of Arabs and Arab Americans after the September 11 attacks, several hundred of whom remain in custody without being charged, despite subsequent revelations that evidence linking them to any illegal, let alone terrorist, activity is nonexistent” (100). Because the perpetrators of the attacks were of this “other” culture, the United States held innocent men, accusing them of terrorism, denying them their rights, despite having no evidence they had done anything illegal. As if this were not enough, Brown also informs the reader: “The prosecution of the war on Afghanistan involved substantial ‘collateral damage’—that is civilian, Afghan casualties at rates that would have been flatly unacceptable if suffered by Europeans or Americans” (100). This information can be seen in correlation with Judith Butler’s concept that there is a hierarchy of grief in which America places American and white deaths as being more significant than the deaths of foreigners and people of color. The unified narrative after the attacks was likely due to the presence of an obvious enemy or person to blame for trauma. Knowing that individuals seek singular narratives following trauma and chaos, one may infer that such an obvious enemy provides them something to focus on. And after 9/11, that was revenge. In *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Butler explores the post-9/11 America and comments on the government’s insistence to wage war. She explains how it became impossible to speak out against the war:

"The voicing of critical perspectives against the war has become difficult to do, not only because mainstream media enterprises will not publish them (most of them appear in the progressive or alternative print media or on the internet), but because to voice is to risk hystericization and censorship. In a strong sense, the binarism that Bush proposes in which only two positions are possible---"Either you're with us or you're with the terrorists"--- makes it untenable to hold a position which one opposes both and queries the terms in which the opposition is framed. (2)

While binaries are simple and require individuals to do little thinking following trauma, giving individuals such an uncomplicated narrative proves to be dangerous when individuals accept racist rhetoric as truth. The acceptance of this rhetoric, combined with the silencing of people who began to speak out against the war, led to the war on terror which inflicted more and more trauma onto various people, both American and foreign. The narrative was simply reversed, painting America as the innocent defeaters of terrorism.

Butler also comments on the use of the word "terrorism" in general, arguing that by using this language in its narratives:

The United States positions itself exclusively as the sudden and indisputable victim of violence, even though there is no doubt that it did suffer violence. But it is one matter to suffer violence and quite another to use that fact to ground a framework in which one's inquiry authorizes limitless aggression against targets that may or may not be related to the sources of one's own suffering. (4)

This constant use of the word terrorism implies that there is only one guilty party and one innocent party with no room for nuance or complexity. Though, when the United States' military kills innocent civilians in other countries, the media and government do not deem our own actions as being terrorism. Perhaps the biggest difference here is between race and nationality. These contrasting narratives lend themselves as proof that language does, in fact, construct reality. America's own actions were deemed a 'War on Terrorism' while America carried out the same attacks against others that were previously labeled as such terrorism. Individuals cling to these narratives rather than questioning them, and therefore, accept the narratives surrounding the victims, the perpetrators, and the entire War on Terror in attempt to accept such horrific disasters, like 9/11 and war.

While the victims of 9/11 were narrated as innocent and brave heroes and were cast in a positive light, the victims of another American tragedy, Hurricane Katrina, were not so lucky. There was no hiding the government's delay in responding to this tragedy. When critics began to question whether it was class or race which had the greatest impact on victims of the storm, it was difficult to distinguish between the two. In *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*, Michael E. Dyson elaborates on this, stating, "Blacks of means escaped the tragedy; blacks without them suffered and died. In reality, it is how race and class interact that made the situation for the poor so horrible on the Gulf Coast. The rigid caste system that punishes poor blacks and other minorities also targets poor whites. Even among the oppressed, however, there are stark differences" (144-145). In a white supremacist and classist society, one must examine both race and class and the ways the two intersect to gather the full picture of how the two affect victims of trauma and the rhetoric surrounding the trauma. Not only did the victims' race and class influence the narratives framing their trauma, it also influenced the likelihood of these minorities to become victims of the storm. Institutionalized racism leaves people of color with poorer education, fewer opportunities, and ultimately more vulnerable to disasters. For example, "In New Orleans, 53% of poor blacks were without cars while just 17% of poor whites lacked access to cars" (Dyson 145). This lack of resources left many poor black people unable to escape the storm and forced them to wait it out in their homes. The victims of 9/11 were honored for various reasons, but one particular reason which can be contrasted with the victims of Katrina is that the victims of the terrorist attacks looked the way America wanted to be represented, particularly the victims who were discussed and portrayed in the media. They were white, white-collar workers who represented a sense of the American dream—people making it in New York, America's greatest city. On the other hand, victims of Hurricane Katrina were, for the most part, people of color living in poverty. For this reason, the victims in New Orleans were narrated negatively and were even portrayed as being inhumane criminals. After the storm, a congressman stated that although they had not been able to clean up public housing in New Orleans, God did it for them through Hurricane Katrina. To place such little value on life lost speaks volumes to the difference between how America valued the victims of Hurricane Katrina in comparison to 9/11.

In "Continually Neglected: Situating Natural Disasters in the African American Experience," Jason David Rivera and DeMond Shondell Miller examine the treatment of African Americans following natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. Due to what Rivera and Miller

call “an experience rooted in a history of inequity” (503), sufferers of Hurricane Katrina found themselves displaced from their homes and awaiting government aid which was continuously delayed. They explain that the news reports describing the conditions the victims of Hurricane Katrina were forced to live in following the storm “provided a clear picture of an environment not worth saving or even inhabitable by humans. Within a climate of media exaggerations and sensationalizing, fictional accounts of what happened became a part of the national discourse about what to do after Katrina” (513). Following 9/11, there was a clear enemy: the terrorists. Following Hurricane Katrina, the narrative became more fragmented because whom to hold responsible became less clear. There was no enemy to blame for the storm; however, the government should be blamed for their failure to prepare for the storm. Rather than a unified narrative, the narratives were influenced by race, class, and politics. Black celebrities began speaking out against the government’s treatment of black people in face of tragedy. In a live interview, Kanye West made the infamous statement which is still a tagline on social media today: “George Bush doesn’t care about black people.” In a country with such polarizing politics, Republicans and Democrats often come at such disasters with completely different opinions. Republicans argued that the victims should have listened to the warnings and left the area while Democrats were more likely to argue for more relief. To evade the responsibility of leaving so many people vulnerable to a storm due to poor preparation and to avoid having to help these people once the tragedy occurred, the government and some media outlets turned to stereotyping, slandering, and blaming the victims of the hurricane for their circumstances.

Whereas the narratives spawned from other tragedies discussed herein focus heavily on the victims of the events, the media response and shaping of the narrative surrounding the horrific act on the campus of Virginia Tech instead focused on the perpetrator of the tragedy. While the tally of the wounded or dead remained hazy, both formal and informal reporting of the shooting began to direct its attention towards attempting to identify and analyze the shooter. Initially, media outlets reported Wayne Chiang as the assailant. Before the dust had settled, an attorney named Jack Thompson spoke on Fox News, somehow compiling a profile of the still-unknown shooter and linking violent video games to the killer’s mindset, motives, and training. Reports originating from a faulty *Chicago Sun-Times* article falsely identified the gunman as a 24-year-old Chinese national. Eventually, the shooter was correctly identified, but this only served to continue the investigation into his personal life. With media from all over the world descending on the Blacksburg, Virginia

campus, the questions being asked and the answers being obtained centered on the individual who had committed the crime, essentially lumping his victims into one faceless group, which is a far cry of the individualized obituaries featured in *The Times* following 9/11. Virginia Tech's own commissioned investigation and report, led by former Virginia police superintendent Gerald Massengill, devoted more than twenty pages to the background, life, and mental health of the shooter. Oddly, some of the earliest reporting on the incident from the *New York Times*, published before the identity of the shooter was known, even referenced by name an individual who committed a smaller shooting on the campus a year prior.

This fascination with the violent individual strikes a similar chord to the public consciousness surrounding serial killers. Countless documentaries and profiles exist that investigate the lives of monsters like Ted Bundy, and the narratives, some that even romanticize or fawn over the charisma and attractiveness of Bundy, often overshadow or outright ignore his victims. While names like Ted Bundy or Jeffrey Dahmer are well-known fixtures in popular culture, one would be hard-pressed to recall the name of a single victim of any high-profile serial killer. Such is the case with mass shooters and school shooters; the only names remaining in the public discourse from the Columbine tragedy are those of the students who committed the brutality. That focus frames the narratives surrounding the tragedy and trauma in a significant way. It places the emphasis on the killer, often investigating their motives. Essentially, the public asks why the killer committed the act, which is a rephrasing of the true question "how did they suffer?" Instead of memorializing the lives of the victims or examining the ways in which they suffered at the hands of these perpetrators, society learns of manifestos, scorned lovers, disgruntled workers, and maladjusted social creatures. In literary terms, the antagonist becomes the antihero. In an attempt to understand such horrific acts through a simple narrative, defining the reason the gunman decided to kill becomes an appealing outlet.

Further complicating the media coverage and shaping of the Virginia Tech narrative are the omnipresent gun reform and mental health conversations. Beyond the crusade to link mass shootings to video games that depict war and violence, the immediate aftermath of the initial reports out of Blacksburg found journalists, news organizations, and even law enforcement searching for clues in the shooter's personal life. While much of this search is to uncover any lurid details to sensationalize the motives or capture a headline, there is also a pragmatic approach to

determine if the shooter was part of any organization, was acting alone, or had any overarching social, political, or religious motivations.

This reality has become part of the narrative for each mass shooting, which has in many ways begun to congregate into an overall narrative about mass shootings in general. Perhaps knowing this, Seung-Hui Cho left the scene of his initial attack, returned to his residence, deleted his emails and removed his computer's hard drive. Whatever his motives were or were not, Cho was likely aware of the investigation process that takes place when a shooter is identified and wanted to shape his own narrative. From there, he compiled a package of videos, pictures, and other documents that he mailed to NBC News before completing the remainder of his attack. This obsession with controlling the narrative speaks volumes to the value and power of narratives in creating a culture's collective consciousness.

This consciousness of the way in which mass shooting narratives are shaped, and his subsequent actions to shape it himself, demonstrate a certain level of lucidity, premeditation, and planning. It also speaks, however, particularly in Cho's case, to lingering anger and mental illness struggles. Following the shooting, it became well publicized that Cho suffered from depression and other mental illness, having even been hospitalized after an evaluation that deemed him a danger to himself and others. This diagnosis should have rendered Cho unable to purchase or obtain a firearm, another debate sparked in the aftermath of shootings. In *There is a Gunman on Campus: Tragedy and Terror at Virginia Tech*, Timothy W. Luke explains:

The debate blossoms a bit each time high profile murders occur, but it is clear that clever killers, like Cho, always have been able to conform to, or successfully defy, existing gun control laws in the United States. Gun Violence, however, is an exciting lead for the global news media...So an event of this magnitude quickly can be mobilized to fuel a fresh feeding frenzy among print, radio, television, and Internet journalists (11)

Perhaps another reason for the fragmentation of shooting narratives is the insistence, by both politicians and civilians, to use the event as an argument for or against gun rights. There are completely polarized opinions on how to respond to such gun violence. These alternate narratives, along with the shock the brain enters in the aftermath of trauma, leave individuals and societies to navigate these fragmented narratives in an attempt to make sense of the trauma.

In *Tragedy and Terror at Virginia Tech*, Michael Kimmel also discusses how race might influence the profiling of school shooters. He argues that the narratives following these traumas

would be much different if the shooters were often black women rather than white men. He explains, “If the killers in schools were all black girls from poor families, we’d be having a national debate about inner-city poor black girls. The entire focus would be on race, class, and gender. The media would invent a new term for their behavior, such as with ‘wilding’ a decade ago” (67). The Virginia Tech shooting is different from most mass shootings described in the media because the perpetrator was not white. Timothy W. Luke also argues that in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shooting, “an unnerving racial undertone must not be ignored.” In the media, they often replaced Cho’s name with ‘disturbed Asian.’ Luke continues to explain, “this radicalized description of the shooter enabled them to explain away Cho’s behavior as a case of difficult assimilation” (14). In this case, the same politicians who argue race has nothing to do with shootings when they are perpetrated by white men, argued that the problem was not guns nor policy; instead, it was immigration. These instances reveal the plurality of narratives and their ability to be molded to fit any agenda.

While 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech shooting rank as three of the most memorable, horrifying, and widely covered tragedies of the first decade of the new millennium, the type of coverage they received was quite different, particularly in the aftermath of each event. Coverage of the 9/11 attacks spanned more than ninety-three consecutive hours across each of the major networks, uninterrupted by commercials or other regular programming. Further, the very nature of the attacks meant that an immeasurable number of viewers around the world actually witnessed the collision of the second plane while watching news coverage of the initial impact. This dynamic meant that many Americans saw the events unfold in real time, along with the inaccuracies, misunderstandings and exaggerations that come along with such reporting. Eyewitness interview accounts of helicopters crashing into the Pentagon, a fire at the National Mall, and a car bomb detonation outside the State Department were all included in CNN’s initial coverage.

Even after the 93-hour marathon coverage, CNN, the first to break the news of the attacks by one minute, continued follow-up coverage for nearly three months. Additionally, 9/11 was significant in that beyond interrupting news channels for continuous coverage, other non-news channels either broadcast coverage from a parent company or replaced their programming with donation information, sympathy still shots, or other event-related content. From there, the seamless transition from 9/11 coverage into reporting, analysis and debate about the subsequent “War on

Terror,” seemed to create an endless stream of 9/11 content in which the narrative was continually revised and hammered into the public discourse.

Interestingly, Hurricane Katrina, the longest of the three events in its actual duration, received less immediate coverage than the Breaking News interruptions of Virginia Tech and less enduring coverage than the 9/11 attacks. NBC News anchor, Carl Quintanilla, remained in New Orleans for just thirteen days, despite the rescue and rebuilding efforts taking several months (PBS). While it cannot be fairly stated that Hurricane Katrina was ignored or that it was less than a highly reported on event, the comparison to other events similar in magnitude does highlight a discrepancy in how information is gathered and reported and how narratives are shaped. Although each of the three events discussed here contained false information and inaccurate reports, the inaccuracies in Katrina coverage often found common themes. Early on, countless stories surfaced of violence, rape, and looting throughout the city, particularly in the Superdome, the gigantic stadium in which thousands of residents sought shelter from the storm. These were later reported to be almost entirely untrue, as Louisiana National Guard Lt. Col. Jacques Thibodeaux told *PBS Newshour*: “I’ve heard of situations and rumors of rapes and murders and complete lawlessness in both the Superdome and the convention center. And I can tell you that I was at both those locations, and those are just false. Those things didn’t happen” (PBS). These inaccuracies added to the narrative that the victims of Katrina were dangerous criminals who did not deserve saving. In accepting these narratives without further examining their truth, the media impacted the imagery of Hurricane Katrina victims in the public’s eye, and therefore, likely impacted the response to the disaster.

With the vital role that these narratives played in a people's collective experiencing, understanding, and processing trauma, it must be equally vital that those same people examine and evaluate the way in which narratives are shaped, ensuring that victims are accurately and fully represented, that history records the events wholly and truthfully, and that any healing and memorializing be done properly or at least with the knowledge that narratives often fail. The narratives that frame significant American tragedies such as the 9/11 attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech shooting are crucial in the presentation of information about the tragedies, the healing process of those affected, and even in how they make future similar tragedies more or less likely to occur. The language used shapes the way the event is perceived, especially after times of tragedy when people are seeking something to make sense of what has happened. Through both

structuralism and trauma theory, one can inspect the shaping of the narratives surrounding these tragedies to analyze ways that those narratives have contributed to both grief and healing as well as to both prevention and encouragement of future potential tragedies. The very nature of horrific tragedy makes the application of a familiar, unchanging frame of the events a necessary part of the coping and recovery process. In moments or events beyond what a society could previously imagine, finding relation and commonality, even in the way the event is understood, ultimately allows citizens to find the comfort and hope to communicate their trauma and believe in the possibility of moving past the experience.

Additionally, the framing of these narratives can also be used to examine the permanent, or at least continuing and well-established, narrative placed on the people and communities forever altered by each tragedy. If narratives are important in creating order and preserving identity after a tragedy, then they are also useful in shaping and furthering that identity in times of tranquility as well. To examine the ways in which these tragedies have been discussed differently, often due to racial, cultural and socioeconomic factors, can speak not only to the handling of those horrific circumstances, but to the circumstances of the people serving as the characters in the overarching narrative of the nation and culture.

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Communism and Witchcraft: Power through Language in *The Crucible: A Play in Four Acts*

Avery Crews

“Every established order tends to produce (to very different degrees with different means) the naturalization of its own arbitrariness.”

Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*

Introduction

Language is foundational to the expression of culture and history throughout the world. Storytelling, literature, legislation, and social doctrine are all shaped and defined by language usage and are communicated through the act of sharing and spreading this knowledge through words. The written language has been vital in understanding the historical circumstances of a group of people, but language far outdates written history and has shaped civilization for as long as humans have been able to express themselves through spoken words and signs. Language and communication are the central facets of humanity that differentiate humans from other creatures. Language is a gateway: it allows for the removal of barriers, the exchange of knowledge, and the establishment of power within society. Letters are made into words which are then given meaning by society and in their meaning, they are given power. All great acts of power have one thing in common and that is the manner in which language was utilized to negotiate power for oneself over another in order to gain and maintain one's end goal.

Religious and Historical Context

For the vast majority of history, power has been drawn from religion and religious doctrine that is then altered by the ruling classes in order to enforce obedience and encourage subjectivity to those in power. Religious language and doctrine have defined human existence for as long as language has existed, and the power of religious language is something that is undeniable even in today's more secular society. In the western world, the central religious text has been *The Bible* and its two independent texts, the *New Testament* and the *Torah*, and this text has controlled human belief and power dynamics for centuries. The Catholic Church and catechism controlled common belief for centuries and heavily influenced and shaped the foundations of society based on the roles set forth within these texts and the church's desires for expansion and the accumulation of wealth. Where the people could find no natural explanations for the phenomena that occurred around them, religion was utilized as a substitute for knowledge and became ingrained in the social order.

Religion has long played a fundamental role in American society, and its role in founding the colonies is undeniable. The Puritans were an English Protestant religious group that unearthed a place to freely practice within the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 17th century whose main desire was to “purify” the English Anglican Church (Giussani 15). Puritan societies were religious based communities founded on the pillar of piety in all aspects of life and defined themselves as “God’s children” and “visible saints” in their attempts at reformation and self-absolution (Giussani 17). The government system was a theocracy in which common belief was that God would act through those he needed and that those he selected as judge and punisher within society would do so based on biblical doctrine. The Puritans inhabited the Massachusetts Bay Colony for more than a century and were prevalent throughout the New England area. Their religious beliefs and strict theocratic society often put them at odds with other religious groups they encountered, particularly the Quakers, whom they persecuted for decades, and created a rigid behavior system within their own communities (Giussani 15).

This strict theocratic society instilled a rigid system of obedience among the people, and any movement deemed theologically unsound or that could impact the standing of the community was punished heavily. Witchcraft has a long history and a biblical root within the *Torah* that has enabled and promoted the hunting of alleged witches and devil worshippers for centuries. It was common for oddities and bad seasons to be blamed on witchcraft as a means of explaining away the negative aspects of life (Hoffer). One major example of witchcraft fervor occurred within the Puritan village of Salem in the Massachusetts Bay Colony from spring of 1692 through late winter of 1693 in which nearly two-hundred men, women, and children were tried on charges of witchcraft and twenty men and women were hanged or pressed to death based on the accusations of witchcraft and satanism by girls aged seventeen and younger, in addition to seven other accused witches who died while imprisoned (Hoffer). Fear of the supernatural and general suspicion of others encouraged this fear and frenzy of witchcraft and allowed for this increasing tension and resentment within the village of Salem (Hoffer).

The young women at the forefront of this were nine-year-old Elizabeth Parris and eleven-year-old Abigail Williams, the daughter and niece of the village minister, who began suffering from fits and outbursts and were diagnosed with “betwitchment,” followed later by five additional young women in the community (Craker 335). This period of frenzy that occurred in Salem in 1692 began with the accusation of three women for working with the devil, Tituba, a slave owned

by the Parris family, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborn, whom the young girls accused of being the cause of their bewitchment (Hoffer). Despite the only evidence presented being “spectral evidence,” these cases went forward and the hysteria and suspicion grew within Salem (Craker 347). Of those initially accused, only Tituba admitted guilt out of a desire to save herself, and this false admission of guilt led to a system in which those named as witches would clear themselves in the eye of the law by admitting to guilt, seeking absolution from God, and entering into a plea bargain that required them to name others as witches.

The Court of Oyer and Terminer, an Anglo-French term meaning “to hear and determine,” was a judicial body that looked specifically into felonies and misdemeanors and served as the central body in trying, questioning, and determining guilt of the accused and was headed by the Lieutenant Governor and several other prominent figures within the community (Louis-Jacques). Evidence presented to the court throughout the course of these trials included “confession,” “testimony of two eyewitnesses to acts of witchcraft,” and “spectral evidence” and the presentation of this evidence generally incited hysteria within the community (Craker 346). The court was dissolved when the news of the witch trials became widely known throughout the Massachusetts Bay Colony, upon which the Superior Court of Judicature took over the cases and eventually “disallowed spectral evidence” which led to the acquittal of the majority of the remaining accused (Louis-Jacques). These trials took place the majority of 1692 and by early 1693 had begun to lose fervor and the remaining accused were acquitted of their supposed crimes (Hoffer). The Salem Witch Trials successfully divided the community of Salem for decades after the trials were completed and forever altered the understanding of fear as a powerful motivation for change within society.

Theoretical Lens

These instances of the power of fear usurping the logical route of action can be seen throughout history, and they continue to repeat themselves in modern society. Pierre Bourdieu was a French linguist, anthropologist, and philosopher whose works deal with language and how it is the root of power dynamics within society. Through his analysis of the transfer of power within society and the influence of social standards on maintaining and altering existing power dynamics, Bourdieu’s theories and ideologies are central to understanding the relationship between language and power within society. Bourdieu is the main figure that is at the center of discourse theory, which can be found throughout his works. The definition for discourse comes from *The Journal*

of Education by James Paul Gee and defines discourse as “a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or social network” (Gee 18). Discourse theory is employed as a means of examining power dynamics within any form of discourse, and it heavily emphasizes language and power relations.

A major aspect of Bourdieu’s theories and writings can be found within the term symbolic power and the concepts that exist in relation to that means of gaining power. Initially defined within the work *In Other Words: Essays Toward a Reflexive Sociology*, and mentioned and expanded upon in other essays, Bourdieu defines symbolic power as, “a power of creating things with words. It is only if it is true, that is, adequate to things, that a description can create things. In this sense, symbolic power is a power of consecration or revelation, a power to conceal or reveal things which are already there” (138). Symbolic power is utilizing one’s situation and the power gained from one’s background to redefine the dynamic navigated in favor of oneself. This emphasis on the shift in power to an individual lower on the power hierarchy indicates the power of language in manipulating the emotions and beliefs of one’s audience. Language is instrumental in establishing, maintaining, and breaking down the existing power dynamics and hierarchies that exist within society.

The writings of Bourdieu were heavily influenced by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure whose writings dealt with the concept of semiotics, signs, and signifiers in his attempt to analyze and understand the use of language on the application of meaning to a combination of sounds. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and the manner in which they are utilized for interpretation by those that make use of a language and Bourdieu was influenced by this concept in his analysis of symbols and symbolic power in regard to language usage within society (Munteanu 65). In his work *Language and Symbolic Power*, Bourdieu writes:

The entire destiny of modern linguistics is in fact determined by Saussure's inaugural act through which he separates the ‘external’ elements of linguistics from the ‘internal’ elements, and, by reserving the title of linguistics for the latter, excludes from it all the investigations which establish a relationship between language and anthropology, the political history of those who speak it, or even the geography of the domain where it is spoken, because all of these things add nothing to a knowledge of language taken in itself. Given that it sprang from the autonomy attributed to language in relation to its social

conditions of production, reproduction and use, structural linguistics could not become the dominant social science without exercising an ideological effect, by bestowing the appearance of scientificity on the naturalization of the products of history, that is, on symbolic objects. (33)

This interpretation of language as foundational to society and the manner in which people influence language in order to adapt the existing power dynamics in favor of another, regardless of their initial level of power. For Bourdieu, language acts as a mechanism of power, and he builds upon Saussure's analysis of the function of language in signifying power and meaning through language by furthering the influence of language on establishing power for one that utilizes language.

Communication and the exchange of knowledge are done with a specific purpose in mind. Michael Halliday states that there are seven specific goals in language, which are instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative, and representational, and each function as a means of gaining something for the speaker in carrying out a form of communication. This definition of language usage is similar to Bourdieu's identification of cultural capital and the goal of human communication and discourse being to gain three types of capital for oneself over those they engage in discourse with ("An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology"). Cultural capital "itself exists in three forms, embodied, objectified, or institutionalized," which correlate with knowledge, property, and recognition and acts as a motivating factor for those that navigate the power dynamics that society is founded upon ("An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology"). Capital functions as the underlying form of motivation for power gain and maintenance within society and acts as a field of social relations that are navigated throughout the course of individual lives. The understanding of this relationship between a desire for personal gain and a wish to uphold cultural stereotypes and niceties encourages those that use and partake in discourse in order to establish longstanding power for themselves through their navigation of language and the intrinsic power that it possesses.

Communism and McCarthyism

Within the mid-twentieth century, the general sentiment towards communism and socialism began to shift, and the common perception of the two ideologies was placed by the U.S. government and media systems as being in direct opposition to American capitalism. This portrayal of an idea as inherently bad because it did not align with what was considered as

economically powerful within the U.S. enabled the propagation of misinformation and misrepresentation of the idea by the general population that fueled the hate filled sentiment that was desired by those in power. The American bureaucracy encouraged fear of this alien ideology during the depression era through the ban of books deemed to encourage leftist ideologies, labor union bans, loyalty oaths, and a variety of other methods that all acted with the goals of limiting access to these ideas while also encouraging misinformation through fear tactics (Schrecker and Deery 84).

In *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu discusses the influence of cultural capital on what is viewed as desirable and powerful within a culture. This can be seen reflected within the tactics used to control the people and their opinions during McCarthy era America. Joseph McCarthy was a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin from the years 1947 to 1957 and headed a political movement founded on paranoia over the fear of communist infiltration that became known as the McCarthy Witch Hunt. McCarthy spearheaded a movement within the United States government to “eradicate” communist sympathies amid the Cold War terror which led to his fear-based power (Schrecker and Deery 105). In a 1950 speech to a Women’s Republican Club, McCarthy came forward with a list of 205 names which he claimed to have links to communism and the Soviet Union within the State Department (Schrecker and Deery 71). This event, which caused mass hysteria and a moral crisis throughout the United States, can be defined by the political repression and fear mongering that were central to the movement at its height.

The McCarthy Witch Hunt led to the establishment of several anti-communist investigation committees by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. One example of the investigation’s impact is shown by the hundreds of individuals who were brought forth on accusations of communist sympathy and treason by the House Committee on Un-American Activities between 1938 and 1975 and found guilty of contempt of Congress (Schrecker and Deery 67). The manner of accusation by others and acquittal upon naming additional communist sympathizers can be seen as directly reflecting the events that occurred in Salem in 1692, and Miller capitalizes on this throughout his allegory. An individual was able to gain capital for themselves by pledging loyalty to accepted ideas such as capitalism and rebuking leftist ideas like communism, and those that chose not to speak against these ideas and agree with what was cultural accepted were blacklisted from their careers and often brought forward and forced to testify, sometimes for months, to the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) (Schrecker

and Deery 67). This system of enforcing ideas and then targeting those who disagreed was not the first instance of this power dynamic within American history, and in the context of modern American politics, it will not be the last time this occurs.

Miller and *The Crucible*

Arthur Miller was an American essayist and playwright known for being a relatively provocative figure within the American media. Best known for his plays *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible: A Play in Four Acts*, Miller's career was defined by controversy, and his works heavily emphasized the relationship between the individual and society and the navigation of that power dynamic. *The Crucible* is a work set in Salem, Massachusetts at the beginning of the Salem Witch Trials and opens with a group of young women dancing naked in the forest, apparently engaged in a ritual, and eventually leads to a series of accusations, threats, and power motivated actions that alter the theocratic society in which the work is set. *The Crucible* was published in 1953, and Miller's work is an allegory of his experience with the McCarthy Witch Hunt and his questioning by the HUAC, which he saw as being extremely similar to the events that occurred in Salem in 1692. He was brought forth and questioned by the HUAC about his political affiliations, and while he detailed his actions, he refused to name others in affiliation to his actions, stating, "I could not use the name of another person and bring trouble on him" ("Why I Wrote"). Miller wrote, in an essay to the *New Yorker* regarding the release of *The Crucible*, "McCarthy's power to stir fears of creeping Communism was not entirely based on illusion, of course; the paranoid, real or pretended, always secretes its pearl around a grain of fact," and discusses the manner in which fear as a means of establishing power is rooted in American history and has heavily influenced society ("Why I Wrote"). This theme of gaining power for oneself through the repression of others based upon existing cultural fears, satanism and communism, allowed for Miller to emphasize the influence of language in establishing power and disrupting existing cultural hierarchies.

In applying the works and theories of Pierre Bourdieu under the umbrella of discourse theory as expressed in his work *Language and Symbolic Power* to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible: A Play in Four Acts*, it can be noted that language is instrumental in establishing, maintaining, and breaking down the existing power dynamics and hierarchies that exist within society. These writings allow for an in-depth evaluation of how power is gained, maintained and lost through the execution of discourse, and encourage an examination of the manner in which language has the power to adapt the existing power dynamics in favor of another, regardless of their initial level of

power. This theoretical lens is valuable in analyzing the language and formation of power dynamics within *The Crucible* because it establishes that language and communication are vital to dissecting and challenging the existing social hierarchy. More specifically, expressed through the use of language to incite fear as a means of gaining power for oneself, and through the manipulation of the established power dynamic by Abigail Williams in *The Crucible* and its contemporary cultural event in Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch-hunt, both of which were established via fear. In focusing on the relationship between Christianity and capitalism within American culture, the value of these two characteristics in defining the social hierarchy within the United States and altering the power hierarchy is analyzed. Utilizing Bourdieu's discourse theory, specifically the critical discourse analysis regarding cultural and symbolic capital, language is addressed as a symbol and as the root of all power and seeks to understand how this theory is incorporated by both Abigail and McCarthy through the expression of religion and gender.

Religion

Karl Marx discussed religion as "an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people," and while this is true in sentiment, the true repression of religion comes in the concept of free will and personal power, all the while enforcing the concept of remaining obedient to an oppressive higher power (262). Religion in American society has encouraged and required people, particularly women and those in the lower classes, throughout history to be complacent in their oppression. These religious standards, based upon biblical doctrine, have shaped the moral expectations for individuals within society and reinforced ideas regarding gender and the role of women within a culture. Christianity, as the central religious force for the western world, has encouraged gender roles and instilled power dynamics within society that have become enshrined within American cultural norms.

Positions of power and authority within the Church have a history of exclusion regarding female leadership and influence. Women are relegated to roles that act as pillars of support for male authorities and have little personal voice regarding the rules and regulations of the Church and possess little influence over church doctrine and leadership. This concept of the exclusion of women from positions of power was argued by the Church to be based off of scripture, specifically 1 Timothy 2, in which lines 9-12 state:

In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;
But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.
Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.
(*The Bible KJV*)

This concept of women being silent, modest, and obedient in order to be considered worthwhile can be seen reflected throughout American culture and in the figure of Abigail within *The Crucible*. This language of subjugation as expressed within *The Bible* can be seen manifest in the treatment of women within Salem in *The Crucible*. The members of society in Salem who possessed the most cultural power were those of high religious position, and the central religious authorities presented within *The Crucible* are Reverend Parris, who acts as the village minister, Reverend Hale, who is invited by Parris to head the trials, and Judge Hathorne, who serves as a judge in the trials, all of which are male. Abigail, as a young woman, has no authority within this theocratic society, and she is meant to be obedient and to seek no actions for herself outside what is deemed culturally acceptable.

Religious doctrine serves as the foundation for the majority of cultural and political doctrine within the United States, and regardless of the growth within the last century in overcoming this gender gap, these standards continue to differentiate between men and women within society. Religious doctrine has perpetuated the concept of gender roles, and the foundation for these roles can be found within *The Bible* in Genesis where Adam and Eve are both given roles by God in the garden that they are meant to carry out. Through this presentation of gender as predefined, the issue comes in how society has adopted these roles and in manners that exalt male power as superior while simultaneously limiting the impact that women are able to have. This mentality encourages standards of behavior that actively restrict female voice within society, and it is this limitation on female access to the language of power that is truly influential in continuing this cycle of repression.

Due to these standards and expectations for women, Abigail is forced to play from within the established hierarchy in order to better her position and increase her personal power. Within his work *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu discusses cultural capital and the manner in which the navigation of culturally significant aspects of society, such as religion, enable members of society

to cultivate power for themselves through their actions. “Capital, which, in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible” and within a theocratic society religious authority is one of the dominant forms of capital for an individual (*The Forms of Capital* 254). The narratorial introduction to *The Crucible* discusses the idea of religious fervor having the power to incite panic when a theocratic political system has the ability to determine the value of individuals within society:

The Salem tragedy... developed from a paradox... Simply, it was this: for good purposes, even high purposes, the people of Salem developed a theocracy, a combine of state and religious power whose function was to keep the community together, and to prevent any kind of disunity that might open it to destruction by material or ideological enemies. It was forged for a necessary purpose and accomplished that purpose. But all organization is and must be grounded on the idea of exclusion and prohibition, just as two objects cannot occupy the same space... The witch-hunt was a perverse manifestation of the panic which set in among all classes when the balance began to turn toward greater individual freedom. (Miller 6)

Language is able to act as symbolic power within this community because it is correlated with religion and that is the supreme source of power within a theocratic society. Within Salem, the witch hunt acted as a form of repression enacted by those who had spent their entire lives oppressed by the system that they were now being empowered by. Abigail is able to increase her power and authority within society because she is able to align her will, and her words, with those of God and religion, which prevented those around her from denying her the power she garnered for herself.

The first instance of Abigail redefining the power dynamic in favor of herself comes in her decision to admit guilt and call upon God for forgiveness, saying “I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; I saw him, I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand” (Miller 45). This reclamation of her status within society would be sufficient for her to retain the level of power that she initially began with, but instead she seeks to increase power for herself and shifts the power to herself through her accusations of others within Salem, stating “I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil!” (Miller 45). These actions enable her to align her words with the authority of God, and in doing so, her language enables her

to manipulate the emotions and beliefs of her audience in her favor in order to establish power for herself and break down the existing power dynamics. Her navigation of the existing social discourses allows for Abigail to garner authority for herself through her use of language and ability to call on religious authority to ground and support her personal authority.

This emphasis on the power of words in altering the perception of power within society continues as more names are listed and the attention and suspicion are removed from Abigail and Betty and instead they are viewed as authorities who have access to knowledge outside the reach of the existing male authorities. Her confession enables her to cleanse herself of her guilt over casting charms and being caught, while also shifting the burden of blame onto others within Salem through her self-serving accusations. This use of God focused language can be seen throughout the work in defining the laws and morals of society. For members of Puritan Salem, biblical sin is the same as breaking a law, and there was a strict intolerance of any form of dissent against the biblical precedence and standards that had been established within society. In transforming her sin into power, Abigail is undermining the system in place within society and establishing a position of power for herself that was unheard of for anyone outside of the ministry, especially for a young, unmarried woman.

Biblical language and the threat of God's fury have heavily shaped and altered the behaviors and mentalities of society. McCarthy was able to utilize this language as a means of garnering power through the use of threats and coercion. The McCarthy Witch Hunt advocated the creation of the HUAC and this language of accusation promoted and allowed for the alteration of the established power hierarchy within society. McCarthy claimed to act out of a patriotic will and this became equated as God's will in the eyes of many of his supporters (Ericksen 49). The ability to equate his words and work with the words and work of God mirrors that of Abigail within *The Crucible* and represents the influence of religion on altering the power dynamic within society. The American ideology is something that has been shaped and compounded into the American psyche for more than two centuries and, as Bourdieu discusses, "the history of the transformation of myth into religion (ideology) is not separable from the history of the constitution of a corps of specialized producers of religious rites and discourses, i.e. the progress of the division of religious labour, which is itself a dimension of the progress of the division of social labour, and hence the division into classes" (*Language and Symbolic Power* 158). The concept of rags to riches and the

American Dream encourage the capitalistic mentality from which McCarthy garnered support from and utilized to fuel his witch hunt towards supposedly unamerican communist sympathizers.

American political rhetoric has long undermined the access to expression within society that those lower on the power hierarchy have. The system in place encourages a power dynamic based upon personal growth for those already in power and seeks to further limit the voices of those lower on the hierarchy. The McCarthy era was no different in its attempts to undermine civilian right to freedom of expression and actively did so through the targeting of those whom they deemed as politically deviant or threatening to the existing political and social system. Playing within the existing system of biblically based ideologies in American society, Senator Joseph McCarthy was able to incite fear over communism within the United States by placing it in direct opposition of religion (Ericksen 51). This enforcement of political repression is “the symbolic violence, a violence that is hardly noticed, almost invisible for the victims on whom it is perpetrated” and the results of these social standards and cultural expectations continue to reinforce the ideology of inequality that has been perpetuated throughout history (“On Male Domination”).

Capitalism and communism have been pitted against one another within American society and the political system for decades. Due to this relationship, “The field as a whole is defined as a system of deviations on different levels and nothing, either in the institutions or in the agents, the acts or discourses they produce, has meaning except relationally, by virtue of the interplay of oppositions and distinctions” (*Language and Symbolic Power* 185). Capitalism has been correlated with God’s will within American society because wealth is associated as a gift from God, while communism is linked with moving away from God which further associates the term with negative connotations. The existing discourses that the American system was founded upon encouraged the accumulation of power for those that aligned themselves with dominant hegemonic ideas expressed through capitalism and subsequently, McCarthyism, in its attempts to maintain the established power hierarchy within society.

Puritan ideology was “the city upon the hill,” as Winthrop once stated, and McCarthy connected to this mentality in portraying his actions as an attempt to raise the standards of American citizens and reclaim the favor of God just as the Puritans of the past had sought to do (Ericksen 48). McCarthy presented his viewpoint and claims as being a reflection of American righteousness, despite the inherent hypocrisy and intolerance of the message being put forward by his platform. In aligning himself with the supposed goodness of the existing American system,

McCarthy was able to cultivate power for himself through his navigation of the discourses that he had access to within society.

Gender

The rigid power dynamic established between men and women within society is presented throughout *The Crucible*. Gender expectations for Puritan men and women were set up through Biblical theology and founded specifically on the roles set forth in the Garden of Eden and, as discussed, many of these standards were based entirely on past biblical doctrine and societal precedents. As a central figure, and a young female in a male dominated culture, Abigail interacts with several figures throughout the course of these four acts, and her actions and relations with these male figures directly correlate to her position within the power hierarchy. The first mention of her within the play describes her as, “a strikingly beautiful girl, an orphan, with an endless capacity for dissembling,” and this emphasis on her appearance seems to be central to the perception of her character by those whom she encounters (Miller 8). As Bourdieu argues in *Masculine Dominance*, this represents the devaluation of femininity in society which furthers the notion of male superiority in the power hierarchy. For Bourdieu, “Femininity is imposed for the most part through an unremitting discipline that concerns every part of the body and is continuously recalled through the constraints of clothing or hairstyle,” and reiterates a power dynamics that seeks to oppress women through gendered language that dictates good versus bad within society (*Masculine Dominance* 27).

The first occurrence of Abigail actively speaking within *The Crucible* is in regard to her uncle Parris and deals with her cousin Betty’s sickness and the blight it has brought onto the family. Abigail is an orphan and has been taken in by Parris out of a sense of social obligation, but throughout their interactions, the language utilized to convey the connection between the two expresses how uneven the power dynamics are. In Act One, Abigail is described within the stage directions as being “in terror” of her uncle’s words and this is understood as her being fearful of being cast out without any means of caring for herself because of the devaluation of women in this society (Miller 11). The conversations that occur between Parris and Abigail are heavily one-sided in word usage, with Parris speaking for several moments, almost lecturing Abigail, and then briefly allowing Abigail to respond before continuing his train of thought. This attitude by Parris can be viewed as almost patronizing, and the stage directions reflect the social expectations for women in Abigail’s situation by describing her as meek and innocent and at one moment directly stating that

“Abigail lowers her eyes” as she is responding to his questions and claims about her guilt in this instance (Miller 10). For Bourdieu, “Male domination is so rooted in our collective unconscious that we no longer even see it,” and Abigail has been subconsciously trained to avoid disrupting the power dynamics that exist around her, often to the detriment of herself, due to the established power hierarchy that dominates power relations between the sexes (“On Male Domination”).

As the play continues, Abigail becomes known to have been the servant of Proctor, and during the course of that servitude, which was eventually ended by Proctor’s wife Elizabeth, she had an affair with him. Due to this uneven relationship, which includes a large age gap, Abigail and Proctor view the situation in different lights with Abigail seeing it as a moment of personal power and growth and Proctor seeing it as a moment of personal weakness and failure. Their interactions are plagued with the repercussions of their affair from the beginning of the work, with Abigail pushing for Proctor’s continued acknowledgement and Proctor resigning in shame. Initially, this relationship exists with Proctor in a position of power over Abigail, and this power is achieved through his gender, status, and age within the Salem community. This can be seen in Proctor’s language choices in his first interaction with Abigail in which, seeking to quiet her and prevent her from arguing her opinion further, he calls her “child” in an attempt to reassert his position of power, and he draws her anger in his attempt to draw the conversation to a conclusion that favors him (Miller 22). Later interactions between the two see Abigail and Proctor on two distinct levels of power with Proctor purposefully above Abigail in many of the scenes throughout the rest of the first act of the play.

Initially, Abigail is characterized as being immature and is described as childlike in many of her interactions despite being considered of age for marriage. Her conversation with Proctor regarding their affair and her continued interest, as well as her discussion with Parris regarding what occurred within the woods, paint her as an individual that must be looked down upon because she is viewed as an inferior figure that needs to recognize her position within society. In opposition to this gendered power dynamic, among her peers, Abigail is recognized as powerful, and her language usage reflects this. An instance that remarks upon her underlying power is when Betty, Mary, and Abigail are discussing their actions in the woods and Abigail threatens them, “And mark this. Let either of you breathe a word, or the edge of a word, about the other things, and I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you. And you know that I can do it” (Miller 19). This instance is the first of many in which Abigail

establishes herself as higher on the power hierarchy, and though this power move is immediately followed by interactions that paint her as powerless, it serves as an example of her capabilities and her ability to utilize her words to challenge and maintain her desired social order.

As the play continues and the events of the witch hunt are carried out, Abigail's ascent into power becomes more and more apparent. As she is being questioned over her actions, Abigail comes to the realization that she will be caught if she is unable to place the blame onto someone else, and she chooses to do so by indicting Tituba, her uncle's slave who was in the woods with them (Miller 40). Abigail understands the options that are available to her from her limited position within society and chooses instead to establish credibility for herself through her statement of Tituba's guilt. In doing so, she is, as Bourdieu defines in *Language and Symbolic Power*, transforming her subordinate power into symbolic power by legitimizing her statements in basing them on social and cultural capital, i.e. fear of witchcraft and the desire to solve the issue at hand (214). This instance of repossessing her personal voice and authority is the moment that establishes Abigail as a powerful and influential figure.

As this scene continues, this newly affirmed power is built upon when she notices that Tituba, upon admittance of guilt and a promise to renew her faith in God, is forgiven of her actions and she chooses to charge herself in stating that "I want to open myself! I want the light of God. I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; I saw him; I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand" (Miller 45). In choosing to adopt this ideological stance, Abigail draws upon the symbolic power of her words in both cleansing her of all guilt in the eyes of the town and also as means of gaining power for herself through the act of naming others as guilty of witchcraft. Gender aids Abigail in this moment because up until she makes this claim she is viewed as lesser than the men who are questioning her, both in physical ability and intelligence, but in her analysis of the situation, it becomes apparent that she is aware of what is needed in order to alter the power hierarchy in her favor and does so through her words that paint her as both innocent and powerful in the face of the law.

As she makes her plea of innocence, Abigail leaves no time for her audience to process her words and her actions, and instead, she moves into claims of witchcraft, stating, "I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil! I saw Bridget Bishop with the Devil!" (Miller 45). This chant of accusation is Abigail's reclamation of her personal power. In indicting others of the charges she had cleared herself of, she is able to garner authority for herself because she appears

to have insight on the situation and she plays on the fear that exists regarding witchcraft within this culture. Bourdieu notes that symbolic power is a means of casting barriers between two groups in order to ensure power for one of them over the other (*Language and Symbolic Power* 130). Abigail breaks from the traditional power roles between men and women within society and instead establishes her own symbolic power in her ability to paint herself as merely misled rather than accountable for her own actions and, in doing so, she begins to establish a new barrier of power throughout Salem as she goes on to utilize language as her instrument of power.

In comparison, gender as expressed within American culture has just as influential of an effect on power relations within society between men and women. American history is defined through its gender roles and the persistent inequality that has existed between the masses since this nation's conception. Drawing most of its basis for these gender roles from religious doctrine and historical precedence, as discussed in the previous sections, it is important to note that other aspects of American culture and society influenced the perception of female power in relation to male power. Language is rooted in symbols and symbolic meanings, and through the incorporation of Bourdieu's theories, one can see the connection between the symbolic nature of the Salem Witch Trials and the McCarthy Witch Hunt. For Bourdieu, "Language is not only an instrument of communication or even knowledge but an instrument of power" (Wolf 55). In controlling another's access to knowledge, one can gain power for them self over that individual because of the symbolic capacity of knowledge being equated to power. Groups throughout American history have been limited in their access to knowledge in order to maintain the established social hierarchy and to limit the ability that these groups have to increasing power for themselves. Women in American society have long been limited in their access to expression and autonomy, and the McCarthy era treatment of women is directly reciprocal of what occurred with Abigail in Salem in 1692.

American culture is to view the man as the breadwinner and woman as the caretaker, and for more than a century, this was the only acceptable option. Women were restricted to and compelled to take on the household chores and the burden of rearing children, while being forced through societal standards to obey her husband's supposed authority over her. This lack of autonomy and purpose for women in this situation led to many feminist critics of the mid twentieth century to discuss what Betty Friedan called "the problem that has no name" in which women of white, middle class backgrounds experienced a universal cultural problem in their lack of feeling of purpose in their actions and roles (154). The mere fact that women did not have access to the

knowledge or the language to discuss and name their feelings over their burdens represents the power of language in shaping and controlling reality. For Bourdieu, “Male domination is so rooted in our collective unconscious that we no longer even see it. It is so in tune with our expectations that it becomes hard to challenge it,” and the lack of language to define and name this problem is the root of the issue (“On Male Domination”). Bourdieu argues that in actively defining something that exists within society people are able to name it and therefore claim it as their own, which is an act of subversive power because it allows for reclamation of one’s power in the face of societal repression and institutional barriers (“On Male Domination”).

This act of naming, in the face of social pressure to remain silent over an issue, is an act of power and serves as a representation of what women throughout history have been forced to do in order to be recognized as existing. Within the American political system, particularly the capitalist system that individuals engage in each day, women are devalued and repressed in their ability to accurately address their personal needs due to the standards in place that act as a means of shaming women who seek take action for themselves. Femininity and traditional feminine traits such as caretaking are devalued within American culture because they are viewed as basic skillsets and have a history of being affiliated with women. Bourdieu discusses the idea of femininity as it is enforced within culture:

As if femininity were measured by the art of 'shrinking'... women are held in a kind of invisible enclosure (of which the veil is only the visible manifestation) circumscribing the space allowed for the movements and postures of their bodies (whereas men occupy more space, especially in public places). This symbolic confinement is secured practically by their clothing by their clothing which (as was even more visible in former times) has the effect not only of masking the body but of continuously calling it to order. (*Masculine Domination* 28)

Male dominance within society is defined by Bourdieu as the “silent violence” against women because this presumed dominance occurs on all levels and seeks to silently control and alter the state of women through language usage within the input of the women who are being objectified by this male domination (*Masculine Domination* 56). Throughout the McCarthy era, the emphasis on female roles in communist sympathies was more or less ignored as women merely being complacent in the actions of the male figures within their lives. This mentality discouraged the idea of female political thought and action as valueless and actively dissuaded women from

vocalizing their political beliefs due to the social and political conception of their opinions being worthless. This silence that was enforced upon women was as influential as any other act of violence that has been perpetrated against women because it forced and encouraged women to internalize ideas that degraded them and upheld the culturally accepted notions of inferiority.

Legal doctrine and legislation have long served as a foundation for the social contract, the agreement to obey established authority and law in exchange for the protection of the government and the stability of a peaceful society. This legislation, though often lauded as being proof of the greatest experiment in democracy, has created a system that places a value on certain individuals within society and enables their success over the success of other individuals who have been deemed as less valuable. United States legislation has a history of exclusion, and that exclusion through specified language can be seen throughout legal doctrine. Legal deterrents that have worked against female participation in government can be seen within United States history, such as the use of masculine language in the United States Constitution and the denial of female suffrage until 1920, and in modern American society through the repercussions that stem from those actions. The United States Constitution begins “We the People,” but this language of inclusion is soon left behind through the use of male pronouns, such as he, in reference to the President and Vice President roles dictated by the Constitution (McDonagh 121). Extensive examples of male gendered legislation can be found through the legal records of the colonies and the United States, and one prominent instance of this is seen in Virginia’s original state constitution where phrases such as “the *man* who shall have the greatest number of votes” strictly determines who is deemed qualified by the state to run for an office (Natelson). This use of language has limited female voice and input in the political system and enforced boundaries that control who has access to the higher-level power roles within the existing hierarchy.

This purposeful exclusion of a group of people by those in authority establishes a power dynamic that places certain people above others and undermines the rights, opinions, and values of those lower on the power hierarchy in favor of those above them. For more than four hundred years, since the European settlement of North America, women have been placed in a position in society that is lower than men, and this degradation of female authority has been validated and encourage through the male gendered language used within legislation and doctrine within society. This male domination of the power hierarchy within society is carried out with the goal of gaining and maintaining a system of power that cannot be challenged due to it being via “violence which

is exercised principally via the purely symbolic channels of communication and knowledge (or, to be accurate, mis-knowledge) of recognition and, in the final analysis, of feelings,” and actively works to disenfranchise those whom the symbolic violence is carried out against (“On Male Domination”). The navigation of the existing social discourses allows for individuals to garner authority for themselves through their use of language and alter the manner in which power exists in society.

Conclusion

The use of language to incite fear as a means of gaining power for oneself, as expressed through the manipulation of the established power dynamic by Abigail Williams in *The Crucible* and in Senator Joseph McCarthy’s witch-hunt, is present through all social interactions expressed within these cultural events. In focusing on the relationship between religion and gender within American culture, two central characteristics that define the social hierarchy within the United States, and in addressing language as a symbol and as the root of all power within society, language can be argued as defining the manner in which communication shifts and the way that power is viewed within society. The emphasis on the shift in power to an individual lower on the power hierarchy indicates the power of language in manipulating the emotions and beliefs of one’s audience, and proves that language is instrumental in establishing, maintaining, and breaking down the existing power dynamics and hierarchies that exist within society.

Within *The Crucible*, religion acts as the central form of power within society and everyone in the community is judged based on their authority within the church and that authority is established upon biblical norms regarding the roles to be carried out. Abigail is able to garner power for herself through her navigation of this discourse through her alignment of her words with the power of God. This action enables her to alter the existing power dynamic within society and to challenge the hierarchy through the language that she utilized. Similarly, Senator Joseph McCarthy was able to incorporate religious sentiment into his appeals in opposition of communism through his language usage. In aligning capitalism and American culture as God first and communism as moving away from God, McCarthy was able to utilize language to target and challenge those in power and alter the existing power dynamics within the American social and political systems.

Just as Abigail was able to alter the power in her favor through the use of religion, she was also able to alter the power hierarchy despite her age and her gender. In incorporating language

that emphasized her naivety, Miller presents Abigail as innocent and enables her to transform the power dynamic to support her personal desires despite the existing cultural standards in place within Salem. Her navigation of the religious discourse enables her to reaffirm her newly created power through the language that she utilizes. Women in American society have also utilized language as a means of garnering power for themselves. Male gendered legislation and doctrine has a history of enforcing gender roles and limiting female access to power, but in incorporating feminine doctrine and language into society women have cultivated power for themselves and encouraged social and political change in spite of the socially constructed power dynamic that has worked against them.

Overall, as expressed with *The Crucible* and within the American society, language is the foundation of all power. Language is transformative and heavily influences all aspects of our lives. Religion and gender are two of many manners in which language has the power to alter the foundations of society. For Bourdieu, "Language is not only an instrument of communication or even knowledge but an instrument of power" (Wolf 55). Controlling access to knowledge, one can gain power for themselves over that individual because of the symbolic capacity of knowledge being equated to power. Examining these two instances of individuals lower on the power hierarchy increasing their personal authority and influence through the words that they utilized and the power associated with and cultivated through those words and what they signified within a culture, language is found to be absolutely central to determining power and influence in society. In conclusion, language is at the root of all power within society and all power for oneself is garnered through the use of language. Language establishes meaning within society and the ability to align oneself with that meaning is a form of cultivating power. Power comes from all aspects of life, but language, as the root of all communication, acts as central to all discourses navigated throughout life and is therefore the dominate force in determining power dynamics within a culture.

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**The Dissection of a Maus: Trauma and its
Depiction and Manifestation in Art Spiegelman's *Maus: A Survivor's Tale***

Hannah VanArsdale

Over the years, stories have been passed down from person to person, from generation to generation. At first, it was simply by the spoken word, drawings on the walls of caves, and handwritten transcripts; once the printing press was invented, writings became faster and easier to create, allowing for more stories to be told, both stories consisting of the facts and those stories created from the author's mind. As the methods of writing became easier and more accessible to every person, the methods in which their stories were told evolved as well. Oral recounting of a family's past had the possibility to be turned into biographies and autobiographies, stories transformed into poems, plays, and films, and photographs and pictures, with many variations and a wide range of accessibility for the public over the years, slowly evolved to become their own method of storytelling. Comics, as Scott McCloud defines in his book *Understanding Comics* – which is written *in* a comic format – are “[j]uxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer,” (9). The story communicated to readers via images, and possibly the inclusion of dialogue or narrations, in a specific sequence in order to convey the events in a particular order. With comics and graphic novels, this sequence is created by juxtaposing each frame to each other. The sequence of events is established by the order in which they are placed as well as the space between the panels showing an illusion of the passage of time. Another aspect of comics is cartoons and the “cartooning” of the characters, the “stripping down [of] an image to its essential ‘meaning’,” which focuses on specific details of a character while simplifying the less crucial details (McCloud 30). Although some comics utilize a more realistic depiction of the setting and the characters, others contain cartoons with simple features; this simplified art style allows for the artist to convey an idea of what a character represents. The creative freedom that comes from this deviation from realism is what allows the artist to depict the characters in such a significant way. Because the character's design is more simplified, the reader is more able to project meaning onto the character, to see how this particular character exhibits, personifies, or represents a particular ideology or concept. As McCloud's stand-in character in the book exclaims, “[c]artooning isn't just a way of drawing, it's a way of seeing!” It is a way of conveying more about the characters and what they stand for by showing less (31).

Paul Buhle writes in his article, “History and Comics,” that comics and graphic arts are “now a zone of increasingly intense interest, albeit one still most often worked by non-historians,” that although the genre of comics, comix, and graphic novels are still mostly thought to be leisure reading, they are garnering more academic respect in regards to how they have the capacity to interpret historical events (319). With this additional form of storytelling – pictures alongside words – audiences are exposed to a historical event and the depiction of it twice. Through the words, readers are given an explanation of an event: what happened, how it happened, and sometimes why it happened. With the additional visuals, readers are given another method to understand. They can see what took place, how it took place, and how these events impacted those involved. He comments that when using comics and this graphic genre to recount historical events, “[h]istory continues to ‘happen’ through memory and then reaches the page, through the creative effort of the artist” (320). This extra method of storytelling alongside the words allows for readers to be given more information at once, as well as for the artist making this story to experience the event they are working with both in their mind and in their work. Buhle also notes that the use of comics and this graphic genre for depicting historical events “raises valuable questions precisely because it brings issues of artistic method narrative back to the presentation of historical themes in films, whether fictional or documentary, and back at last toward oral history as well” (320). The ever-evolving methods of storytelling allow for a multi-media depiction of events, whether that be more historically accurate or a more romanticized approach. This artistic genre allows for creative freedom for the artists without the possible risk of undermining the event or overexaggerating it, an issue that is prevalent in any mode of storytelling. With any retelling of a historical event, there is always the risk of romanticizing the event in order to appeal to audiences or the failure to simply explain the event properly. One historical event that storytellers struggle to depict in this regard is the Holocaust. However, despite the shortcomings of some representations, others are able to portray it appropriately.

In 1972, Art Spiegelman published the original comic, “Maus”, a three-paged story in which a Poppa mouse recounts his experiences within Mauschwitz, a mouse version of Auschwitz, as bedtime stories to his son, Mickey. Just like in *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale*, the mice represented the Jewish people and the cats represented the German Nazis. In 1980, Spiegelman and his wife, Françoise Mouly, cofound *Raw*, which he describes in *MetaMaus* as an “avant-garde comix magazine” that was published “biannually – and [he] never knew whether that meant twice a year

or once every two years,” which allowed him a flexible schedule to meet deadlines (76). Within this magazine, Spiegelman expanded upon this first comix, changing the father-son duo into that of his father and himself, and started serializing the chapters of what is now known as *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*. It was later compiled and published into two volumes in 1992. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* is ultimately two stories in one. The first story is comprised of the testimonies of Vladek Spiegelman, Art Spiegelman's father, who recounts his life story for his son. He discusses his meeting and falling in love with his wife, Anja, the birth of their first son, Richieu, and how their lives were changed for the worse when anti-Semitism and Nazism became more and more commonplace in Poland. The graphic novel focuses on how he and his family lived before and during Hitler's rise to power and how he and his wife managed to survive the concentration camps and reunite once more. The second story is that of Art Spiegelman's stand-in character. Art's story portrays a child born after these traumatic events, but still subjected to their aftermaths. Art is the one recording his father's testimonies of his life and compiling them into a cohesive story. While Vladek's traumatic experiences focus on and around the Holocaust, Art's trauma instead comes from second-hand exposure to these events, his expectations in life being compared to those of his father's and his brother, whom he never got to meet, and his struggles to properly portray the events that had taken place in his father's lifetime.

With trauma being illustrated by pictures alongside the dialogue, insight is gained on the visual representation of the memories of the traumatic events, how they are displayed for the audience, as well as the vocabulary used for the recounting of events. As Marianne Hirsch states in *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*, *Maus* itself is “the collaborative narrative of father and son: one provides most of the verbal narrative, the other the visual; one gives testimony while the other receives and transmits it,” showing a multi-dimensional way of interpreting and working through trauma (34). Spiegelman provides the audience a second-hand account of the testimonies of his father, Vladek, while also allowing the audience to see his own interpretation of both of their traumas in the form of visuals. They both had undergone traumatic events in their lifetimes, both shared and entirely separate from each other. Vladek exhibits difficulty with remembering the events of the Holocaust objectively and precisely, while also struggling to cope with everything he has witnessed. With Art, the reader is made aware of the emotional toll of witnessing his father's testimony, of attempting to put said testimony into words, and of dealing with his own trauma of losing his mother. Through the application of trauma theory

and psychoanalysis to this work of historical fiction, and through the use of visuals alongside the words of Vladek and Art's testimonies, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* asserts the manifestation and impact of both individual and shared traumas on a person while also showing the difficulties in healing from trauma.

Cathy Caruth and Sigmund Freud's Trauma Theory

An understanding of trauma in a general sense is necessary in order to better comprehend trauma depicted in a work of literature. Cathy Caruth's introduction in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* focuses on the difficulty of explaining and properly representing trauma. She claims that those affected by a traumatic event "carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess," or that the victims and survivors are now a part of the event to such an extent that they cannot fully distance themselves from what had happened in the past (5). In summary, for Caruth, the survivors of trauma act as living proof of the event, their story acts as a narrative of the event that can be retold. Despite this, there is always an issue with putting trauma into language, as well as simply discussing trauma in general. With a victim of a traumatic event, they almost seem to become a part of the trauma. This merging of the individual and the trauma prevents them from moving past their trauma. Instead, the trauma becomes a recurring part of their being, making them unable to fully move past this trauma they have endured. Because trauma itself is never a conscious experience, there will always be a historical aspect to the witness's experience. As Caruth explains, "a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence" (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* 8). The event itself is not fully experienced by the witness until they must relive the event in order to attempt to forget it. Caruth notes that with trauma, it is never "experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly" which prevents the witnesses from being fully aware of what is happening the instant the trauma happens (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* 4). This belatedness causes gaps in one's memories, which prevent a witness from fully explaining the event in an objective manner. This inability to fully experience and understand the trauma in the instant that it occurs ultimately results in this historical aspect of trauma. Trauma will ultimately repeat itself in order for the witness to start the process of healing and remembering.

Caruth also notes the difficulty of bearing witness to someone's trauma or testimony. When someone undergoes a traumatic event, it is difficult to be burdened both with the trauma itself and with the status of being a witness to the event. This is why it is so crucial and so difficult when a

witness to the event confides their testimony to someone with little or no connection to the traumatic event itself. She states, “to be able to listen to the impossible...to have been *chosen* by it, *before* the possibility of mastering it with knowledge,” is a challenge in and of itself (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* 10). Discussing trauma is difficult due to the inability to represent the event in words that would properly explain and find meaning. However, to witness someone’s experience is a daunting task itself. This inability to put one’s trauma into words complicates the event because the witness *to* the witness was never present at the time of the actual trauma taking place. The witness *to* the witness is far more removed from this piece of history than the actual witness could ever be. When it comes to witnessing a witness’s testimony, it becomes almost impossible to comprehend the event and put it into language for others. With trauma, language is used to cope with the event, but the event can never fully be encompassed in language. Caruth reiterates that “[t]he difficulty of listening and responding to traumatic stories in a way that does not lose their impact, that does not reduce them to clichés or turn them all into versions of the same story” is an issue that is still prevalent in memoirs and traumatic narratives even to this day (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* vii). With trauma, it is so very easy to romanticize the event, to give it a purpose or meaning, to make it easy for the general populous to understand, but that defeats the purpose behind maintaining the initial “impact” of the testimony. When dealing with trauma, it all comes back to how it is later written down, how it is worded, and how it is pictured. Due to its belated nature, trauma cannot be understood in the initial moment it happens; it is only when trauma resurfaces at a later time that it can even be attempted to be understood. Even then, trauma remains unexplainable. The very nature of trauma prevents it from being understood perfectly, yet people are still compelled to relive the event and work through what their mind repressed during the initial trauma. One has to explain the event without explaining the event. One cannot project meaning onto a traumatic event, nor can one order it to make perfect sense. The victim or the writer just has to represent it as honestly as possible, in the form of a subjective witness’s testimony.

Caruth’s writings on trauma theory are heavily influenced by Sigmund Freud’s ideas on trauma. Freud’s work is extensive, covering many topics from dream analysis to psychosexual stages of development; his work on trauma, however, is often overlooked due to the popularity of his other theories, as well as the availability of more modern theories on trauma. One of the main aspects of psychoanalysis is the idea of the talking cure. In Josef Breuer’s “Anna O.” which is one

of the case studies in his collaboration with Sigmund Freud, *Studies on Hysteria*. When he would meet with her, she would usually be under hypnosis to ensure that she was willing to cooperate, seeing as how on bad days she would be “increasingly moody, contrary, and unpleasant,” making it difficult to work with her (Breuer 68). Despite this, they found that having her “[give] utterance to her hallucinations she would lose all her obstinacy...and when, after some comparatively long interval, she was in a bad temper” due to her not talking through her hallucinations (Breuer 68). Breuer notes that “[s]he aptly described this procedure, speaking seriously, as a ‘talking cure’,” that by talking about her issues, her mood would become happier and her symptoms would either go away for a time or lessen their impact on Anna O. (68). This case study is what inspired Freud to incorporate the “talking cure” into his own practice, which led to him developing the technique of free association, allowing patients to talk freely in therapy in order to help them cope with repressed thoughts and memories.

He also writes on the topic of loss. In Freud’s “Mourning and Melancholia,” he defines the process of mourning as “the reaction to the loss of a beloved person,” and melancholia as “a profoundly painful depression” that seems to turn more inwards, as if the grieving person is even more so at fault (310-311). With the process of mourning, a person will grieve their loss, but will manage to do so in a psychologically healthy manner, so that they will be able to move past their grief in due time. However, melancholia is an almost obsessive way of grieving, the inability to move past the loss they have endured. Freud also notes that “[i]n mourning, the world has become poor and empty, in melancholia it is the ego that has become so” (“Mourning and Melancholia” 313). These feelings of guilt and depression are either turned outwards, life is no longer the same, or inwards, oneself is forever changed. Melancholia takes a toll on the person to such an extreme that they cannot move past their grief.

Manifestation of Trauma in Daily Life

Within *Maus*, Spiegelman shows how ingrained Vladek and Art’s traumas are to their daily lives. Although both of them have undergone very traumatic events, their trauma often slips into their daily lives in the most minute of ways. For Vladek, he starts to show almost obsessive behaviors, from keeping everything in a designated spot and never wasting a cent, to scolding Art for using a “wooden match” instead of the complimentary “paper matches” that he got for free, and displaying an unwillingness to throw away food. All of these behaviors working in tandem paint a picture of a man who is trying to maintain stability and control in a life that has been so

chaotic. In one scene in *Maus II* when he tries adamantly to give Art food, they argue over keeping an almost empty bag of cereal or throwing it away. Vladek's argument is that "ever since Hitler I don't like to throw out even a crumb," alluding to the need to have access to food, whereas in the camps it was a luxury to have (2: 78). Caruth notes in her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*: "[t]he experience that Freud will call 'traumatic neurosis' – emerges as the unwitting reenactment of an event that one cannot simply leave behind" (2). A person will almost relive their trauma in their everyday life. The person will perform actions that remind them of their trauma, and they will be compelled to repeat actions as a compulsion. His experiences before and during the concentration camps did not just become a part of Vladek's past; these experiences are always there, always reminding him of what has happened, and that he must be ready if it were to happen again. For Vladek, the impossible and the unthinkable have happened, and he managed to survive, but he must always stay alert for the impossible and unthinkable to happen again. Art's response hints at his own trauma, but in a less obvious fashion. Art, in retaliation to Vladek's reasoning for keeping leftover cereal, angrily tells Vladek to "just save the damn special K in case Hitler ever comes back!" (2: 78). Although a slightly humorous exchange due to how absurd the argument seems to be, it alludes to the extent to which Hitler and the Holocaust impact Art's life, even if he never lived through those events. Art tries to care for his father, but the Holocaust—that experienced trauma—is always just under the surface. Art is never simply interacting with his father, but rather he is interacting with his father and all of the trauma he has undergone as well.

Another exchange over Vladek's obsession with food and how Art responds is in *Maus I*, when he, Vladek, and Mala – Vladek's second wife – have dinner one day and Art does not finish the food on his plate. While Vladek tries to convince him to finish what is on his plate, Art says, "[y]know Mala, when I was little, if I didn't eat **everything** Mom served, Pop and I would argue 'til I ran to my room crying..." but he explains that Anja would eventually fix him food that he would eat, to which Vladek replies, "Anja was too easy with you always," and that Art should have eaten everything on his plate (1 :43-44). Vladek notes before this exchange that "you don't eat anything!" (1 :43). Art needed even more food than what was on his plate. Normally, these exchanges would seem like Art was a picky eater and that Vladek just wanted to make sure his son ate enough food, but Vladek's behavior also reflects how his time during the Holocaust has shaped him. Vladek acts in such a way as to never let food go to waste, even food that nobody wants,

because he never knows when that will be all that is left to eat. Vladek works under this assumption that food should never be wasted, and Art has adapted to this mindset. This exchange shows us more of Art adapting to the expectations set by his father during childhood. In the present tense, Vladek wants him to finish off his food even though Art is not hungry anymore, to which Art does not even argue with him and complies, eating what was left on his plate. The panels show that Art's plate is relatively empty in comparison to Vladek and Mala's plates. While their plates seem relatively full, Art's shows a sliver of presumably meat that is later replaced with the clean bone. Considering that this demand to eat more was a common occurrence, it is easily inferable that Art learned to fill his plate with only food he knows he will eat. Through this strategy, he could clean his plate without overeating or having to waste anything, which would cause another argument between him and Vladek.

Art's trauma instead manifests in his work and his lack of confidence throughout the graphic novel. Art's trauma comes through by his recording of his father's testimony, his transferring the story into words and pictures, and his attempts to both understand what he has been given to work with and to figure out if he has appropriately represented everything in a respectful manner. Art is even shown to have doubts in his ability to write *Maus* and how to properly tell his father's story. He expresses his self-doubt when talking with François about how stressful listening to his father's story is and the pressure to depict everything perfectly. He remarks, "I can't even make any sense out of my relationship with my father...how am I supposed to make any sense out of Auschwitz?...of the Holocaust?" (2 :14). Art questions how he can properly depict an event as traumatic and complex as the Holocaust in his work if he cannot even get along too well with his own father, the man who actually lived through the event. Art is constantly struggling with Vladek, whether it is struggling with Vladek's stubbornness, his expectations, or his testimonies of the traumatic events of his life. Not only does Art have Vladek's problems weighing him down, but Art's own issues are only really explored once Vladek is absent, whether that be when Vladek is simply not seen within the frames or when Art is away from his father, like in therapy or spending time with François.

The Shared Trauma: Anja's Suicide

The traumatic event that both characters witnessed was that of Anja's suicide. Anja is mentioned repeatedly by Vladek in both his recounting of the Holocaust and in the present, in which he still trying to cope with her death while holding Mala to Anja's standards. Art, however,

seems more at peace with her suicide, having made attempts to work through his feelings towards the event through his art. Even as he attempts to bear witness to Vladek's Holocaust testimony, Art is still haunted by the trauma of losing his mother. Freud notes in "Mourning and Melancholia" that "[w]e rely on [mourning] being overcome after a certain period of time, and consider interfering with it to be pointless, or even damaging." The process of dealing with grief, although disruptive in everyday life, is necessary in order to work through the feelings felt when losing a loved one or a "love-object" (311). However, Freud notes that this mourning can become melancholia, that "like mourning, [it is] a reaction to the loss of the love-object, but it also has a condition which either is absent from normal mourning or, where it is present, transforms into pathological mourning" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 317). These feelings can become unhealthy for the individual's well-being and recovery from loss. Both Art and Vladek have had to undergo the process of mourning Anja, but they both struggled due to the suddenness of her death.

Spiegelman includes a scene in *Maus I* of the graphic novel in which Mala confides in Art that Vladek found an older comic of his and had been more depressed since reading it. Mala and Art look over one of his older comics, "Prisoner on the Hell Planet", in which the art style completely changes to show the comic being read, but also includes a real-life photograph that was included in the original publication. In the comic, a humanized Art – which the Doctor Orens calls Arthur – recounts the events surrounding his mother's death and his subsequent guilt that plagued him. Spiegelman shows multiple layers of trauma simply through the abrupt change in the art style and the striking image of an actual photograph within the spread. As Caruth notes, "[t]o be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event," or in this case, the image of the event itself (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* 4-5). This panel containing three separate interpretations of Art – an actual picture (representing Spiegelman), a humanized drawing (representing Arthur), and a mouse's hand (representing Art) holding the comic – shows the belatedness of Art's trauma, how it has segmented him over the years, and how he has made attempts to remove himself from the trauma to try and move past the anguish he has felt. However, because of the trauma being kept within the pages of his comic, and now within the pages of *Maus*, these memories of Anja's suicide keep reoccurring and forcing Art – and Vladek – to relive the moment of Anja's suicide.

The comic also affects Vladek, as he tells Art that "I saw the picture there of Mom, so I read it...and I cried...it brought in my mind so much **memories** of Anja," (1: 104). Anja's death

is something that he cannot get past. While Art lost his mother, Vladek lost his wife, the mother of his children and the one person who could understand the specifics of what he had gone through in his very traumatic lifetime. Vladek claims that he always told Anja that “[u]ntil the last moment we must struggle together! I need you! And you’ll see that together we’ll survive” (1: 122). Vladek asserts that no matter what, as long as they are with each other, they will make it through anything that comes their way. He stayed by her side when she most likely developed postpartum depression. They were separated when Vladek was drafted into the Polish army for World War II, only to be reunited once Vladek was released as a prisoner of war. They had to send their son away to somewhere safer, only for Richieu, to be killed. From there, they were found by the Gestapo, the two and Anja’s parents forced to wait out their fates; Vladek and Anja, although able to bribe their way out, had to leave her parents behind to all of their dismay. All of this happened before either of them was forced to go to the camps, which were traumatizing enough. They managed to pass along letters to each other at Auschwitz and see each other when Vladek had to work in Anja’s camp in Birkenau. It was only after the war, after they had been released from the camps that they finally found each other again. Their lives changed for the better, moving to America and having Art, starting over in a sense and leaving Auschwitz and the looming memories of everything that happened behind.

They went through all of this together: all of these hardships, bad luck spells, deaths, beatings, losses, betrayals, unpredictable and unescapable circumstances that were out of their control. Vladek passionately tells Art, “**never** Anja and I were separated! **No!** The war put us apart, but always before and after, we were together” (2: 25). Vladek and Anja always seemed to miraculously find each other again, no matter what happened to them. All of it, they went through together, only for Anja to end her life. No explanation nor note was left behind. He misses her immensely, and he does not understand why this happened. None of them know. They have been a team through all of this pain and suffering, and now Vladek does not have her by his side. Freud notes that in situations like this, where someone cannot let go of their loss: “the beloved object no longer exists, and demands that the libido as a whole sever its bond with that object. An understandable tendency arises to counter this... This tendency can become so intense that it leads to a person turning away from reality,” as if desperately trying to keep the loved one or love-object around (“Mourning and Melancholia” 311). Vladek is unable to leave Anja in the past, even to the point that Mala angrily points out that he “keep[s] photos of her all around [his] desk – like a

shrine!” (1: 104). He behaves like Anja is always there, always reminding Vladek of the past and reminding Mala that she will never hold such a place in his heart, for it has been permanently taken by Anja. Although he remarries to someone who survived the Holocaust as well, he is still the only one left that knows what he or Anja went through. He misses Anja, not just because he loves her, but because she was the only one to truly understand everything he had gone through. Now, it is only him. His memories and his trauma alienate him from Art and Mala because they did not experience the Holocaust the same way he did. Anja was the only one who could relate to his exact experiences. Because she is gone, Vladek is now left alone with his sole memories of what they went through together. Despite how much Art and Mala may try, they will not be able to fully understand what happened to Vladek in a way that Anja could.

Individual Trauma: Physical and Mental Anguish

Vladek and Art struggle with other traumas as well. Vladek struggles with both having lived through the Holocaust, as well as with recounting the events to Art. His emotional and mental trauma, however, often overshadows his physical pain. As the story progresses, Vladek’s wellbeing starts to deteriorate, both from his old age and from revisiting all of the pain, torture, and loss that he has been subjected to in his lifetime. Throughout the graphic novel, we see his physical state of being slowly deteriorating until he finally passes away. Art makes note of Vladek’s appearance in *Maus I*, saying that Vladek “had aged a lot” since Art last saw him, and that “[Anja]’s suicide and [Vladek’s] two heart attacks had taken their toll” on the man (1: 11). A few months later, we see Vladek counting his pills, with a total of “6 pills for the heart, 1 for diabetes...and maybe 25 or 30 vitamins” for his daily doses, having to recount them after knocking them over on accident multiple times, which he claims is because of one eye being a glass eye and the other eye having cataracts (1: 26, 40). Throughout the graphic novel, we slowly watch as Vladek goes from constantly doing something, whether he is working on the roof or riding his exercise bike, to being so tired that he stays in bed. The last meeting with Vladek in *Maus II* has him confined to a bed, too tired to do much of anything. Mala describes his behavior as “listless” and “confused”, which is seen in his bewildered expression at seeing Art come for a visit, having already forgotten that Art “said [he] was coming when [he] phoned [Vladek] yesterday,” showing how even his memory is starting to fade (2: 128). The graphic novel ends with Vladek quickly wrapping up his story, getting comfortable in his bed, and telling Art that he is “**tired** from talking, Richieu, and it’s enough stories for now...” leaving a bewildered Art to dwell on the final words

of Vladek's testimony, as well as leaving behind a son as Vladek joins his first wife in the afterlife (2: 136). Vladek's health declines over the course of the graphic novel, as if everything he has gone through is finally taking its toll on him.

Art, however, struggles with living up to the expectations set by his father, whether they are based on his own childhood or based on the son that was lost in the war. The very first pages of *Maus I* detail a moment in Art's childhood in which his friends laugh at his misfortune and leave him behind. When he seeks his father out for comfort, Vladek instead responds that "[i]f you lock them together in a room with no food for a week... THEN you could see what it is, friends!" (1: 6). Art's issue with his friends does not compare at all to the horrors his father had to endure alongside people he thought he could trust. Moments such as these seem to downplay the struggles that Art goes through, seeing as how any pain experiences are permanently put beside that of his family's. What he goes through is not really that bad when placed in comparison to the Holocaust. Art also struggles with listening to his father's story and properly depicting it for his audience. Even after Vladek's passing, the unequal comparison between his and Vladek's trauma is still at the forefront of Art's mind. In *Maus II*, we see Artie, a human wearing a mouse mask with an exhausted face, referred to as Art by his therapist. Artie recounts some facts surrounding his life, his father's life, the success of the first part of *Maus*, and the deaths of the Holocaust. He states that "Vladek died of congestive heart failure on August 18, 1982...I started working on this page at the very end of February 1987...I've gotten 4 serious offers to turn my book into a T.V. special or movie. (I don't wanna.) In May 1968 my mother killed herself. (She left no note.)" (2: 41). With every fact stated about the present—about Artie's personal life—he partners it with something that has happened to his parents or in the Holocaust. As he sits at his writing desk, with a Nazi watch post looming outside his window and a mountain of rotting mouse corpses littering his workspace, he simply tells the readers that "Lately, I've been feeling depressed," as if to downplay the severity of the trauma he has personally witnessed or been exposed to by his family (2: 41). With everything that has happened to him, it can never compare to what his family had gone through. It is something that is always on his mind, always looming over everything he tries to do. If he is going through hard times, he knows that it is nothing compared to what his parents went through.

The Healing from Trauma, or the Lack Thereof

An aspect of *Maus* that is often overlooked by critics is the processes of healing and attempts at coping with trauma within the graphic novel. A possible reason that the process of

healing is overlooked could be due to the fact that Vladek – although the focus of *Maus* is on Vladek’s trauma and what he has gone through – arguably does not heal from his trauma within the graphic novel. Unfortunately, he instead shows signs of getting worse. His health deteriorates over the course of the graphic novel, and his mental state suffers as he tells his story. As he talks more and more about his trauma, he becomes more weary and almost more defeated. Revisiting all of this pain and hurt does him more harm than good; he does not work through his trauma, he only relives it as he tells everything to Art, and this reliving of all of his trauma only makes him worse.

Within the graphic novel, this is represented with Vladek’s exercise bike. On multiple occasions while Art is listening to his father’s story, Vladek will be pedaling on the bike, the wheels spinning in circles as he tries to work through his experiences, only for all of his work to lead him nowhere. Hillary Chute notes in her article, “‘The Shadow of a Past Time’: History and Graphic Representation in *Maus*” that “[i]n the middle of [the page]...packed with signifiers of the past and present...Vladek, his camp tattoo visible for the first time, pumps on an Exercycle. Not moving forward, he is literally spinning his wheels” as he recounts the beginning of his story to Art (203, 205). As he pedals on his bike, the front wheel turns, morphing into the reader’s first look into his past (1: 12). Sometimes Vladek’s pedaling stops, often at times when he becomes reluctant to speak about the past. An instance of this is seen when he is talking with Art about his girlfriend, Lucia, that he was with before Anja, claiming that these details were not “so proper” and that he did not “want you should write this in your book,” because these moments, in Vladek’s mind, are not a part of his trauma, even though he most likely does not want reminders of these particular moments in his life (1: 23). The wheels also stop turning when he recalls Anja’s haunting look as she holds Richieu, telling Vladek that she will “**never** give up my baby. **Never!**” (1: 81). The guilt from losing his son is apparent as he almost gets off his exercise bike, the wheels stopped and his eyebrows lowered as he states, “we had to give Richieu to hide a year later” (1: 81). Vladek later recounts the day in Sosnowiec where the Jewish people were separated into two groups by the Gestapo. Those deemed good and useful enough to live were sent to the right of the plaza, and “[o]ld people, families with lots of kids, and people without work cards” were sent to the left, which “never came anymore home” (1: 90-91). After speaking about the loss of his father, who had snuck over to the left side of the stadium to be with his daughter, Fela, and her four children, Vladek wearily stops pedaling, slumping over the bike and wiping his brow, weakly saying, “[i]t’s

enough for today. Yes, Artie?” going to lay down after all of the emotions brought about in this one interview session (1: 91). Vladek’s recounting of all of these events does not feel cathartic to him. They do not help him work through everything he has witnessed and experienced. They merely remind him of all of the losses he has faced and how he cannot move on from them. Instead of moving past all of his pain, the wheels simply stay in place, preventing him from moving forwards in his life and keeping him rooted in the past.

Family Photographs and the Absence of Mourning

In *Maus II*, we later see Art and Vladek looking at photographs of Anja’s side of the family, as well as of Vladek, Anja, and Richieu. The photos explode out of the panels, covering gutters and other panels alike. Within the last frame, we see Vladek and Art sitting side by side, with Art being partially covered with an old family photo of his parents and their other son, while Vladek states that all that is left of anyone is the photos (2: 115). The next page shows a paneled spread of Vladek as he explains that only one person on his side of the family survived the war – one of his little brothers, Pinek. Vladek’s body is segmented by the gutters, his body literally being sliced into sections. His shoulders are slumped downwards, his eyes show weariness, and his stature shows how the Holocaust has torn him down, both in terms of emotional well-being and in terms of his remaining family, or lack thereof (2: 116). Even though the reader knows that the format of the page just makes it seem that Vladek is fragmented by the gutters, the negative space breaking the picture apart makes his fractured life more prevalent. Spiegelman draws his father in segments to show how his mind stays in the past, how he longs for Anja even after all of these years, and how he is still traumatized from the Holocaust and unable to move past these experiences. These frames show the magnitude of his loss. Anja and her family now only exist in photographs, while he is faced with the crippling scarcity of his own family members within the photos. As Hirsch would agree, “[l]ike all pictures, the photos in *Maus* represent what no longer is. But they also represent what has been and, in this case, what has been violently destroyed” (23). The photos act as proof of living, a memento of a moment in time that has long since passed. With photos, they show proof of life, but also show a death of what used to be. The instant the photo was taken, there was death in the sense of that moment in time is but a moment, unable to change or exist outside of that snapshot. As Hirsch remarks, photographs of the survivors and events of the Holocaust are “uniquely able to bring out this particular capacity of photographs to hover between life and death, to capture only that which no longer exists, to suggest both the desire and the necessity and, at the

same time, the difficulty, the impossibility, of mourning” (20). These photos represent a moment in time that is normally inaccessible due to the trauma caused by the event. The photos reinforce the survivor’s narrative, acting as proof of having lived before, during, or after this event, as proof of the Holocaust itself having even happened.

However, the photos themselves do not equate to a chance to properly mourn. The photos act as windows to the past, a time when life was simpler, happier, and safer, a time one can no longer go back to. Vladek only has photos of Anja’s family and his own memories to deal with the past; and from the defeated look Spiegelman has drawn on Vladek’s face, they are not enough to help him recover and move past his trauma of the Holocaust or Anja’s suicide. This perfectly reflects what Caruth says about how a witness becomes a part of history. The trauma is inescapable and will continue to haunt long after the fact. Caruth also states, “the impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located, in its insistent appearance outside the boundaries of any single place or time” (*Trauma: Explorations in Memory* 9). Trauma is so impactful because it cannot be simply forgotten or left in the past. Trauma will continue to follow a person throughout their life, making them constantly remember the event without rhyme or reason. Vladek’s trauma has become a part of him to the point that he cannot move past what has happened, leaving him to constantly repeat and relive all of the trauma he has endured.

Art and Artie’s Catharsis

With Art and his other depictions within *Maus*, however, there are multiple instances that show his attempts at healing from the traumas he has endured in his life. “Prisoner on the Hell Planet” shows Arthur cathartically talking about his mother’s suicide, a comix written seemingly to purge himself of the guilt and anguish he felt surrounding her death. The comix acts as a reflection of his guilt surrounding her death, his resentful last words to her, and his mental health deteriorating as a result. In the comix, Arthur is taken to Doctor Orens, the man who informs Arthur of his mom’s suicide. The man, with his large forehead and Hitler-like mustache, looms over Arthur as he tells Arthur that “[y]our mother killed herself – she’s **dead!**” leaving Arthur feeling “confused...angry...**numb!**” and leaving him not fully able to process what had happened (1: 101). Arthur starts to cry, but he does not have the chance to fully mourn because he has to care for Vladek, who had “completely fallen apart” after finding her dead in the bathtub (1: 101). He does his best to console his father while trying to work through his feelings of guilt over her death. When Vladek throws himself on her casket, screaming “**ANNA**” over and over, Arthur has to get

away from the funeral and cry, which a family friend scolds him for, saying “[n]ow you cry! Better you cried when your mother was still alive!” not realizing that the guilt was eating Arthur alive (1: 102). Arthur tries to find an answer, blaming himself, while his thoughts run wild, surrounding a guilt-ridden Arthur in the corner of the frame. His thoughts consist of “**menopausal depression**” accompanied by his mother’s corpse in the bathtub, “**Hitler did it!**” with a pile of corpses and a swastika in the background, “**Mommy!**” as he recalls a time when his mother used to read him books, and finally “**Bitch**” as he thinks of her tattooed arm cuts the other with a razor blade (1: 103). The comix ends with Arthur screaming in his cell, stating that his mom “committed the perfect crime...[y]ou put me here...you **murdered** me, Mommy, and you left me here to take the rap!!!” expressing the betrayal and the anger he feels at the sudden death of Anja (1: 103). Scenes like this allow for readers to see the purging of negative emotions during a time of grief, to show how Anja’s suicide hurt Art in such a way that turning his emotions into a comix was the only way he could work through his guilt. Michael E. Staub notes in his article, “The Shoah Goes on and on: Remembrance and Representation in Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*,”: “[t]he inclusion of scenes like this one...work to under-cut...any impulse readers might have to see survivors-or their children-as either saints or heroes, or indeed to prettify in any way the ‘moral lessons’ one can draw from the Holocaust” (40-41). The extreme emotions in this comix work not to paint survivors as merely victims, but as humans with faults. Anja’s actions caused Vladek so much anguish that he is still mourning her in the last pages of the graphic novel, unable to move past his loss. Art was instead overcome with so much pain and sorrow that he had to put his emotions out there in some way. None of the three are at fault for their actions within the comix, none of them are “the bad guy” for handling their emotions in the way they have; despite this, one’s actions negatively impacted the other two. Anja’s unknown motives caused her so much pain that she sought out to end her pain. Vladek was unable to cope at the sudden loss, turning to his son for some comfort and finding very little because Arthur was unable to work through his own feelings regarding her death, both blaming himself for her death and blaming her for all the pain he has endured.

This raw piece of writing shows the anguish Arthur and Vladek felt at losing Anja, the pain and agony of her suicide on their psyche. However, for Art, this was a chance for catharsis, to work through his pain in this instance. Doctor Orens, in response to Arthur’s crying in his office, simply states to “let him cry...it’s good for him!” as some kind of outlet for his feelings is good, and any attempts to process his mother’s suicide will help Arthur in the long run (1: 101). The

comix acts as catharsis for Art; by drawing out his feelings, he is putting his energy into creating something instead of mulling over his guilt and sadness over his mother's death. Even Vladek agrees, saying that "[i]t's good you got it outside your system," that Art worked through his feelings, unlike Vladek himself who says, "of course I'm thinking always about her **anyway**," even his attempts to mourn do nothing to ease his pain from losing her (1: 104). While Art has been able to work through this guilt and sadness, Vladek has not. Vladek has made attempts to move on, even marrying Mala, but nothing seems to help him through this.

We also see the difficulty that Artie has with writing and illustrating his father's testimony. In *Maus II*, Spiegelman leaves the frame narrative of mice and cats to self-reflectively depict himself struggling to write *Maus*, both for apprehension of properly representing the Holocaust and for the constant demands being made for a more commercial or aesthetic story to sell to the masses. Artie wears a mouse mask, one that looks weary and exhausted, as he works on *Maus* at his desk. A Nazi outpost looms outside through the window, and flies swarm around Artie and the pile of dead, Jewish mice that are heaped underneath the desk, completely covering the floor (2: 41). The memories of Vladek's testimony and Artie's desire to represent the Holocaust properly and respectfully cause the traumatic events to blend with the world outside of *Maus* and outside of Vladek's recordings. Artie gets interviewed by reporters, being questioned on the inclusion of other groups of people, on the possibility of commercializing to make more money, and on how *Maus* could possibly add more guilt to the Germans that were not alive during the Holocaust. As the reporters and businessmen close in and make more and more demands, Artie starts to shrink in size: with each question, he shrinks from an adult able to sit comfortably at his desk and attempt to answer the questions he is given, to what looks like a toddler, barely able to fit into his chair as the adults tower over him, overwhelming him to the point of bawling (2: 42). When initially confronted about what message he wanted to send with *Maus*, Artie looks perplexed and states that he "never thought of reducing [*Maus* and Vladek's testimony] to a message. I mean, I wasn't trying to CONVINCe anybody of anything." He wants "ABSOLUTION," or a release from the trauma his father had bestowed on him, a release from the obligation he feels to tell this story, yet when asked about if the process of writing *Maus* has been cathartic, he breaks down and cries (2: 42). He struggles to write about the trauma, but something compelled him to start this project, to write about his father's experiences before, during, and after going to Auschwitz; something, even at his lower points, still drives him to challenge the impossibility of putting trauma into words.

Spiegelman works against this impossibility of language by writing and drawing his father's testimony, trying to bring his father – his mother, his family, the victims of the Holocaust – some justice and validation of their traumatic experiences. He strives for this impossibility of language to become possible through the use of both visual and linguistic elements within the graphic novel. █

Immediately following this moment, a blatant example of Artie attempting to heal is shown: his weekly visit to Pavel, Artie's "shrink" and another Jewish Holocaust survivor. During the visit with Pavel, Artie initially goes to talk about his struggles to continue drawing *Maus*. He admits that "[m]y time is being sucked up by interviews and business propositions I can't deal with. But even when I'm left alone I'm totally BLOCKED...I just lie on my couch for hours..." (2: 43). This moment in the text is indicative of how he is starting to become emotionally drained from all of the publicity that *Maus I* received as well as how he is starting to lose the drive to continue onwards with creating *Maus*. The next page, he and Pavel are discussing Art's conflicts with his father and the memories of his father. Artie states that "[m]ainly I remember ARGUING with him...and being told that I couldn't do anything as well as he could. No matter what I accomplish, it doesn't seem like much compared to surviving Auschwitz," showing that these doubts of the severity of his own trauma are still present even after his father's passing (2: 44). During this exchange, Artie's mask expresses anger and defeat with the eyebrows furrowing in frustration then slanting outwards in almost weariness, while Pavel's mask remains blank as he listens to Artie talk through his feelings. He simply responds to his feelings of inadequacy that "you weren't in Auschwitz...you were in Rego Park," reminding him that Artie and Vladek have undergone different traumas, but one does not overshadow the other (2: 44). These feelings of inadequacy stem from this comparison of his experiences to those of his family's, most especially his father's. He feels that he cannot compare to what his father went through, and because of that, he feels guilt: guilt for what his father went through, guilt for his own traumas when his family endured much worse than he ever did, and guilt for the possibility of not doing his father's story justice within *Maus*.

Stanislav Kolář remarks in his article, "Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma in Siegelman's *Maus*," that Pavel "suggests that even Art's father feels guilty because he has survived while the others have not. Clinical studies describe how many survivors suffer from a sense of guilt for the same reason; however, Pavel's point is that Vladek has transmitted his own survivor's guilt onto Art" (232). The guilt that Artie feels is the same kind of guilt that his father suffered

from. They both suffer with the guilt of surviving when others did not, the guilt of suffering when there is the possibility that someone had gone through worse. Pavel works with Artie to reassure him that Artie's own traumas, both those dealing with Vladek and the Holocaust and those more personal to him, are all important, and he asserts that Artie cannot place his own trauma beside his father's and deem his own as lesser. Trauma will not be the same for every individual, nor will everyone deal with their trauma in the same way; this does not make anyone's issues and experiences any less impactful for the individual. Trauma is not something to competitively compare with others, it is something that an individual goes through that impacts their life, something they must work through. In Freud's "An Autobiographical Study," he describes Breuer's work with Anna O. by saying, "[w]hen the patient recalled a situation...under hypnosis and carried through to its conclusion, with a free expression of emotion...the symptom was abolished" (12). By having the patient talk about what they are currently going through and what they have gone through allows the patient to let go of their pathologies that relate to their trauma, even if for just a while. As Artie and Pavel talk through Artie's own issues as well as how he feels about his father's, Artie starts to understand his feelings better. Artie's mask looks more and more reassured as he and Pavel talk about the Holocaust, share opinions on Holocaust narratives and how the victims are unable to share their stories, and discuss how to depict a particular scene within *Maus* that Artie was struggling with. Artie's confidence grows as he returns back to his writing desk, his body growing from the almost childlike stature back to the original adult size from the beginning of the chapter; he comments to himself that he does not understand why "but these sessions with Pavel somehow make me feel better" (2: 46). Talking through his struggles and doubts with someone who validates his feelings towards *Maus* and his father allows him to continue his work with renewed inspiration.

Conclusion

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* shows the struggles that Vladek and Art carry with them, as well as emphasizes the weight of both survivor's guilt and their loss constantly looming over them. Their memories stay with them over the years, and their pathologies follow not far behind. Both characters have trauma and struggles to work through. While Vladek is unable to move past all of the trauma he has endured, Art manages to find a way to heal from some of his mental anguish through the course of the graphic novel. Spiegelman highlights these aspects of the characters' lives through the use of visuals, allowing readers to see the trauma manifesting before their eyes.

Within the work, Spiegelman shows the attempts at healing from both shared and individual traumas, while also contrasting the successes and failures to do so. Ultimately, *Maus* is a story on the inner workings of the characters' minds, on how their trauma has impacted them in their daily lives, and on the strain placed upon both Vladek and Art while attempting to heal from the traumas of both past and present.

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Dispelling Difference: Reader in the Role of Interpreter in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*

Justin Sturgeon

In Rani Nuetill's entry in the *Naming Jhumpa Lahiri* anthology, she establishes that, Lahiri, who is separated from Indian Partition as a second-generation witness, still feels an ethical responsibility to interpret "the foreign and unassimilable nature of trauma and loss that wound each of the characters in [*The Interpreter of Maladies*]" (119). More specifically, she provides a literary analysis of the title story, "Interpreter of Maladies," to illustrate Mr. Kapasi's desire to be "an interpreter between nations and alternative relationships" (124). Nuetill claims that even though Lahiri is fairly removed from partition, she is still compelled to "awaken" others to partition, which emerges through her stories as an "ethical burden of [the] survivor" (129). Ultimately, Nuetill contends that Lahiri's cycle should be read as a whole, as each of the stories illustrate a malady also present in other stories in the collection. Nuetill's analysis of Lahiri's first and most critically-acclaimed work raises questions pertaining to the use of a short story cycle genre to convey emotions connected to immigrant and native South Asian American experiences in ways that seek to dispel geographical differences by luminating emotional human experiences that seek to unite rather than to divide. Indeed, Jhumpa Lahiri's short story cycle *Interpreter of Maladies* articulates an emotional connection of unfulfillment tied to immigrant displacement in a new culture through characters in these short stories and by deliberately placing the reader into the role of interpreter. By evoking and rejecting certain conventions of the genre, Lahiri creates a unique space for her reader to become an interpreter of the psychological and emotional 'maladies' of featured characters in each story. More specifically, by casting the reader as an interpreter, Lahiri connects audiences to this sequence of stories in a way that encourages them to connect to others across geographical and racial or ethnic divides. In particular, "A Temporary Manner," "Interpreter of Maladies," and "The Third and Final Continent" all involve the reader's transition to interpreter and, thereby, engagement in an analysis that compels the reader to understand and empathize with the character, the 'other,' being presented.

In order to understand the contextual work of Lahiri's text, it is imperative to consider the transition in immigrant experience writing from a postcolonial emphasis in the direct aftermath of Partition to one that exudes a cosmopolitan aesthetic that promotes globalization. Elizabeth

Jackson, who studies South Asian diaspora through a feminist lens, maps a transition from postcolonial identity categories to cosmopolitanism. Jackson prefaces that a cosmopolitan identity is not synonymous with being elite (110). Rather, she views the label as more of an attitude than a lifestyle that constantly uproots a subject by relocating from country to country. Jackson argues that cosmopolitanism theory allows postcolonial perspectives to be more flexibly applied. More precisely, she offers a close reading of Lahiri's text to demonstrate the short story cycle as effective for examining this transition. By "transcending" the geographical tie to identity as determined in postcolonial theory that falls short when describing people who do not fit into easily defined ethnic identities, a transcendence also occurs from "narrow loyalties and sympathetically incorporate people from other parts of the world into a vision of shared humanity without an erasure of cultural identity" (112-113). Here, Jackson is illustrating the position of cosmopolitanism as a compliment to globalization in ways that unites rather than divides in relation to ethnic identity. In terms of Lahiri's text, Jackson demonstrates that the stories in the cycle offer, "the failure to connect [as] a general malady that manifest itself simultaneously on interpersonal and intercultural levels" (121). Jackson is illustrating that Lahiri's text offers an effect that can resonate feelings of unfulfillment with almost anyone regardless of nationality.

Similarly, Susan Koshy addresses potential gaps or faults in cosmopolitanism, which yields a primarily Eurocentric presence without regard or opportunity to other minority groups. If it was not clear before in cosmopolitanism theory, Koshy coined the term "minority cosmopolitanism" to describe the transition of thinking which aligns minority writers as cosmopolitans. Further, Koshy determines "the incongruence between national and cultural identity, instead of being perceived as a sign of failed nationhood, can instead serve as a resource for rethinking the terms of a national membership" (596). In reestablishing ideas about one's ethical loyalties tied to citizenship, one can be compelled to broaden their horizons and be more empathetic to people with whom they may not initially have connected. Koshy describes the "exorbitant citizen" as a character who may geographically submit to one nation but have cultural ties to another. She emphasizes that exorbitant citizenships allow for a reimagining of "community, worldliness, and belonging"—as what Jackson describes as cosmopolitan in nature as opposed to postcolonial identity categorizations (597). Lahiri's text exemplifies this mindset in its character's "practices of accommodation" (599) of which Koshy plots in the last story, "The Third and Final Continent," which will be discussed later. Koshy ultimately constitutes that Lahiri, "forces [the reader] to

imagine an impossible hospitality from the position of the other who cannot feel at home” (594). Specifically, in *Interpreter of Maladies*, the characters who experience situations of unfulfillment often have linked anxieties over the temporal distances of their ‘home’—where they reside at peace, comfortable with their surroundings. In terms of the reader of this text as an interpreter of maladies, a compulsion to empathize with the characters transcends the reader’s modality linked to geographically bound identities.

While Lahiri’s text is able to effectively allow space for its reader to interpret maladies connected to ethnic identity anxieties in general, the genre of short story cycle also provides a complementary form that effectively demonstrates dilemmas involved with narratives representing South Asian immigrant and native experiences specifically to American audiences. Susan Mann offers a canonical history of the genre leading up to its boom in the twentieth century. Mann explains that framing devices in stories can be traced back to before Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* and even to the epic cycle. Mann also determines that prefixes to the short story cycle genre include higher epochs of marketability for unauthorized sequels and reproductions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for shorter fiction in the form of novellas (4). James Negal describes the genre in American literature: “each element [or story is] sufficiently complete for independent publication and yet serve[s] as part of a volume unified by a continuing setting, or ongoing characters, or developing themes, or coalescent patterns of imagery” (9). In other words, the stories are independent enough to be read on their own without any of the other stories present as contextual pillars. However, when these stories are read together as one piece, they exude deeper connections to a unified theme, character(s), situation, or experience.

The short story cycle as a genre is one that has become very popular for ethnic writers like Lahiri. Negal applies the short story cycle as appealing and well adaptive for ethnic writers because it has “origins in the oral tradition and descends through cultures in every part of the world, unifying them in a larger legacy of universal story telling” (10). Thus, the genre is consistent with the growing prevalence of cosmopolitanism and its impact to unite people across geographical boundaries. Mann goes on in her study to identify that short story cycles often contain a collective protagonist as well as featuring themes pertaining to loneliness, failures of marriage, and “depictions of unsatisfactory love relationships and families” (11). Negal, similarly describes the genre as effective for ethnic writers because of its ability as a form opposed to the novel to

communicate fragmentation, alienation, and the experiences of modern life (12). Brada-Williams indicates that the genre also poses challenges of representation to ethnic writers as a “common dilemma of obscuring part and whole due to the inevitably finite nature of both available representations and one’s own reading” (452). Here, Brada-Williams illuminates that ethnic writers face the change of balancing both specific experiences and also the collective whole in their narratives. She goes on to demonstrate that the genre also offers a solution to the problems it creates by “balancing a variety of representations rather than offering a single representation provided by the novel of the individual story” (453). Brada-Williams exemplifies the genre’s form to contain solely independent works, as Negal describes it, to more accurately highlight the complex variety of representations for a single ethnic group.

Conclusively to the short story cycle as an adequate form for ethnic writers, Lahiri’s text is a hallmark of these features as it mediates between South Asian American immigrants, natives of India, and their shared feelings of dislocation and unfulfillment, while avoiding a homogenous portrayal. Noelle Brade-Williams applies Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Interpreter of Maladies* as a short story cycle that utilizes themes and affects to secure the stories as one through portraying “recurring themes of the barriers to and opportunities for human communication; community, including marital, extra-marital, and parent-child relationships; and the dichotomy of care and neglect” (451). She illustrates the collection as an effective short story cycle because of the various unifying themes that unite the characters across geographical and class status. Further, Lahiri in some ways also rejects traditional notions of the genre to further communicate these feelings of unfulfillment—especially in terms of the reader’s position as interpreter. Mann illuminates that several signals are present that indicate to the reader that a larger cohesive story is present aside from being a mere collection in the author’s intentions regarding the title of the collection as it usually is replicated from an important short story within the cycle—usually either the story placed first or last in the collection (14). In Lahiri’s text, the title of the collection comes from the third story in the cycle rather than the first or last, as is the case with her second short story cycle published in 2008, *Unaccustomed Earth*. The positioning of this title story is imperative for the reader’s interpretation because it is at this point that they become aware of their responsibility, whereas the first two stories allow the reader to be guided into their position in a low-stakes way that allows them to unknowingly give in to the compulsion exuded from the story to interpret the maladies ailing Shoba in “A Temporary Manner” and Mr. Pirzada in “When Mr. Pirzada Came

to Dine”. The reader then becomes aware of their role as an interpreter for each story in “Interpreter of Maladies” and then progresses to interpreting intentionally for the remaining stories, specifically “The Third and Final Continent.”

The first story in this collection, “A Temporary Matter.” relates the story of a young couple’s descent into discontentment and grief after their baby is stillborn. Shukumar and Shoba both emigrated with their families from India as children but now live in America as academic professionals. From the tragedy of the stillbirth, the marital relationship between Shukumar and Shoba, a wife and husband, suffers in terms of communication and offering support for one another. In the six-month time span since their child’s death, Shoba and Shukumar remain distant and often avoid contact with one another, instead letting their work or hobbies carry their attention away from the other. Laura Ann Williams concurs that this resonance of isolation appears in the couple’s lack of household maintenance and cooking (71). Williams goes on to exemplify this change in Shoba as seen through Shukumar’s eyes in “observations of deficiency contrasted against surplus” (71). Shoba no longer cooks or prepares meals with the abundance that she used to, whereas Shukumar transforms the nursery into his workspace since Shoba would never enter that room. Ultimately, Williams identifies that Shukumar has always assumed “their marital problems were temporary without investing any care or in restoring or replenishing their relationship” (72). Elizabeth Jackson examines that each is “too wrapped up in solitary grief to be able to offer to offer adequate comfort to the other, so almost inevitably they fail one another and gradually drift apart” (120). The obvious temporary matter in this story is the scheduled power outage for five nights which disrupts the couple’s disconnected habits and forces them to be present together where they begin to reveal ‘secrets’ to each other that ultimately ends with a sense of hope that may lead to recovery down the road.

This story also dives deeper into trauma and its association with ethnic identity. Susan Moynihan elaborates on the secret telling game during the dark as a ritual that appears to bring catharsis for the couple unmasked with the story’s conclusion, but “when Shoba reveals she has been looking for a new place to live, [she] rewrites their game of supposedly growing intimacy as really a mourning ritual for their former visions of what their marriage had or could have been” (106). Notably in this passage, Moynihan is not insinuating that the couple is necessarily able to completely move past this event in a way that restores their marriage to its former mobility, but

that the couple is able to confront their unresolved trauma from their child's death. Throughout the narrative, Moynihan observes the placement of temporality in Shukumar's thoughts as they constantly return to their child's death regardless of the time or setting of the memory that he is revisiting. Elsewhere, Hagar Ben Driss discusses the subtle nature of Shukumar's "anxieties over Indianness" (73) and the story's emphasis "more towards insinuation than indication" (74). Driss suggests the story indicates the connection of Shukumar's parents as being a nexus for his increased interest in India's history after their death as an attempt to rediscover that relationship. Driss also contends that the temporal "snapshots of memory"—as Moynihan described in terms of trauma theory—"enable both the readers and Shukumar to fill in gaps, to reconstruct a type of linearity in a fragmented story full of silences" (74). Shukumar was only an infant when he left sick to the Americas which he relates to feelings of inadequacy towards the connection to his Indian heritage. Driss goes on to address the role of food in this story—as it surfaces in most of the others as well—as an addition that does not offer any sense of relief (75). As Shukumar grapples with these internal struggles not entirely made known to Shoba, their attempts to formulate past experiences also sheds light on their connection to their Indian heritage. Ganapathy-Dore highlights that these epochs involving "load shedding brings back memories of Calcutta and the games that people play to pass away the time and overcome the fear of obscurity begins to resurface" (62). Significantly, understanding these ethnic experiences as presented through Shukumar's eyes becomes a crucial aspect to the reader interpreting the maladies in this story.

The reader is placed into the role of interpreter in "A Temporary Manner" in unnoticeable ways as a means for the reader to develop interpreter skills, without acknowledgment, that will be utilized throughout the rest of the stories in this cycle. Although this story is related primarily through the head space of Shukumar, it is Shoba's malady that the reader is compelled to interpret. Shukumar attempts to describe Shoba's ailments of unfulfillment in his observation of their growing distance: "Eventually [Shukumar] gave up trying to amuse her. He learned not to mind the silences" (12). However, when the scheduled blackout occurs, the couple begins to slowly reconnect through initially awkward, face-to-face dinner and conversation that eventually leads to the climax of their emotionally charged revelations linked to the miscarriage. Shukumar becomes surprised when Shoba's behavior changes again as each night progresses through the blackout. He begins to notice her coming home earlier from work (14), she takes their dishes into the kitchen rather than taking solitude in the living room (14), they match words when calling out to another

couple walking down the street (16), and she acts in a more determined manner (13). At this point, the reader is able to see through Shukumar's hopeful perspective that the two may be on their way to restoring balance to their relationship as he inches deeper into conversation each night at dinner. Both Shukumar and the reader are also able to notice her response to these attempts and begins to assume that a breakthrough is happening in Shoba's grief. However, a clear connection to Shoba's healing is still unestablished as the couple still navigate through rekindling their relationship.

Through the nights of the blackout, Shukumar confesses somewhat frivolous secrets throughout his past to Shoba that highlight his own feelings of inadequacy as an immigrant compared to Shoba's own memorable early childhood experiences in Calcutta. While Shukumar's constant return to both the stillbirth and his lack of connection to his heritage explicitly reveals his own maladies involving guilt for not being there when the stillbirth happened and for not being able to connect fully with his own Indian heritage, little is revealed in Shoba's maladies involving loss with the stillbirth of her first child and unfulfillment in her current relationship with Shukumar. This gray area of Shoba's current bearings on their relationship after the blackout dinners is demolished when Shoba reveals on a luminated night that she is moving out, which comes as a complete surprise to Shukumar who believes they have reached much ground in reconnecting with each other. Shukumar's reaction occurs in: "It sickened Shukumar, knowing that she had spent these past evenings preparing for a life without him" (21). This leads him to reveal arguably his most intimate secret yet, that he held their son in his arms while Shoba was asleep before they took the dead baby away. As the story closes, it captures Shoba's reaction: "Shoba had turned off the lights. She came back to the table and sat down, and after a moment Shukumar joined her. They wept together, for the things they now knew" (22). Here, Shoba opens up to Shukumar in a way that differs from her previous grappling with grief. In this emotional scene, the two are arguably more connected than they have been in months, even more so than the nights of secret sharing during the blackout. In visualizing this connection, the reader is compelled to develop a sense of hope for the couple to begin mending their relationship and work through their trauma related to the stillbirth. By leaving the direction of their relationship a mystery, Lahiri compels the reader to be aware of Shoba's desire for a genuine connection similar to that which was initiated in their secret-sharing evenings. Shoba's simulation of the blackout serves as a potential means of reaching catharsis to her maladies associated with grief and unfulfillment in having lost her child. In opening this short story cycle with an intimate examination of an Indian American couple who experiences

family tragedy linked to unfulfillment creates a resonance of emotion that the reader comes to seek a connection to in the remaining stories.

While “A Temporary Matter” situates the reader as an interpreter of the maladies present for Shoba in indirect ways, the title story “Interpreter of Maladies” sheds light to the reader of their responsibility as an interpreter as seen through a literal exchange between interpreter and patient as seen in Mr. Kapasi’s job as a literal interpreter of maladies in India for a local doctor who speaks a different language. In this story, Mrs. Das transcends the physicality of his job by pleading with him to interpret her maladies associated with detachment from her family. The Indian American couple and their children travel to India as tourists and are driven to various attractions by a local driver, Mr. Kapasi, who unexpectedly leaves an impression on Mrs. Das. Like the first story in this collection, the narrator takes on the limited perspective of a single character, in this case, Mr. Kapasi. Brian Yothers illustrates that the maladies in this story are “those of the soul” (216) as Mrs. Das confides in Mr. Kapasi a family secret she has kept for years about one of her children’s real father. Ultimately, Mrs. Das rejects his *interpretation* of her malady rooted in guilt which is doubled in their cultural differences that shines through as Mr. Kapasi must save one of the children from being attacked by a monkey when exploring off the paved road. Ketu Katrak accurately describes Mrs. Das’ search for solace in Mr. Kapasi with, “Mrs. Das is looking for a spiritual, mythical India with healing powers, and sees the interpreter as a vehicle sent to her for that purpose” (6). Nuetill describes Mr. Kapasi’s role as an interpreter as being on par with being psychic (125). Mrs. Das becomes immersed in his role as an interpreter in India as a stark contrast to her current detached relationship with her husband who is predominantly Americanized.

Throughout this short story, the Das family serves as an opposite to Mr. Kapasi in both mannerisms and culture both linked to the family’s experience as second-generation immigrants seeking to gain an abrupt connection to their heritage by vacationing in India. Specifically, Mr. Das and Mr. Kapasi illustrate what Nuetill has deemed “double coding” (60), or representations that are directly comparable. Brian Yothers demonstrates the immediate contrast between the Americanized Das family and the “reserved” and mature Mr. Kapasi in their meeting when Mr. Das excessively shakes Mr. Kapasi’s hand while Mrs. Das similarly mirrors this “childish behavior” (214). Throughout the ride, Mr. Das and Mr. Kapasi constantly give insight to the sights they are seeing, Mr. Kapasi through his knowledge and experience of being a native, and Mr. Das’

citations from his guidebook. Mr. Das' overtly saturation in Americanization also surfaces through his camera which he uses to document—seemingly mundane to Mr. Kapasi—exhibits of native life. One of the first examples of obvious difference between these tourists and Mr. Kapasi occurs in an ironic moment when Mr. Das compares himself to Mr. Kapasi when asked about his occupation as a teacher: ““What subject?’, ‘Science. In fact, every year I take my students on a trip to the Museum of Natural History in New York City. In a way we have a lot in common, you could say, you and I. How long have you been a tour guide, Mr. Kapasi?’” (46). Here, Mr. Das inserts his own experience as a guide for his students in the United States to Mr. Kapasi as a tour guide in India for tourists from around the world. Mr. Das' implicitly westernized perspective—as evident from his reliance on a guidebook over Mr. Kapasi's own knowledge from being native to the area (47)—reduces Mr. Kapasi Indian experience in an attempt to connect with him. The polarization between Mr. Kapasi and Mr. Das is important for the placement of Mrs. Das, who is the character of significance from this story and who initially surfaces the responsibility of the reader as an interpreter to the forefront of the reader's mind for the remainder of the cycle. These dynamic representations also demonstrate what both Jackson and Koshy illustrate as ineffective in postcolonialism. Lahiri's choice of characters here demonstrates the complex nature of ethnic identity that postcolonialism alone fails to effectively categorize. A heightened example of this emerges when Mr. Kapasi notices the guidebook about India Mr. Das uses has a foreign aesthetic. While the Das family are Indian in ethnicity, they were born in the United States to immigrant parents and are culturally Americanized.

Mr. and Mrs. Das appear to have a tense and detached relationship rooted in a place of frustration over minimal events and occurrences within the trip, and these are noticed by Mr. Kapasi who reduces them both as equal siblings to the children rather than parents responsible for “someone other than themselves” (49). Another stark contrast appears throughout the car ride between Mrs. Das's contention for her husband and her fascination for Mr. Kapasi as an interpreter. As referred to earlier by Katrak, Mrs. Das sees his role as having “potential healing powers” (6) in which she seeks to learn more and more about. Her longing to experience a spiritual connection to his work is evident in: ““Tell us a typical situation.’ She settled back into her seat, her head tilted in a patch of sun, and closed her eyes. ‘I want to picture what happens.’” (51). With each inquiring notion, Mrs. Das becomes more and more fascinated by his otherwise viewed remedial side-job and even describes it as romantic (50). The polarization of both men comes to the surface again

when Mr. Kapasi reflects on this exchange with: “She did not behave in a romantic way toward her husband, and yet she had used the word to describe him [Mr. Kapasi ...] Her sudden interest in him, an interest she did not express in either her husband or her children, was mildly intoxicating” (53). Throughout several other examined snapshots of Mr. Kapasi’s mind, the reader begins to see his infatuation with her as Mrs. Das also serves as a polarizing opposite from his wife and their own marital problems. While more could be said about his hopefulness for their relationship, he is unaware of what really is ailing her—the guilt associated with one of her sons not actually being biologically Mr. Das’ but belonging to an acquaintance of which she had a one-night stand with. Like Shukumar, Mr. Kapasi is optimistic of their growing relationship until he becomes more hesitant when she refers to him as a father figure, an archetype that makes sense for this scenario as she merely sees him as someone with spiritual, healing authority

In the emotionally charged, seemingly ironic moment of the revelation to Mr. Kapasi, Mrs. Das finds an opportunity to confide in her “mystic” while Mr. Das leads the children with his guidebook through sightseeing. After hearing her story, Mr. Kapasi who is quite uncomfortable at this point asks why she decides to tell him this information, of which she replies with: “I told you because of your talents” (65). This revelation further confirms her Americanized, somewhat desperate position to find healing through a spiritual connection to her family’s heritage. Mrs. Das pleads with Mr. Kapasi to become an interpreter of her maladies, even though they come from two different cultures in an attempt to ease her familial guilt. The cultural differences present here do not hinder Mr. Kapasi from accurately interpreting Mrs. Das’ malady: “Is it really pain you feel, Mrs. Das, or is it guilt?” (66). This interpretation was not what she was looking for as its invasion into the personal realm is disconnected from her Westernized façade that is enacted in front of her family and friends in hiding the secret. While she rejects Mr. Kapasi’s interpretation is merely foreshadowed at the beginning of the story as illuminated in, “Mr. Kapasi noted that this boy was slightly paler than the other children” (48). Mr. Kapasi’s mature, reserved perception of this family immediately allows him to notice peculiarities within the family which further builds up to Mrs. Das seeking him as an interpreter.

Whereas “A Temporary Manner” ends with a somewhat hopeful, intimate moment for Shukumar and Shoba, this story leaves no indication that the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Das will change as her attention becomes transfixed on her son who has been attacked by monkeys.

Also, a contrast between the first story and this one occurs in the effect left on the reader as an interpreter to character maladies throughout the rest of the cycle. In the first, the reader is compelled to sympathize with Shoba through Shukumar's limited perspective. However, this story leaves the reader unsympathetic for Mrs. Das and her malady through Mr. Kapasi's limited perspective. This effect is present in the last line of the story: "[...] knowing this was the picture of the Das family he would preserve forever in his mind" (69). As the slip of paper resembling his only option for a continued connection to the family slips away, he does not chase it or strive to restore it. This ending scene demonstrates Mr. Kapasi's newfound detestation for the Das family as his own *mystical* illusion becoming emotionally connected to Mrs. Das fades. This story brings the relationship between an interpreter of maladies and a character with maladies associated with ethnic identity to the forefront of the reader's mind. This newly acknowledged skill that the reader has been performing since the first story, as analyzed earlier, becomes a mainstay for the remaining six stories in the cycle. At this point, the reader is compelled to consume the rest of the stories and continue their role as an interpreter. As an American reader interprets Mrs. Das' malady alongside Mr. Kapasi, the reader is able to become more aware of varying representations of ethnic identity as the Das family and Mr. Kapasi demonstrate how complex identity based solely on ethnicity can be, thus further dismantling easily identifiable categorizations marked in postcolonialism. By interpreting maladies through the perspective of an "other," the reader's performance in this role is consistent with ideas previously established with globalization as a cosmopolitan reader. The act of interpreting in this context from the point of view from a mediated narrator's perspective, in this case Mr. Kapasi, is what compels a traditional American audience to partake in a cosmopolitanism setting that seeks to deconstruct narrowly built walls of difference.

While "Interpreter of Maladies" acknowledges to the reader their responsibility as an interpreter of character maladies, the last story titled "The Third and Final Continent" raises the stakes established throughout the cycle by having the interpreted maladies belong to the narrator. This story builds upon previously established themes from other stories including both marriage, immigration, and unfulfillment through the narration of a native from Calcutta as he moves to Britain and then to New York, all while getting into a traditionally arranged Indian marriage to Mala, who accompanies him in the States after six weeks. Koshy utilizes this story to highlight several aspects of assimilation pertaining to immigrant experience. Koshy outlines the narrative as containing two forms of intimacy consisting of house-tenant and romantic relationships which

adds further complexity to representing immigrant experience in assimilation than mere romantic desire. Koshy highlights that both forms, “undercut a foundational myth of the immigrant as a certain type of desiring subject” (602). Through the narrator’s assimilation in America when first staying with Mrs. Croft, his landlord, he becomes more accustomed to living in the United States through various aspects such as food and shelter. As the story continues, the narrator becomes closer to Mrs. Croft throughout his stay until he must find a larger apartment for when his new wife Mala comes to live with him. After several awkward nights of their arranged marriage, the narrator takes Mala to visit Mrs. Croft, which marks a shift in the perception the two have of each other. Koshy remarks this shift as the narrator’s transformation from guest to host in his time living in America (603). After this meeting between the Calcutta native having been naturalized to America, an elderly American native, and the young lady who has just arrived in America from India, the narrator becomes more focused on fostering love for his wife which encapsulates the rest of the narrative. That ends with his reflection on having lived on three continents.

Similarly, Jackson indicates that this story contains an “implicit critique of nationalism” as first evident in the narrator’s reading of *The Student Guide to North America* while traveling from Britain to America (118). She demonstrates that the reading of this text occurs as, “an effort to draw (artificial) distinctions between ‘the English’ and ‘the North Americans’” (118). By further making such generalizations about both the U.S. and England, the reader is able to see further evidence as to what postcolonial labels fail to indicate in plotting identity by making sweeping generalizations about two highly western (establishment) countries. Jackson goes on to conclude with her analysis of this story as containing a pivotal shift in Mrs. Crofts’ ability to “transcend her patriotic fervor and express respect and appreciation for someone from a very different cultural background” such as Mala (119). Here, Jackson draws on associations of the complexities of ethnic identity and the dismantling of geographical and cultural differences that also becomes the nexus for the narrator’s own view of Mala as the two begin to fall in love after this encounter.

In this story, the narrator is not compelling the reader to look in on another character’s maladies, but his own, which are tied to navigating life in a new culture as well as translating traditions from Calcutta into the United States, namely, marriage. The story begins by only reflecting on the narrator’s prospects of entering the U.S. and finding housing with Mrs. Croft. The narrator’s anxieties associated with living in the U.S surface through points of difference between

the States, Britain, and India in, “I learned that Americans drove on the right side, not the left, and that they call a lift an elevator and an engaged phone busy” (174). While this instance annotates the narrator’s run in with assimilation, many of his maladies associated with living in the U.S. occur in the urban/rural dichotomy. The narrator cannot stand the noise of the city, “The noise was constantly distracting, at times suffocating. I felt it deep in my ribs, just as I had felt the furious drone of the engine on the SS Roma. But there was no ship’s deck to escape to, no glittering ocean to thrill my soul, no breeze to cool my face, and no one to talk to” (175). Here, the narrator indicates his inability to escape from the noise of New York City as he compares it to his boat ride over to the States. The narrator’s maladies connected to moving to the U.S. are mirrored to his maladies of getting married—particularly to someone of whom he barely knows. When describing her during his stream of consciousness, he depicts her in ways that are conducive to a job application. He elaborates that she has been rejected by many because of her complexion, but that she can cook, sew, and cite poetry (180). When Mala comes to live with him in the U.S., their first few nights are rather rough as she cries but he does “nothing to console her” (181). He recalls when he picked her up in the airport that he recognized her form based on her traditional bridal covering. From this moment forward until meeting Mrs. Croft, the two lack any sort of connection as the narrator views the situation as more of an obligation rather than a consensual, willing desire to care for her. These occurrences compel the reader to empathize with the narrator and Mala rather than Mrs. Croft, the initial host, as the narrator becomes host not only for Mrs. Croft, but also to Mala.

The narrator’s maladies associated with both his assimilation to America and his new marriage converge with his relationship as a tenant to Mrs. Croft. In one exchange between the two when she is trying to draw excitement out of him over the recent U.S. moon landing, she urges him to remark “splendid” (179). The narrator reflects, “I was baffled and somewhat insulted by the request. It reminded me of the way I was taught multiplication tables as a child, repeating after the master, sitting cross-legged, without shoes or pencils, on the floor of my one-room Tollygrunge school” (179-180). Here, the command to say splendid comes off as forceful and unexpected to the narrator, who at this point does not realize that Mrs. Croft is one hundred and three years old (187). As he is just beginning to learn more about living in America, he suddenly feels like he is being educated much in the same way as his childhood education in India. However, he is now separated by location and must navigate moving to America in 1964. In the same passage, he begins to create a link to these thoughts to the marriage: “It also reminded me of my wedding,

when I had repeated endless Sanskrit verses after the priest, verses I had barely understood, which joined me to my wife. I said nothing” (180). Here, the narrator expresses unfulfillment in both his traditional Indian marriage and in this exchange with Mrs. Croft. As the six weeks pass, the narrator becomes closer and more sympathetic to Mrs. Croft, as well as more accustomed to living in New York City.

One night when Mala and the narrator are walking around the city the narrator says, “without thinking, I lead her down the quiet street where for so many nights I had walked alone” (193). The narrator feels compelled to find solace where he has become most comfortable in America, which was his first living arrangement with Mrs. Croft. Although the couple in this story are most recently from India, the potential for contention and stagnation in their relationship is beginning to build much like what has developed in both the Das family and Shoba and Shukumar. However, this story converges from the previous two as well when the narrator takes Mala to meet Mrs. Croft. A pivotal moment occurs both for the narrator’s transition to life in America and also his relationship with Mala when Mrs. Croft tells the story of her now broken hip and she inquires of the narrator, “‘What do you say to that boy?’ As stunned as I was, I knew what I had to say. With no hesitation at all, I cried out, ‘Splendid!’” (193-194). Here, the narrator has not spoken to Mrs. Croft in several months. This conversation is an exchange that resembles old times when he was her tenant. In search for a strengthened connection to her, he speaks their word “without hesitation” which then brings the narrator to notice Mala in, “Mala laughed then. Her voice was full of kindness, her eyes bright with amusement. I had never heard her laugh before, and it was loud enough so that Mrs. Croft had heard, too.” (195). Here, the narrator’s growth with Mala and Mrs. Croft becomes a catalyst for his growing relationship with Mala. He recalls the event: “I like to think of that moment in Mrs. Croft’s parlor as the moment when the distance between Mala and me began to lessen. Although we were not yet fully in love, I like to think of the months that followed as a honeymoon of sorts” (196). Over this time, the narrator and Mala both bond with each other as they tread the same journey of assimilating to America.

Not only does this story compel the reader to empathize with the narrator and his maladies associated with navigating life in the U.S., the reader also is compelled reflect on the previous narratives with similar sentiments that seek to both unite and dispel differences between Americans, Indian Americans, and native Indians in an attempt to further understand one another,

not necessarily completely, but enough to become more aware of the experiences of others outside of one's own culture. All three of the stories in this analysis demonstrate psychological maladies that are communicated in ways that compel American readers to seek empathy for both immigrants and natives from another country such as India in this case. The story, and the collection at this point, ends with an anecdotal narrative from the narrator to his son who is now a student at Cambridge. The narrator who is now a father reflects on his experience, "In my son's eyes I can see the ambition that had first hurled me across the world. In a few years he will graduate and pave his way, alone and unprotected. But I remind myself that he has a father that is still living, a mother who is happy and strong" (197). Here, the narrator aligns his own maladies over his son's in a way that connects their experiences even though the narrator is an immigrant from Calcutta and his son has grown up and lives predominantly in America. The following lines express the sentiment of this story's title as well as the short story cycle over all in, "Whenever [the son] is discouraged, I tell him that if I can survive on three continents, then there is no obstacle he can not conquer" (198). Here, the reader is compelled further to place this story and its message in terms of the previous stories where the reader has served as an interpreter to the maladies of certain characters, all varying in ethnicity associated with American and Bengali. The significance of the short story cycle genre allows for these stories that feature different characters in different geographical locations to experience similar feelings and themes as plotted by the reader after reading each story individually and then placing them in connection to one another in ways that dismantle the divide between 'us' and 'them'.

In conclusion, the short stories in the short story cycle Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* position the reader to become an interpreter of characters' maladies in ways that seek to empathize with those who are members of a diverse group of both native Indians and Indian immigrants to the United States who struggle to fit neatly lined categories of ethnic identity. This became a responsibility that is consistent with cosmopolitanism and complimented by the short story cycle, which are two trends in American Ethnic Literature today. By writing stories that position the reader to be responsible for interpreting maladies of characters from a different culture places the reader from a general American audience into a cosmopolitanism setting. The use of the short story cycle is complementary to this reader responsibility, because it highlights a variety of representations from a given culture and avoids mere flat, stagnate characterizations of immigrants. Given this significance, further critical attention could be paid to Lahiri's texts, both this collection and her

other works, as applicable to historical accounts associated with patterns of diaspora and immigration from India to the U.S. in the wake of Indian Partition. Furthermore, the role of nations in Partition such as Britain could be analyzed through certain cosmopolitan authors such as Lahiri. Further critical significance could also trace the employments of the short story cycle genre as it becomes more prevalent for ethnic writers to use as a vehicle for writing about experiences with ethnic identity by either abiding by or rejecting traditional conventions of the genre. In doing so, a further emphasis can be placed on examining how different nations respond to difference both ethnically and culturally and how trends emerge that offer either a predominantly divided world view of others or a world view of others that seeks to cease divide over ethnic angst of difference in an attempt to be more empathetic to other humans who reside on the same globe.

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Emily Brontë's Heathcliff: An Affective and Linguistic Evaluation of *Wuthering Heights*' Sadistic Protagonist

Emma Turner

In the initial pages of the second volume of *Wuthering Heights*, readers are given a raw portrait of the novel's protagonist in indistinguishable pain as he reacts to the death of the woman he loves. He screams to her spirit, "Be with me always—take any form—drive me mad! only *do* not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!" (Brontë 130). Following his heart wrenching pleas to the specter of his lost beloved, he dashes his head against the trunk of a tree in agony. This crazed and grieving canonical literary character, who throughout the text, engages with a reader's sense of empathy and apathy due to his characterized behavior is Heathcliff in Emily Brontë's 1847 novel *Wuthering Heights*. In her work, Brontë follows the Earnshaw family as they welcome Heathcliff in his infancy into the household. Heathcliff with his genetic and familial ambiguity is brought into a hostile environment where he is bullied and belittled throughout his childhood. As he grows older, however, Heathcliff discovers how to negotiate the behavior of those who treat him with hostility. He learns how to manipulate his adopted family and those who allow his ill treatment to go without reprieve. Heathcliff becomes a bitter, unagreeable character who works to manipulate those around him at all costs.

In Volume I of Brontë's novel, Heathcliff exercises his primary attempts at control on the earliest written generation of the Earnshaw and Linton families. His control is characterized by the manipulation of his adopted siblings through the favoritism of their father, his resentment that blooms in the face of alienation, and the period of his disappearance that marks the dawning of his newly adopted gentlemanly conduct. Heathcliff returns from an unexplained absence seemingly worthy of aristocratic ardor but falls into the routines of the Earnshaw lineage by overseeing the farm and remaining steadily within the middle class by usurping his drunken brother. In this foremost volume, Heathcliff also experiences the early pains of rejection in familial and romantic associations. In Volume II of *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff uses each asset available to him in order to make those around him as emotionally miserable as he is. The death of Catherine Earnshaw Linton spurs Heathcliff into a devastating phase of vengeance born out of grief. This desire to inflict pain impacts the newest generation inhabiting the moors: young Catherine Linton, Linton Heathcliff, and Hareton Earnshaw. The young people are manipulated by their elder into

relationships and brought into a cataclysmic situation set in motion by the loss of the senior Catherine. Heathcliff's vengeance toward Catherine for abandoning him and toward Hindley for his treatment in their youth spurs his actions forward and against innocent beings in the novel. His quest for revenge is even turned against his own son who dies in its wake. Yet, such a seemingly evil character is appealing to many readers because of his humanity, his emotion, and, ultimately, his vulnerability.

Heathcliff's engaging qualities are rendered through various levels of language throughout the novel. The levels of language are disguised through the multiple narrators who recount the years that encompass Heathcliff's life. Although not entirely reliable, the reader engages with the points of view the narrators offer to consider Heathcliff's experiences and draw empathy. Readers are intrigued by Heathcliff because of the ability to empathize with the pain he experiences and the actions he exacts in reaction to that pain; his reactions are a vehement response to humiliation and heartbreak and are characterized by anger. The novel is a tool containing emotion and inciting emotion, and the relationship between villainous protagonists and how readers empathize or are alienated by these characters can be explored through this medium. Further, Nietzsche's theoretical constructions of language creating reality paired with affect theory, emotion creating literature, is used to explore the relationship between how characters are written and how readers perceive them. In this context, the affectual relationship between reader and novel is created by complex elements of language within the novel that compose the components of the text a reader interacts with. *Wuthering Heights* is a canvas creating space for emotions formed by the author and characters alike to be present, as well as for readers to draw emotions from the characters and reflect their own emotions upon them. The characters within the novel generate the greatest impact when discussing the novel in terms of affect and language. Heathcliff becomes the nexus of this discussion. His lack of relation to the world around him and his strong emotional links to other characters in the story compose him as an empathetic and endearing character despite his moral pitfalls. Whether his actions be human nature or linked to philosophical truths regarding mankind, the affective nature of the language surrounding the character of Heathcliff and how readers perceive him becomes crucial in context with the discussion of empathy.

Emily Brontë's Ties to Passion

Heathcliff's passionate actions in *Wuthering Heights* are illustrated as key features of his identity. The struggle to create identity is a prevalent concern for the protagonist throughout the

novel as he suffers in the wake of lost attachments and treacherous relationships. The search for identity and the desire to understand its composition engage with Romantic conversations of metaphysics. Metaphysical concepts expressed through poetic forms in the Romantic era were concerned with having a foundation in the emotional as well as the logical. The *Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Romantic Period* shows, “The emphasis in this period on unlabored art and on the spontaneous activity of the imagination producing it, and the premium placed on the immediacy of the relationship between author and poem, are linked to a belief in the essential role of passion” (“Introduction” 16). Brontë reflects the “essential role of passion” in her novel. In the preface to the fifth edition of *Wuthering Heights*, editor Alexandra Lewis describes the passions at play in the novel. She writes, “Brontë shapes into being a landscape of passion so visceral as to be unforgettable, and the range of affect experienced by her characters is all-encompassing: from love and possession to violence and revenge to humility and peace, and back again” (Bronte ix). Brontë’s passion in the novel is reflected through the plot her characters navigate. This same plot produces passion within the novel amongst her characters and results in the creation of affectual bonds. The bonds between parents, siblings, and lovers are highly emotional. Emotion that is present translates from book to reader. These emotive responses and displays of passion serve as a foundation for the application of affect theory. Further, the passions in the novel that readers react to become indicative of the author’s relationship with the novel as well.

Much like the ambiguous character of Heathcliff, *Wuthering Heights*’ identification within the Romantic and Victorian periods is indistinct. Emily Brontë allows her novel to draw on conventions of both eras that, ultimately, strengthen her composition in form and structure. The qualities of the two literature periods featured in her work are incorporated due to the young woman’s education and experiences with pieces from the respective eras in her youth. Brontë is most well known for her singular novel *Wuthering Heights* as well as selections of her poetry that were published under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. Brontë’s youth was defined by the collective artistry of her and her siblings. In their formative years, the Brontë children were educated by their father. The Brontë sisters began their education, according to Brigid Lowe in her biography on Charlotte and Emily Brontë, at a school for poor clergymen’s daughters. Because of her sisters’ deaths following their departure from the school, Lowe writes that “Charlotte attributed the deaths in 1825 of her sisters Maria and Elizabeth to their stay there” (Lowe). The school was afflicted by incredibly poor living conditions and its state prompted Patrick Brontë Sr. to bring his children

home to receive their education. The education provided to the students at home emphasized poetry, history, and politics (Lowe). In Juliet Barker's *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry entitled "Emily Jane Brontë", she writes, "Unlike most parsonage daughters [...] the Brontës were not limited to a purely domestic role but were allowed to share their brother's academic lessons with their father, studying not only the Bible but also history, geography, and biography." Additionally, the Brontë children were given "unlimited and uncensored access to books, periodicals, and newspapers" that influenced composition of their own works and writings. Barker, in her encyclopedia entry, elaborates on Brontë's incorporation of elements from the writers who influenced the essential traits of her body of work. Her writing, she says, emphasizes "'essential passions' and 'elementary feelings' of human nature." Brontë was heavily influenced by Byron and Shakespeare, especially in childhood. In maturity, Brontë drew inspiration for her writing most prominently from the works of Wordsworth and Walter Scott. Her influences led to early tales characterized by the "melodramatic[,] [...] revenge, and death, she was already capable of writing with that combination of tender lyricism and deceptive understatement" (Barker). Brontë's poems, many detailing the fictional world of Gondal created in play with her siblings, expressed notions of political interest, love, rebellion, war, and exile. Stephen Greenblatt discusses Brontë's writing in his biographical entry on the writer in the *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Victorian Age*. He says, "Her personal lyrics "share[d] a drive to break through the constrictions of ordinary life, whether they be by the transfigurative power of the imagination, by union with another, or by death itself" ("Emily Brontë" 1329). It is emphasized that Brontë's "concerns with a visionary world links her to the Romantic poets, particularly to Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley" ("Emily Brontë" 1329). Her adoption of the style of Romantic poetry identifies her novel deceptively as a Romantic text despite being composed in the Victorian era. Although containing qualities of the two eras, Brontë distinctly draws on the characteristics of her Romantic forefathers while also incorporating key components of the Victorian era such as discussions of class standing through a consideration of material conditions, an acknowledgment of the various forms of social mobility within the novel, and Brontë's use of the frame narrative. The traits of these two literary periods bear significance in how Brontë's text interacts with affect theory and a discussion of language through the critical theory created by Nietzsche's philosophy.

Affectual and Linguistic Conditions

Affect theory focuses on how readers engage with a text on an emotive level. The text with which the reader interacts becomes a talisman for emotion. Patrick Colm Hogan in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia for Literature* rationalizes affect theory as being a gateway to the study of “fiction-inspired emotion and tragedy-based enjoyment.” He points to a simulation effect present within literature that produces the emotional appeal to the reader. The reader is given positive or negative feelings from the text he or she reads. Hogan says, “the functionality of simulation is inseparable from emotion.” The simulation yields two “paradoxical” results that reveal the intricacy of the human mind through the experience of reading. Hogan further explains, “First, we grieve over fictional events, thus events we know to be unreal. Second, we enjoy experiencing that grief” (Hogan). The complex emotions readers experience as they interact with a text resemble emotions felt in everyday life. Yet, experiencing emotions through the text allows for the progression of events to occur without risk to the reader. In *Ugly Feelings*, Shianne Ngai substantiates Hogan’s claim of the enjoyment of experiencing grief through the fictional world: “literature may in fact be the ideal space to investigate ugly feelings that obviously ramify beyond the domain of the aesthetic proper” (Ngai 2). In this context, literature becomes an ideal space to investigate negative emotions that question standards of aesthetic beauty or might provide new views on emotion in artwork. Ngai posits that these ugly “affective values” make literature “meaningful”; therefore, they are worth exploration and discussion (28). The negative emotions in literature are explored by various theorists and affective scientists. A foundational affective scientist who assesses positive and negative affect is Silvan Tomkins. His work examines the topic through a psychological lens, largely drawing on psychoanalysis as a basis for his research. Tomkins in his four volumes of *Affect Imagery Consciousness* surveys affective states, their causes, and their effects. His theories have been adopted by affect theorists over time to use in application of affectual interpretation of literature. It is from Tomkins’ work that affect theorists are able to create explanations of affect in literature. Such an explanation is provided by Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg in *The Affect Theory Reader* introduction “An Inventory of Shimmers.” The two define affect as “an impingement or extrusion of momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation *as well as* the passage [...] of forces or intensities. That is, affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body[...], in those resonances” (Seigworth and Gregg 1). In responding to literature, the moment of relation between the bodies is the reader sharing

emotion with the text. Further, the emotion one perceives in literature is created by various facets. Components of the text itself create the emotion. These components include qualities of the text such as characters, plot, and narrators. Readers affectively empathize with characters who are constructed as parts of the narrative landscape with which they interact. *Wuthering Heights* is a novel that reproduces Hogan's discussed simulation process for readers through its narrative landscape. Readers become enamored with the interweaving stories of the Earnshaw and Linton families. The readers find themselves invested in the lives of the characters and believe that they, too, are a part of the *Wuthering Heights* narrative. However, the narrative is constructed by the ugly feelings or negative affects Ngai discusses. Furthermore, the demonstration of these feelings through the medium of the novel and how the novel presents its affectual components warrants a discussion of the role of language within the work.

Nietzsche's critical theory specifically discussed in the context of "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense" focuses on how language constructs reality for subjects. In his philosophy, language is used to shape the truth. Because of the malleability of truth in language's hands, the ideal of absolute truth is a resulting illusion. Of truth, Nietzsche writes, "Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors which have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered metal and no longer as coins" ("On Truth" 891). Nietzsche proposes that because metaphors have been used in the place of truths so many times, they are now interpreted as truths rather than metaphors. Nietzsche's writings also contribute a commentary as to who influences the interpretation of the metaphors and their adoption as truth. The illusion of truth is a consequence of a series of power dynamics set in place by those who have been able to acquire a mastery of language. Those who have the mastery of a language have the ability to control how subjects perceive themselves and perceive others. Vincent Pecora declares in his article, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, Critical Theory," that the philosopher's works survey the "vicissitudes of power in modern experience, its simultaneous efficiency, ubiquity, and opacity" (106). The interpretation and translation of power through language is precisely the motivation that animated "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense." Further, in the "Maxims and Interludes" chapter of *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche offers additional insight into language constructions and how subjects perceive themselves. While offering postulations pertaining to human nature, Nietzsche's reflections are reminiscent of Heathcliff's journey to social literacy in Brontë's novel. Paul Kirkland, in "Nietzsche's Honest

Masks,” declares that Nietzsche displays brutal honesty in *Good and Evil* but somehow retains a text that is closed to shallow interpretation: “Nietzsche employs the mask of the most thoroughgoing honesty, declaring the most terrible truths, seducing honest and superficial readers to believe that they have penetrated his secrets, which remain consistent with their own enlightenment” (Kirkland 578). Through this statement Kirkland reveals that Nietzsche reaffirms the ability of the dominant group to shape the language because they believe it to be true, but others recognize its fallacy. As reality is shaped by language, the subject is thus a product of it. In *Wuthering Heights*, Nietzsche’s principles regarding language are most vividly demonstrated in Brontë’s characterization of Heathcliff throughout her novel. Heathcliff’s character is shaped by language that is controlled by the narrative delivered by the narrators Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean. In their recounting of Heathcliff’s tale, the narrators shape the reader’s perception of Heathcliff. In a further inspection of the novel, language is used to shape Heathcliff’s perception of himself. From being referenced in childhood as an “imp of Satan” to a “gipsy brat,” the young man grows into his brutish, evil descriptions (Brontë 32). After learning an association to his state as such would “degrade [Catherine] to marry [him],” Heathcliff is so affected by the power of language that he disappears from the moors to completely recompose his character so that it is more socially appealing (63). He gains control of language through this process. Returning from his mysterious travels, Heathcliff exercises his new-found literacy by meddling in the affairs of both the Linton and Earnshaw families in pursuit of revenge. The negative events that prompt Heathcliff’s change are placed in context with greater notions of language constructions and how one is shaped by his or her experiences. In sections 88-95 of *Beyond Good and Evil*’s “Maxims and Interludes” chapter, Nietzsche writes of the humanity of one who is deemed melancholy or one who has suffered trauma. In section 89 appears one of Nietzsche’s solemn truths: “Terrible experiences make one wonder whether he who experiences them is not something terrible” (94). This statement provides a framework for the application of Nietzsche’s philosophy to Brontë’s text. Heathcliff endures circumstances throughout the novel that cause him to pursue revenge. His experiences and associations create an affective value that impact him negatively. The negative impact is most clearly seen by degrading Heathcliff’s perception of his own image and creating a politically charged environment. Vincent Pecora comments on Nietzsche’s foresight into the reflection of the outside environment upon the self: “power is already inscribed in the language of self-reflection” (107). The language that is used is reflective of affective qualities and perceptions

of the self formed within it. Affect theory and the postulations posed by Nietzsche in his theory work in conjunction with one another to produce a comprehensive portrait of the text *Wuthering Heights* and its misanthropic and misunderstood protagonist.

Empathizing with Cruelty

Heathcliff is an empathetic character upon examination of the affectual linguistic conditions of Brontë's novel. An acknowledgement of the relationship between reader and character opens an emotional bond the two share, which is seen in *Wuthering Heights*. In *Empathy and the Novel*, Suzanne Keen defines empathy as a "vicarious, spontaneous sharing of affect, [that] can be provoked by witnessing another's emotional state, by hearing about another's condition, or even by reading" (4). Empathy is invoked through the process of sharing emotion. The novel serves as a channel to access this characteristic. The process of empathy is enacted in relation to characters in the novel and the circumstances they endure. Keen postulates empathy begins in "character identification and empathy felt for fictional characters[.] [It] requires certain traits (such as a name, a recognizable situation, and at least implicit feelings) but dispenses with other requirements associated with realistic representation" (68). Further, in her writing, Keen acknowledges that a reader does not have to like a character to empathize with his or her situation. She also recognizes that readers do not have to identify with a character in order to perform situational empathy (Keen 79). She writes, "character identification often invites empathy, even when the character and reader differ from each other in all sorts of practical, and obvious ways" (Keen 70). It is recognized that through empathy, readers form a sense of attachment to characters despite differences the reader may have from the character. In *Wuthering Heights*, a reader may find that they have many differences when compared with the novel's protagonist, Heathcliff. However, the imposing negative conditions Heathcliff experiences draws empathetic reactions from readers. Many of these instances where readers are able to create empathy for the cruel protagonist are found in Heathcliff's attachments that damage his well-being. His attachments are a universal condition with which many can empathize because they have experienced it, but readers who have not may read the novel to experience the affects as Heathcliff does.

Through the creation of attachments in the novel, readers see the source of Heathcliff's malice revealed. In Lauren Berlant's essay "Cruel Optimism," she discusses attachments that damage the psyche of a subject despite the subject perceiving the attachments as positive. The relation of attachment itself, "cruel optimism," is defined as being "compromised conditions of

possibility whose realization is discovered either to be *impossible*, sheer fantasy, or *too possible*, and toxic” (Berlant 94). The attachments are highly emotive, and subjects are invested in the preservation of their state. However, as Berlant acknowledges, the preservation of these attachments, even if proven to be toxic, also contributes to a preservation of the subject’s sense of self:

What’s cruel about these attachments[...] is that the subjects who have *x* in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being; because whatever the *content* of the attachment is, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject’s sense of what it means to keep on living in and to look forward to being in the world. (Berlant 94)

The subject forms their own identity around their cruelly optimistic attachment. The loss of the attachment would decimate the subject’s idea of what it means to be themselves. The loss would also take away the subject’s connection to the outside world and, therefore, reduce the ability to perform within social relations. In Brontë’s novel, Heathcliff’s cruelly optimistic relationship is created in the formative years of his life. The attachment that produces this affect upon the man is his strange companionship with adopted sister Catherine Earnshaw Linton. Formed in childhood, the two keep their peculiar bond through adulthood until Catherine’s untimely death. The relationship is emotionally damaging to each of the two, although one observes Heathcliff as the primary inheritor of the attachment’s yielded destruction. Catherine repeatedly hurts Heathcliff and shuns him, yet Heathcliff chooses to maintain his attachment to her. In what is perhaps one of the most canonical sections of dialogue from the novel, one sees Catherine’s exclusion of Heathcliff’s attachment. She tells Nelly Dean, “I’ve no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven[...] It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him” (Brontë 63). In this section of dialogue, Catherine denies the attachment between her and Heathcliff while simultaneously reaffirming it. In the words of Berlant, she sees the possibility as “*too possible*, and toxic” (94). The toxicity of the relationship for Catherine is rooted in the relationship’s inability to provide social mobility or further her social standing as Heathcliff is still perceived as “low” within the social order because of how others, specifically Hindley, treat him (Brontë 94). As time passes in the novel, the attachment between the two remains toxic. For

Heathcliff, the attachment is perceived as such by a reader because of his willingness to pursue it, the identity that he forms in it, and the damage it inflicts upon him.

Moreover, an examination of Heathcliff's attachment to Catherine brings into view another aspect of the cruel optimism Berlant presents. She says, "Cruel optimism is the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object in advance of its loss" (Berlant 94). The attachment a subject maintains may imply an object is to be lost through some means, may that be through death or dislocation. Catherine is the problematic object in Heathcliff's attachment, and the object is ultimately lost. One might argue she is lost first through marriage and then through death. Silvan Tomkins in *Affect Imagery Consciousness* reveals that Heathcliff experiences shame following his loss of attachment from Catherine in the novel. He says of humiliation: "Another major source of shame in interpersonal relationships is the loss of the love object, through separation or death. Not only is distress produced, but the head is hung in shame" (Tomkins 391). Heathcliff's identity becomes largely founded in the pursuit of revenge to quench his feeling of shame. This revenge is based out of a desire to rectify the actions of those which made him to be perceived as "low" and unsuitable to be Catherine's partner. Although amplified upon the time of her death, Heathcliff embarks upon his insidious plot once returning from his secretive absence. Heathcliff, while still infatuated with Catherine, works to make the moors a hellscape. He becomes the mortgagee for his drunken brother, and he manipulates Isabella Linton into an abusive marriage with himself, although Catherine has an initial hand in that interaction. The inward toxicity of the attachment with Catherine is reflected outwardly towards relationships with other characters. Ultimately, it is Heathcliff who suffers the most from the attachment to Catherine as it impacts his ability to function as a positive member of his society. The initial motivation for Catherine's abandonment of the attachment between her and Heathcliff impedes his future social development and is indicative of a larger issue regarding social class within the novel.

The novel's foremost identification as a Victorian novel warrants the discussion of tenets of the era's values within literature. Many of these values revolved around a discussion of social class and conditions; therefore, these values were reflected in the literature produced during that time period. Empowering her work through this common trope of Victorian literature, the idea of class within the novel is described as being "a tension between surrounding social conditions and the aspiration of the hero or heroine, whether it be for love, social position, or a life adequate to his or her imagination" ("Short Fiction and the Novel" 1036). The consideration of social and

material conditions in *Wuthering Heights* is shown through a class consciousness most vividly demonstrated through the characterization of the Linton and Earnshaw families. The Linton family is landed gentry who are well educated in appearance and have many farm workers and servants. In comparison, the Earnshaw family is upper class, but exist at the lowest level of this group. The family owns the farm they live on, but, from contextual evidence, it would seem the Earnshaws, Joseph, and Nelly complete the work on the farm. To simplify this explanation further—there is limited help available on the farm as the family is economically available to employ only so many workers and must perform the labor themselves. Nelly has worked in the home for the family since childhood, and Joseph is an older man who assists on the farm and around the grounds of the home. Neither are earners of wages on an impressive scale. Henry Staten in “The Return to Heath,” a chapter from his book on the Brontë family, George Eliot, and Nietzsche, informs readers of the class condition of the Earnshaw family. He says, “The Earnshaws are gentry of a rather rough variety, it is true, but gentry nonetheless” (Staten 135). Staten acknowledges Brontë’s emphasis on the material conditions of the family through their landowning ability. These details are integral in the Victorian novel as they reveal the material reality and living conditions for the characters or subjects within the novel. The Victorian era “is a society where the material conditions of life indicate social position, where money defines opportunity, where social class enforces a powerful sense of stratification, yet where chances for class mobility exist” (“Short Fiction and the Novel” 1036). Indeed, in Brontë’s novel, class mobility is revealed by multiple characters. The protagonist is a singular example of this aspect. Heathcliff begins his social journey at the bottom of the proverbial social ladder. Staten says of this experience: “Heathcliff begins at the absolute bottom of the social hierarchy: a non-white, parentless, nameless, vagrant child. Then at a stroke he is grafted onto a genteel family” (Staten 134). Although Heathcliff is treated in an unbecoming manner for a gentry-man by Hindley, he responds to this behavior by adopting a greater aristocratic polish than his brother. Staten writes of Heathcliff’s absence where his refinement is adopted: “out of a blank space in the text, he emerges once more as a gentleman” (Staten 134). Heathcliff returns from a mysterious absence having adopted behaviors befitting upper class men and begins to invoke those behaviors as a means to gain revenge against his adopted siblings. In the case of Heathcliff, class mobility is weaponized. Another character who shows the aspect of class consciousness is Catherine Earnshaw Linton. Catherine personifies social mobility by moving from the middle class to the upper class when she chooses to marry Edgar Linton. Isabella Linton

experiences the downward movement within social mobility as she marries Heathcliff and loses social status, rather than gains it, as her class was higher than his prior to their union. These instances within Brontë's novel reveal the larger effort of the novel to labor within constructions of the Victorian era. Her work's adherence and theorized redirections of the Victorian values contribute to a dialectic where philosophy is able to produce a discourse that questions set values within the novel amongst those that may be perceived of the work in modern day.

Embarrassed and Sad, He Lashes Out

Berlant's discussion of cruel optimism contributes to a larger philosophical discussion of melancholic language and humiliation behavior. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche posits several statements regarding the characterization of a villainous individual. He opens a discussion of why a subject might not operate well in a traditional societal setting. His statements bear connection to the loss of a cruelly optimistic attachment. The loss of the attachment is humiliating, hurtful, and leaves the subject feeling dejected. Nietzsche writes, "One begins to mistrust very clever people when they become embarrassed" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 94). In Nietzsche's view, which echoes Berlant's, a humiliated subject will withdraw from society and begin to mistrust his or her fellow man. In *Wuthering Heights*, this is a notion seen in action. Humiliation is an emotion that afflicts Heathcliff. When Catherine returns from her recovery at Thrushcross Grange, she embarrasses Heathcliff by debasing his appearance and attitude. She tells him, "Why, how very black and cross you look! and how—how funny and grim! But that's because I'm used to Edgar and Isabella Linton" (Brontë 43). Catherine, who has become accustomed to the upper-class lifestyle and appearances of the Linton family, does not take into account the treatment Heathcliff has endured at Hindley's hand during her absence. When Hindley condescendingly instructs Heathcliff to shake Catherine's hand, he says, "I shall not! [...] I shall not stand to be laughed at, I shall not bear it!" (Brontë 43). Further, he tells Catherine, "I shall be as dirty as I please" (Brontë 43). Catherine's newfound concern with appearance and social status creates a nadir of pain for Heathcliff in which he discovers that he is alienated from her newfound life. He finds that she is publicly repulsed by the lifestyle he has had to undertake by Hindley's instruction. Heathcliff's humiliation becomes a shame. He experiences these feelings because he perceives himself as an outcast within his social group. Tomkins writes of this phenomenon: "Social norms and ideologies are ordinarily supported by and are capable of evoking a total matrix of both positive and negative affects. Shame is but one of many affects which are enlisted in support of conformity" (412).

Within the novel, Heathcliff's shame is used as a vehicle to demonstrate his place as an other and his displacement within perceived notions of conformity.

The Politics of Alienation and Solitude

Heathcliff's place as other is indicative of the larger political landscape within the novel that he must face. In an interview for IPAK Centar, affective theorist Lauren Berlant explains the political foundation of affect theory: "Affect is a way of talking about the impact of the world on subjects in the way they try to assess their belonging to the world or their sense of relation to strangers and other humans through identification" (IPAK Centar 0:33-0:55). The theory demonstrates "how people experience attachment and the kinds of fantasies that mobilize their attachments to each other through different kinds of institutional affiliations or relation to abstractions" (IPAK Center 0:56-1:17). Affect theory provides an avenue for an evaluation of the power dynamics which afflict subjects and shape their emotions. The power dynamics associated with affect connect with Nietzsche's concepts of control over language and truth. In this context, the text of *Wuthering Heights* itself becomes an affective space for its own characters regarding the language that is used in shaping perceptions within and of the novel. In his own right, Heathcliff is an individual who does not belong to the world in which he is written. In the novel he must make his own place by force and by a series of transformations. Moreover, his attachments in the novel are fueled by emotions. Heathcliff is an affective character in composition. His emotions throughout the novel are volatile and palpable to the reader. Nietzsche's statements in *Beyond Good and Evil* pertain to the characterization of Heathcliff in Brontë's novel regarding his emotional composition. Of Heathcliff's ability to act out through emotion, Nietzsche writes of a similar aspect of human nature: "Heavy melancholy people grow lighter through precisely that which makes others heavy, through hatred and love, and for a while they rise to their surface" (*Beyond Good and Evil* 94). While others are impeded by the emotions of malice and affection, Heathcliff is empowered by them. They become his motivations in revenge and prompt his harsh behavior. Heathcliff's sardonic and cruel behavior results in further alienation within the setting of the novel.

Heathcliff's alienation engages with conventions of solitude and individualism that compose his identity as a Romantic hero. These two traits are based on the idea of the Byronic hero's ability to perform "self-sufficiency" ("Introduction" 19). Critics of the period have also discussed Wordsworth's self-sufficiency as a "self-made man" in *Lyrical Ballads* ("Introduction"

19). *Wuthering Heights* engages with these aspects in the form of its protagonist. Heathcliff, as hero of his own narrative, performs self-sufficiency throughout the novel. In his bid for revenge, Heathcliff's return to the moors in the first volume reveals traits of self-sufficiency that contribute to his solitude. In "Whose Injury Is Like Mine?" Emily Brontë, George Eliot, and the Sincere Postures of Suffering Men," Kevin Morrison suggests that Brontë's novel "track[s] the emergence of a wounded masculinist liberal subject" (271). The liberal, by Morrison's classification, is defined as "a set of concepts (including autonomy, liberty, the individual, and the public sphere) that both rely on and require the disavowal of obverse notions coded as feminine" (272). Heathcliff's self-sufficiency is most largely signaled by his transformation from described gypsy-brat to proprietor of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange and vindictive micromanager of the moors. A hint of Heathcliff's ability to control the moors is revealed upon the death of his brother Hindley. Nelly details to Lockwood of Heathcliff's accomplishment: "The guest was now the master of Wuthering Heights: he held firm possession and proved to the attorney[...] that Earnshaw had mortgaged every yard of land he owned for cash to supply his mania for gaming; and he, Heathcliff, was the mortgagee" (Brontë 145). Although Heathcliff's absence where he gained his wealth and new form of behavior is as entirely ambiguous as his origins, his ability to be able to fund his brother's gambling habit allows for the procurement of property. Heathcliff, as master of the Heights, sets himself, his home's small staff, and his nephew Hareton in solitude to protect themselves from the combatant forces of the outside world that might threaten his role as patriarch. As Morrison suggests, "The interpersonal and social power that men derive from their distress is facilitated by the insatiable demands for sympathy that their self-pitying performances compel from others and the resentment and self-righteousness that psychic pain fuels within them, facilitating their virulent reassertions of sovereignty" (Morrison 273). Heathcliff's journey to his position, and his journey that is continued throughout the novel where he strives to gain more power, is an individualistic passage that separates the protagonist from other characters within the novel.

Further, the solitude so often portrayed in the poetry of the Romantic era is represented by the loneliness of nature and removal from civilized society in *Wuthering Heights*. Brontë's novel is set in Haworth Moor where her narrator, Mr. Lockwood, describes the location to be "so completely removed from the stir of society" (Brontë 3). The initial description of the Heights itself is portrayed as "a perfect misanthropist's heaven" (Brontë 3). A misanthrope avoids human

contact, so the location of the story is relevant to a discussion of solitude especially when considering the misanthropic protagonist. Lockwood further explains that as a tenant of Thrushcross Grange, *Wuthering Heights* is “the solitary neighbor that I shall be troubled with” (Brontë 3). Readers see that through this setting the theme of solitude becomes a prevalent factor for Brontë’s characters. Lockwood’s initial characterization of Heathcliff is that he is “exaggeratedly reserved” (Brontë 3). However, Lockwood acknowledges the impact of the isolated landscape upon his landlord’s demeanor. He says, “I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of mutual kindness. He’ll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again” (Brontë 5). Throughout the novel, Lockwood learns of Heathcliff’s background and why his demeanor is presented in its reserved and hostile form. Lockwood’s education is informed by the narrator biases within the novel as well as the structure of the narrative itself.

Narrator Biases and Structures

The narrator biases of Brontë’s novel are revealed through constructions of language that are employed by Mr. Lockwood and Nelly Dean. The novel points to the majority of the narrative being told from Nelly’s point of view which Lockwood, in turn, relays to the reader. Through Lockwood’s recounting of Nelly’s tale, one is witness to the biases and language devices she employs. It is through these translations that Nelly’s brutality and villainy are revealed. In James Hafley’s article, “The Villain in *Wuthering Heights*,” the scholar proposes an alternative antagonist to Brontë’s canonical novel. He insists that the “celebrated novel has been consistently and seriously misread” where Heathcliff has been assumed the villain (Hafley 199). The thesis of his paper is indicated as: “Ellen Dean is the villain of the piece, one of the consummate villains in English literature” (Hafley 199). While Hafley acknowledges that readers have interpreted Nelly to serve as a foundation for normalcy in the novel whilst other characters bring forth chaos—Charlotte Brontë being one of the readers who agreed with this sentiment—Hafley argues that Nelly is the chaos that controls the moors. Hafley characterizes her recounting as a “sounding board of [her] viciousness” (201). Certainly, her apathy towards Heathcliff is demonstrated early in her tale. She tells Lockwood of Heathcliff’s introduction into the Earnshaw family. She says, “Miss Cathy and he were now very thick; but Hindley hated him, and to say the truth I did the same; and we plagued and went on with him shamefully” (Brontë 31). Her shameless admittance of misconduct towards her charge shows her early sense of emotional detachment from the young

man. As time progresses in Heathcliff's childhood, Nelly recounts an instance where the three siblings suffered from the measles. She admits to Lockwood that she did not treat Heathcliff with the most nurturing care during that time. She says that although he was dangerously sick, he was extremely grateful for Nelly's presence during his sickness. Unlike his siblings, he did not harass her for care, and he did not complain. However, Nelly tells Lockwood, "he hadn't wit to guess that I was compelled to [nurse him]" (Brontë 31). Nelly interprets the interaction between the two as being done out of duty or necessity; it is purely transactional. While Nelly's role as a nurse to the children requires she complete these duties, her bond and service to Catherine and Hindley seems more affectual. These early instances of malice within Nelly's actions reveal her bias against Heathcliff and motivating factors to influence Lockwood to form a negative opinion of his landlord. Henry Staten writes of Nelly's narratorial bias: "Nelly, who claims to be the only 'sensible body' in a world of people gone mad, is in fact a skillful storyteller [...]EB makes it evident beneath Nelly's imaginative overlays, [she] has compelled the imaginations of readers, as a consequence of which these readers have relegated her to a marginal role" (Staten 133). Hafley sees the narrative being told from Nelly's perspective as "her crowning act of villainy[...]—she will of course tell it so as to present herself in the genteel and upright role she fancies; she blames herself for what has happened only at times when she can be sure of his sympathizing with her; in the crucial instances she is silent, and we must watch, rather than hear, the role she plays" (204). Readers are given the opportunity to observe Nelly's exercise of power through the form of Brontë's novel where she gives voice to the members of the Earnshaw and Linton families as well as provides voice to herself.

Nelly's control is specifically presented through the narrative she relays to Mr. Lockwood through the use of the frame narrative. Although the novel itself is one large story, there are multiple stories taking place at once. In this capacity, the novel adheres to the Victorian convention of "contain[ing] a multitude of characters and a number of plots, setting in motion the kinds of patterns that reveal the author's vision of the deep structures of the social world" ("Short Fiction and the Novel" 1036). Readers are first introduced to Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* by the character of Mr. Lockwood. Lockwood's place in the present provides readers with a glimpse at the current condition of the Heights in the novel, as well as an opportunity to learn the inhabitants of the abode. Well before learning of their birth in later chapters of the novel, the opening chapter, and a specific advantage of the frame narrative style, begins introducing—two of the novel's many characters—

Catherine Linton Heathcliff and Hareton Earnshaw. The story of Hareton and Catherine Linton “plays itself out on a parallel, but secondary, plane with that of Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw” (Staten 133). Zillah, the Heights’s current housekeeper, is present for Lockwood to become acquainted with, as well as Joseph, who is a caretaker for the grounds. The strange conduct of these individuals beguiles Mr. Lockwood, and he is entranced by the mystery that is Wuthering Heights. Specifically, he becomes interested in its current patriarch, Heathcliff. In his quest to understand Heathcliff’s strange, reclusive behavior, Mr. Lockwood turns to Thrushcross Grange’s housekeeper, Nelly Dean, for rationalization. The explanations Nelly provides are told through the tale of the Earnshaw family’s growth from adolescence to adulthood and through the second generation. Through her role as story teller, Nelly Dean serves as a secondary narrator within the frame narrative. The novel is arranged so that multiple plots are occurring; however, Brontë has cleverly used the convention in her own manner by placing the plots in sequence with one another to create the frame. Her use of the large number of characters contributes to the longevity of the work and the ability of the plots to be able to span across a narrated long period of time. Staten asserts that the use of Nelly’s voice as narrator is “evoked in a complex, savagely ironic way because the dull nervous system and fatuous sensibility of Lockwood has[sic] registered their story so inadequately, at his level of the telling, with so incomparably less feeling than even Nelly Dean—and, nevertheless, this entire tale is, indeed, registered for us on his perception, ghosts and all” (171). The vehicle of the narrative through the retelling to the audience by Lockwood is first translated by Nelly Dean. Her thoughts, biases, and morals invade the narrative she constructs. Furthermore, the reflection of her morals and beliefs reflect her own experiences such as encounters by characters with supernatural forces.

Brontë’s Romantic roots are emphasized by several key characteristics demonstrated in her novel, the use of the supernatural being one of these. The supernatural is a theme in *Wuthering Heights* that is repeatedly seen in relation to the protagonist. The most common link between the supernatural and Heathcliff is the spiritual appearance of Catherine Earnshaw Linton. In the first volume of the novel, the reader witnesses the misanthropic Heathcliff force his tenant Mr. Lockwood to lodge in Wuthering Heights overnight while a winter storm passes. During his overnight stay, Mr. Lockwood, after reading Catherine’s diaries from her youth, seemingly encounters her ghost in the window. A child’s face and an ice-cold hand reaches towards him through the windowpane and commands, “Let me in—let me in!” (Brontë 21). As the tenant

screams in horror, Heathcliff is drawn to the chamber to mourn for the ghost of Catherine in an “agony [...] beyond [Lockwood’s] comprehension” (Brontë 24). Heathcliff pitches the window open and begs for the ghost to return to the estate, but he is met only by the wind. Through further reading of the novel, it is learned that Heathcliff’s grief stems from the trauma of Catherine’s death. At the time of her bereavement, Heathcliff begs for a supernatural connection to her. He pleads, “You said I killed you—haunt me, then! The murdered *do* haunt their murderers, I believe—I know that ghosts *have* wandered on earth” (Brontë 130). In her writing, Brontë acknowledges and incorporates elements of the supernatural. The romantic convention is included as a tool to express grief within her narrative. It is especially poignant in expressing the connection between Heathcliff and Catherine. One might characterize this connection as being undying due to how he discusses it in his dialogue and how Brontë has chosen to write it. The unyielding nature of the relationship shows the connection between romantic bonds and familial, which creates a larger discussion regarding familial impact in the novel.

Sibling Rivalry, Drunken Fathers, and Trauma

Heathcliff’s origin of trauma is created not only by his affective attachments, but it is also created by trauma inflicted within the family setting. Henry Staten describes Brontë’s novel as a “struggle for domination among her various actors” (132). The labeled “struggle for domination” begins from the feud between Heathcliff and Hindley, as well as Heathcliff’s strife with Edgar Linton (Staten 132). Many critics of the novel have viewed Hindley as a villain. His identification as such comes with the proposal of alternative antagonists such as Nelly. Whereas Nelly’s identification within this role is through language and action, Hindley’s manifests directly through action. Of this notion, Staten says, “Hindley, not Heathcliff, originates the dialectic of vengeful sadism in *Wuthering Heights*. After his wife’s death he becomes the original model of Gothic brutality in the novel, after which, clearly, the adolescent Heathcliff – who as a child has no visible inclination to violence – shapes himself” (141). In a sense, Hindley and Heathcliff become reflections of each other. The two suffer the same negative experience—the loss of an affectual attachment—that plays a part in the shaping of their identity and code of behavior. Each reacts unwell to the loss also. Nietzsche comments on the reactionary nature of individuals in *Beyond Good and Evil*, specifically the inherent preference of the individual to practice violence and anger in retaliation to negative affects that are practiced towards him: “So cold, so icy one burns one’s fingers on him! Every hand that grasps him starts back! – And for just that reason many think he

is glowing hot” (*Beyond Good and Evil* 94). Brontë demonstrates Nietzsche’s idea in action through Heathcliff’s behavior. Heathcliff learns to defend himself in an environment that breeds his subordination, and his defense is established as violence against violence—a form of self-defense or self-preservation in a setting that wishes to control him.

Heathcliff is a product of the environment he must survive in. From birth to adulthood, Heathcliff struggles against the cruelty that is imposed against him within the Heights. Hindley is one of the largest sources of negativity that produces Heathcliff’s own destructive behavior. Hindley’s malice towards Heathcliff is described as a jealousy for their parent’s love and of the favored treatment the adopted boy receives. Nelly speaks of Hindley’s anger: “the young master had learnt to regard [...] Heathcliff as a usurper of his parent’s affection and his privileges, and he grew bitter with brooding over these injuries” (31). The treatment Heathcliff receives in his youth from Hindley is the initial stimulus that drives the protagonist into seclusion. The ill conduct of Hindley is damaging to Heathcliff’s self-perception and his ability to interact with others. In Heathcliff’s teens, Brontë writes of his experience as an outsider because of his treatment. Nelly describes Heathcliff’s mental and physical deterioration: “[His] personal appearance sympathized with mental deterioration; he acquired a slouching gait, and ignoble look; his naturally reserved disposition was exaggerated into an almost idiotic excess of unsociable moroseness; and he took a grim pleasure, apparently, in exciting the aversion rather than the esteem of his few acquaintances” (Brontë 53). Solitude blooms out of Heathcliff’s maltreatment, and his own callousness and cruelty take shape as a reflection of his brother’s. His brother’s treatment affects more than Heathcliff as well.

Gerald McCaughey in “An Approach to *Wuthering Heights*” considers Hindley’s place as the perpetrator of trauma within the novel. McCaughey upholds Hindley as the epicenter of the violent events within Brontë’s work. Of the events he discusses, he finds particularly disturbing the incident in the novel where a drunken Hindley carries young Hareton to the top of the staircase and drops him. However, his plan is thwarted as “Heathcliff arrived underneath just at the critical moment; by a natural impulse, he arrested his descent, and setting him on his feet, looked up to discover the author of the accident” (Brontë 58). Hindley commits the action of dropping his child with intent to kill him, but, as McCaughey states, “Heathcliff is the instrument of its [Hareton’s] salvation. While Nelly records this act as though Heathcliff regretted it, we cannot escape the obvious significance in Heathcliff being cast in this role of Savior” (235). McCaughey’s assertion

reiterates the unnatural, negative behavior Heathcliff has been trained to exhibit within the setting of the novel. Brontë herself describes his actions to save the boy as “a natural impulse” which clashes with Nelly’s biased depiction of the event that suggest Heathcliff regrets having saved the child from his paternally inflicted doom (Brontë 58). McCaughey asserts that through the abuse Hareton and Heathcliff share at Hindley’s hand, “Hareton finds Heathcliff an ally against the bullying of his own father” (McCaughey 235). McCaughey, through his article, continues an evaluation of the traumatic environment inhabitants of the Heights endure. He notes that, “On Heathcliff’s return, while it may be helpful to his desire for revenge, we cannot escape the truth that Hindley is utterly degenerate by this time. Even his motives in inviting Heathcliff to stay are bad, remembering he is anxious to both recoup what amounts to a fairly limited gambling loss at this time, and to grasp a thoroughly unnecessary rent” (McCaughey 235). Hindley, in an attempt to reconcile his abuse of his finances, uses Heathcliff as an end to this means while Heathcliff develops a strategy that will ultimately allow his victory over his adopted brother. Heathcliff, like Hareton, is portrayed almost as if he is Hindley’s abused child who has returned to avenge his past treatment, even if this vengeance is not done physically. Tomkins writes of the imitation or replication from hostility that parents teach children; it is a concept performed through the medium of Brontë’s novel by her characters. He says, “One of the prime ways of teaching the child to respond with disgust is to show him much disgust” (Tomkins 421). Hindley employs much disgust towards both Hareton and Heathcliff. It is only natural that both of the two men learn to emulate the eldest’s behavior. Further, the learning of Hindley’s behavior is not practiced in complete adherence by either secondary party. However, Heathcliff, seeing the genetic connection between Hindley and Hareton and seeing the resemblance between himself and the boy, is incredibly cruel towards him. Heathcliff’s cruelty, though, is rarely manifested through physical violence towards Hareton or any other character. Instead, physical aggression is performed against himself, and the intimacy that should be present towards his son Linton Heathcliff, who is delivered to be raised alongside Hareton, is personified instead as a willful negligence and the cycle of imitation is perpetuated once again through his child.

Killing Linton Heathcliff

Heathcliff practices a malicious disregard against his ailing son Linton Heathcliff. This disregard seals his son’s fate in tribute to his revenge plot. The neglect Heathcliff performs is a reproduction of the same behavior that was executed against him throughout his adolescence by

Nelly and Hindley. The protagonist is nurtured through callousness and debasement with an expectancy that his consequential behaviors will typify the masculine and yield independency. Within the relationship between Heathcliff and his son, one sees the trauma of his neglect reflected within the behavior he enacts against his child. Linton Heathcliff is viewed by his father as a fragile, sickly charge. Brontë describes Linton as a “pale, delicate, effeminate boy, who might be taken for [Edgar Linton’s] younger brother” (153). Rather than gaining the gypsy-like features of his father and his harsh attitude as well, Linton is partial to the lineage of his mother, Isabella Linton. His resemblance to the Linton pedigree certainly fuels Heathcliff’s dislike of the young man. Linton is often left in sickness without a doctor, he is manhandled by his father and cousin, and he is threatened with violence if he does not successfully complete his part in his father’s revenge plot. Upon Heathcliff and Linton’s first encounter, Heathcliff describes his account of his son. He says, “I do regret [...] that he so little deserves the trouble. If I wished any blessing in the world, it was to find him a worthy object of pride, and I’m bitterly disappointed with the whey-faced whining wretch!” (Brontë 160). With Linton’s perceived worthlessness, the relationship the two form is largely based out of Heathcliff’s need to use Linton as a connection to the Linton family. The young man becomes a chess piece in Heathcliff’s elaborate play for revenge. Discussing the relationship between Heathcliff and his son, Henry Staten also incorporates conversations of narratorial bias within his evaluation of the novel: “[Emily Brontë] makes Heathcliff’s treatment of Linton seem less monstrous than it would appear in any less tendentious realism, not only by making Linton objectively as loathsome as an innocent child can well be, but by having Nelly viscerally second Heathcliff’s loathing of his son. Nelly shares Heathcliff’s revulsion” (Staten 153). In consequence to the unwelcoming attitudes of those around him, Linton himself, during his stay at Wuthering Heights, becomes increasingly inhospitable in attitude and unwell in health. His treatment of his cousin, young Catherine Linton, who holds him in such high esteem, becomes exceedingly degradational. Linton’s actions in the novel are shaded as childish pettiness and selfishness. A vicious cycle of manipulation and abuse is present among the moors. Hindley perpetrates the initial abuse against his young adopted brother, and Heathcliff, in turn, practices the violence against Linton and himself. Linton’s continuation of the sadistic patterns the family exhibits is broken by his death. For Heathcliff, following the death of his son as well as before, his violence is manifested against himself and defines his relationship with his own identity.

Vengeful Sadism Against the Self

The vengeful sadism Hindley creates becomes Heathcliff's defining characteristic as he grows older within the novel. A reader sees this sadism being perpetrated against himself. Of this notion, Henry Staten suggests, "Emily Brontë keeps the unabated force of Heathcliff's mourning always at work, sometimes offstage, for a long time expressed as vengeful sadism" (133). The behavior Heathcliff exhibits is in an effort to earn a place within society after being shunned from it by his siblings and, ultimately, to demonstrate how Catherine's choice to marry Edgar Linton and her death are factors that have driven him to his cruel state. Heathcliff sacrifices his values and personal nature in pursuit of a revenge that he believes will quench the longing that has formed within his soul throughout years of toxic attachments and mistreatment. The sacrifice Heathcliff has subjected himself to is sustained by abstaining from unnecessary physical violence and maintaining his attachment to Catherine after her death. The upper-class persona he created for himself was designed for Catherine rather than him, and the pursuit of her as well as her loss prompts him into cruel patterns. Heathcliff's lack of outward bodily violence is a noticeable characteristic when compared with other characters upon the moors. Staten discusses Heathcliff's lack of physicality: "He never tries to retaliate physically against Hindley, and even after his expulsion from the household, when Nelly paints him as a little savage, he responds to Edgar's contempt not by striking him, as Catherine will do [...], but by throwing a tureen of hot apple sauce at him" (Staten 141). Often, it is Heathcliff's words that speak louder than his actions as the physical actions he executes are commonly committed through an indirect manner, such as Staten's referenced apple sauce bowl incident. Additionally, Staten sees the relationship between this violent incident and Heathcliff's behavior as being linked to the influence of an outside force: "Nelly herself had casually suggested to Heathcliff before Edgar arrived that he was small and a sissy and Heathcliff could 'knock him down in a twinkling'. Nothing is more natural [...] than Nelly's attitude, but there is a distinct mismatch between the objective nature of the apple sauce incident and the way she shades her portrayal of Heathcliff in relation to it." (Staten 141). Staten's comments link to the discussion of narratorial bias within the novel and exhibit how Nelly's language has the ability to shape Heathcliff's perception of himself as well as his actions. Her influences encourage the young man to conduct an act that is out of his character, and this incident serves as a catalyst or model for further events like this to occur.

Brontë's novel is infused by various incidents where Heathcliff displays violence towards the self. His self-violence is most frequently depicted as the striking of his own body or the application of a non-bodily object upon himself in reaction to events caused by others. One of the primary instances where his violence towards his own body is demonstrated occurs moments before his call to Catherine's ghost to return to the window when Lockwood stays overnight at the Heights within the first chapters of the novel. In reaction to Lockwood's admittance of perusing Catherine's diaries, he tells the man, "How—how dare you, under my roof—God! he's mad to speak so!" (Brontë 23). After this section of dialogue, he "struck his forehead with rage" (Brontë 23). His violence towards his own body continues throughout the novel—or throughout the narrative, rather—in this same fashion but escalates. Heathcliff punishes himself physically directly following Catherine's death. Rather than using his own body to complete the violence, however, he uses an object outside of himself. Following Nelly's announcement of the death to Heathcliff, she narrates that "he dashed his head against the knotted trunk; and lifting up his eyes, howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast getting goaded to death" (Brontë 130). Heathcliff, often deemed a violent character, is most violent to himself. His self-inflicted violence is his greatest interaction with the negative affects of the novel, and they afflict him greatly. Heathcliff experiences shame-anger in depressive scripts. Tomkins characterizes an individual who suffers from this condition as "exhibitionistic and also demanding, but he will work hard and long to keep the loving eyes of the other on himself. His disorder is self-limiting and episodic because he is excessively vulnerable to fall from the state of grace whenever he loses the love and respect of the other" (821). Having already lost the love of the other, Heathcliff has suffered the fall from grace Tomkins references and is coping through revenge in reaction to its occurrence. Heathcliff does perform his vengeful actions in a grandiose manner towards himself and others, but they are driven and have specific goal: to become the sole proprietor of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. However, throughout every action he commits in pursuit of his goal, one remains aware of his motivations for the acquisition of the properties and remains empathetic to his situation. Suzanne Keen discusses why Heathcliff's negative behavior and negative feelings become scenes of empathy for the reader. She says, "empathetic responses to fictional characters and situations occur more readily for negative feeling states" (Keen 72). Keen's statement is consistent with Shianne Ngai's conclusions about the inclusion of ugly feelings within literature. By including the ugly feelings or negative affects within the artform of the novel, readers have the ability and are

more likely to empathize with characters who exhibit or engage with negative feelings. Further, Keen explains, “Empathy with a situation responds to plot as much as to character, though it often finds its focus in a character’s feelings” (Keen 79). Certainly, Heathcliff’s actions towards other characters are indicative of his feelings and may cause a reader to vilify the protagonist. However, it is his violence against himself that reveals the deep-rooted trauma and disappointment the protagonist has learned to cope with, and, further, his actions against himself reveal the pain the human experiences he has suffered have produced in his current state.

Conclusion

Emily Brontë’s Heathcliff is a character who is reflective of the emotional behaviors of humankind in reaction to mortal experiences of pain, heartbreak, and humiliation. How readers and other characters within the novel perceive Heathcliff’s behavior is influenced by the language of the novel itself. The association between Heathcliff’s behavior and larger ideas of psychological and philosophical ideas reveal his relatability and the capacity of the reader to empathize with the unkind man and prompts an evaluation of the novel’s affective values within its linguistic qualities. The novel suggests that the villainous protagonist is a product of the environment he is exposed to, whether his production is through his relationships, developed trauma, or the language that is used to describe him and those that he interacts with. Of this aspect of the novel, Gerald McCaughey conjectures, “if Heathcliff’s methods have appeared to be brutal and callous and causing of destruction, then let us remember that the destruction was inherent in those destroyed and he merely served as the agent” (240). Undoubtedly, Heathcliff achieves much of his plan for revenge through his acquisition of the properties of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, as well as his assumed guardianship of Hareton Earnshaw, Linton Heathcliff, and Catherine Linton. Although gained through manipulative methods, Heathcliff’s revenge is performed against characters who are initially unkind to him and unfortunately affects an innocent generation of the Linton and Earnshaw families. At the conclusion of the novel, Heathcliff is presented with the opportunity to complete his revenge against his adopted brother and sister by punishing their children, however, he does not. He tells Nelly, “when everything is ready, and in my power, I find the will to lift a slate off either roof has vanished. My old enemies have not beaten me; now would be the precise time to revenge myself on their representatives: I could do it; [...] But where is the use?” (Brontë 244). Heathcliff suddenly begins to entertain an apathy for his revenge plot. After seeing Hareton and Catherine together, he sees his own past reflected upon them. Within

Catherine, he sees his own Catherine mirrored. Within Hareton, he sees Catherine in his appearance, but he perceives himself in the young man's life experiences.

The development of Heathcliff's newfound affectual ties to his niece and nephew, although self-reflective, mark a turn away from the pursuit of revenge. Heathcliff declares, "I have lost the faculty of enjoying their destruction, and I am too idle to destroy for nothing" (Brontë 244). In a return to the philosophy of Nietzsche, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, he questions, "Who has not for the sake of his reputation – sacrificed himself?" (94). This statement demonstrates a parallel nature to Heathcliff's characterized behavior within his final days among the moors. Rather than upholding his reputation as the unyielding and cruel master of his two properties and his young charges, he becomes emotionally distant from the inhabitants of the Heights, more socially approachable, and he ceases his plot for revenge. Heathcliff prepares for death to join his beloved Catherine in the churchyard and relinquishes his earthly devices to prepare for his impending "change" (Brontë 244). The volatile character of Heathcliff is quickly altered by the promise of a reunion with the singular being who made an effort to understand his thoughts and feelings throughout his life with disregard to the negative aspects of their interactions. Heathcliff's complex idea of his own selfhood is entangled with the identity of Catherine Earnshaw Linton and the attachment the two share. Seemingly guided by her spirit to his death, Heathcliff embraces death with a smile and a "gaze of exultation" (Brontë 254). The aftermath of his existence allows the youngest generation of the moors to flourish after years of cruelty and vindictive behavior. Yet, Mr. Lockwood understands Heathcliff's place as an instrument of the positive occurrences that have developed and upon his viewing of the man's grave articulates, "I lingered round them [...] and wondered how any one could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth" (256). It is through the concluding moments a reader has with Heathcliff in the novel that the complexity of his character is further revealed, and his behavior is further opened for empathetic interpretation. Heathcliff's place as one of the canonical protagonists of British literature creates a discussion concerning the composition of a sadistic or cruel protagonist and how characters such as these function within the realm of popularized literature. An interpretation of his character prompts similar evaluations of villainous protagonists in literature throughout time to redetermine and redefine their affective value within the traditional novel.

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Redefining My Voice: ‘Casting A Patronus’ to Guard Against the ‘Dementors’ of Traditional Academic Discourse

Paige Enlow

When I was a young girl, I kept a diary — my first. It was one of those small ones with a picture of a golden retriever puppy, a lock, and a tiny metal key attached to a pink ribbon that I begged my mother to purchase for me at the yearly G.C. Burkhead Elementary School Book Fair. I was absolutely in love with that diary; I thought it was the cutest book I had ever seen, and since I now physically possessed it, I figured I had ought to start writing in it. Thus, began the start of my short-lived career as a creative writer.

At first, I didn’t really know quite what I should do with it. I remember asking my father what I should write about in my new diary, and he immediately responded with, ‘Write about your day—what happens to you.’

I thought that sounded quite boring, so I resolved to ask my mother.

When I asked her the same question, she thought for a moment, then said, ‘Write about how certain things make you feel. Write about the people you meet, the encounters you have, the events in your life, and how those make you feel. Write about *you*.’

I decided that I liked her idea best, so I did what she recommended.

At that point in my life, I wrote about everything. I wrote about my friends at school, the sleepovers I had, which of my friends just got their first boyfriend (and, of course, my jealousy over it). I wrote about my endless stream of crushes on boys in my classes, fights I had with friends, the time I spent with family, in church, on road trips, at camp; that time my second grade teacher, Mrs. Laux, refused to let me go to the bathroom during lessons even though I *desperately* needed to, and I ended up peeing in my pants, resulting in the entire class making fun of me for a week...and through all of the laughter, embarrassment, fun, and pain, I never failed to write about what I *thought* of these situations and how they made *me feel*. I had a voice.

I know this story seems out of place, and maybe you’re sitting there reading this, and you’re thinking, “*Why is she writing about this? Why is she writing like this?*” Your alarm is expected and also understood; I am writing in the first person, I’m using *contractions* for God’s sake, and

there isn't a hint of formality in my tone to be seen anywhere. I cringe as I hear some of my professors in the back of my mind, chanting in unison as I write this: "*This does NOT fit the listed criteria for acceptable, professional, academic writing! What are you doing, Paige!?*"

Maybe you share the same opinion as them. Maybe this is uncomfortable for you to read, and maybe it doesn't make an ounce of sense to you, but, I implore you, it is crucial to the essence of this paper, of this minute glimpse into my mind and heart, that you see that little girl in *your* mind, with her golden-retriever diary and her no. 2 "Chubby-Buddy" pencil, and understand the role that academic discourse—which so many bright-eyed students place their faith in, and (ofttimes)well-meaning instructors endeavor to preserve and enforce—estranged her from my life—made her and I all but strangers.

It killed her, at least I *believed* it did.

As a result of that event, this piece is my wholehearted struggle to reconnect with her, to resurrect that facet of my personhood which I had long since abandoned: *my* voice.

In fact, since my integration into high school at the age of fourteen, I was suddenly and violently ripped away from the personal writer's voice I had begun to develop in childhood, and it was quickly and forcibly replaced by a colder, more mild tone of voice. I and my classmates were taught to "...maintain a distanced and detached tone, cite outside authority, and [write] in response to previous academic writing..." (Bridwell-Bowles 351).

We were instructed as young and steadily maturing academics to remove our emotions and personal assertions from all of our writing—the very form of writing which I had patiently courted in the seven years since I had obtained that adorable and individually influential little diary—and instead adopt a new mindset and academic voice, which in many ways feels as if I am a marathon runner running in stilettos, rather than practical tennis shoes: uncomfortable, anxiety-inducing, and just painfully awkward.

I discovered quite quickly that this style of writing was not crafted to suit my needs as a young writer. I struggled in high school to get a solid grip on it, and later when I ventured into the overwhelming authority of college academic discourse, I continued to struggle, but, ultimately (and to my delight), with more successes.

Of course, even now, with significantly more proficient, sometimes bordering on distinguished, utilization of said patriarchally-structured pedagogical colloquy, the exercise of writing and operating within it is still just as soul sucking in its process.

I recall, at one instance during the spring semester of my freshman year, relating one of the academic papers I was required to write in my Pathophysiology course to a Dementor from *Harry Potter*, and, henceforth, whenever I would relent and work on it, it felt as though a Dementor were giving me “the Dementor’s Kiss,” sucking my soul right out of my body.

I often wished in those moments that I had the ability to cast a *Patronus*, a positive and personal manifestation of individual desires of hope, happiness, and a powerful will to live, which would guard me from the depressing and desperation inducing effects of the Dementor-like paper.

As you can see through this specific instance, I abhorred academic discourse and the expectations it demands because it was so painfully uncomfortable for me, like forcing my limbs to bend in unnatural directions and shapes, and also because I couldn’t manipulate it as craftily and effortlessly as some of my other classmates.

As a result, because I struggled so greatly for so long to write in academic discourse, (and still continue to do so) I felt as though I was, for lack of better word, a complete and utter dunce.

By this point, I had been conditioned to believe that “...academic ‘standard’ language [was] the key to [my] success, perhaps even the key to [my] very survival...” throughout the course of my academic career (Bridwell-Bowles 351). I placed my utmost faith and devotion in it; I believed that committing my time and effort into mastering the machinations of higher “academic standard language” would catapult my successes as a student that much further.

No longer am I blinded by such naïve and foolish optimisms.

The harsh reality I have only recently discovered in the last year of my (current) sixteen subsequent years of academic experience is that the ‘patriarchal, phallogentric’ form of academic discourse established as the standard in the classroom has only hindered and neglected my mental and literary maturation as a woman.

The academic prose we are so familiar with was crafted by men for men, in an environment that was not thoughtful of, nor was it concerned with, the language which women may wish to employ to express their innermost thoughts and opinions.

This certainty is made most apparent in my interactions with other young women in my classes, when we discuss the expected tone of our academic essays, the rhetoric of our readings, the nature of our assignments, it is so painfully clear to us all that *we* were not made for academia's standard of speech and writing anymore than it was designed for *us*.

The very nature of patriarchal academic discourse deprived me of my individuality as a writer for much of my academic career, and to a degree, my freedom of thought as well. This form of dialect considered by many to be the "...highest form of language, the true language, of which all other uses of words are primitive vestiges..." forced me into a "public-private dichotomy," resulting in the development of the "dual voice" Tompkins writes in (Tompkins 173).

Academia conditioned me into feeling shame and embarrassment in the acknowledgement and incorporation of emotions, of my "self," into the quintessence of my writing in the academic discourse, instead forcing me to abandon my individualistic writer's voice for something more cold and detached from the reality of the human experience.

I, like Tompkins and many other women familiar with the consequences of academic discourse, gradually developed "two voices inside [of] me," one I used for "respectable" discourse. It writes my essays, my emails; it delivers my presentations; it speaks with my professors and classmates regarding course content, always with a polite, cool, detached tone. This voice is sure of itself, confident, aggressive, but typically in a condescending manner (Tompkins 169).

My other voice, on the other hand, I reserve for the most private of exchanges. It is the voice I use to talk through household issues with my family, discuss personal matters when I hang out with my friends, contemplate with my boyfriend the future of our relationship, converse with my therapist, and even orders food for me. This voice is the antithesis of the first, and attached to it are all of the emotions, insecurities, and anxieties that come with my personal existence.

Indeed, I consider both to be facets of my innermost self, existing simultaneously and at regularly and varying intervals, as if they are whole and separate individuals who have taken up residence in the furthest recesses of my psyche.

My “public” voice bullies my “private” voice, beating it into submission. It chokes that voice with one firm hand while writing my academic discourse with the other, preventing even the slightest escape of an idea—a breath of a word—from leaving the recesses of my heart.

Likewise, after assiduous deliberation over the state of my conscious, I have deduced that this “public” voice is the source of my overly self-depreciative nature. It always seems to be lurking in the corner of my mind, ready to compare any word, thought, or action to that phallogocentric mode with which I am so familiar. It forces me to compare myself and my work to my classmates’ and friends’; it follows me from class to class, mocking me when I struggle to fully grasp a concept or just barely miss the mark on an assignment; it is constantly whispering in my ear as I write those traditional academic essays, “If you do not fully grasp this concept and apply it to the text accordingly, then you are hopeless. If you cannot do at least that, then you will never amount to anything beyond this campus.”

”*No more...*” I think, “*I’m done.*”

I endeavor from now on to cease attending to that “public” voice so frequently. Rather, in light of the spirit of this essay, I elect to break away from the traditional mode of writing in patriarchal academia (when deemed appropriate, for I can’t abandon it altogether—I have a degree to obtain first!) and, instead, write in a tone of voice which serves to give shape and form to the thoughts, feelings, and concepts which the dominant discourse fails to accurately transcribe.

Now that I am finally trekking beyond said traditional academic discourse and gingerly dipping my toes into the figurative waters of the unknown, I’m not ashamed to admit that I *am* scared and uncomfortable. But...not for the reasons you may first assume.

You see, I’m frightened, not just because I’m heading into new and mostly uncharted territory, but because of how surprisingly euphoric and addictive it feels to do so. I haven’t felt this free, this empowered through *my own writing* in years.

At this point, I have written 1,985 words in a matter of four hours, and the complete shift in voice and tone I am witnessing, the metamorphosis of a young girl with her golden retriever diary and “Chubby-Buddy” pencil as she grows and matures into the mentality of a bolder, more emotionally-definite and authorially confident woman is quite astonishing to me.

In light of this newfound empowerment that laid dormant within my subconscious and the exhilaration which pairs so effectively with it, I'll confess, I dread tomorrow. Tomorrow when I am required to replace the "straightjacket" of academic discourse back on my body and write in that dreaded manner which seems to suck the soul out of me.

At this moment, I am finally beginning to discover my own voice, I'm just now memorizing and familiarizing myself with the sound, and I fear that when I must inevitably change course and journey back into that sea of restriction, of unbearable *silence*, that I will forget how to listen for that voice.

I don't want to lose sight of her her—or worse yet forget her-- after just rediscovering her.

This is the harsh reality of the effects of academia on the mind and spirit. My loss of individuality and the disconnect apparent in my experience with patriarchal discourse is perpetuated by the fact that in Western schools of thought, emotion and the personal have no place in academia, nor do they have a role in the attainment of higher knowledge.

Because, in the West, women are encouraged—no *expected*—to exist in society as beings of pure, emotional drive, and men, on the other hand, are socially conditioned to repress said emotions, then any dominant discourse which "...excludes emotions from the process of attaining knowledge radically undercuts women's epistemic authority" (Tompkins 170). In this manner, academic prose has barred women from the conversation, and not only women, but any individuals of varying races, genders, and classes who do not belong to the established dominant discourse.

This is why the dominant discourse of academia is so damaging—it chokes off any opposing and alternative schools of thought. It denies the self, the individual, and it "others" the use of emotion and all which consists of the human condition. This is why there is a necessity for experimentation in a new variation of writing in academia and in the classroom.

Marginalized peoples especially are filled with emotional and impactful thoughts and experiences; these profound narratives require more personal, individualistic, and alternative forms of writing which diverge from the established impersonal and "distanced" prose of academic discourse.

Clearly, the traditional model of writing and its neglect of emotion and the individual experience does not do them justice. In fact, the discourse of traditional academic discourse was born of privilege, meaning that only a miniscule portion of people can benefit from it (i.e. the straight, white, middle-class man).

I will state this here and as clearly as I can, for I do not believe I have explicitly expressed this accordingly thus far in my writing:

My focus in this essay is to assist in generating a conversation surrounding the effects of phallogentric academic discourse on gender, and to further contribute to the theoretical construction of an alternative discourse in response to that, for I believe that the one which we are now forced to operate within is insufficient, and only caters to a significantly small percentage of individual narratives.

Bridwell-Bowles is surely correct in her assertion that “If we are to invent a truly pluralistic society, we must envision a socially and politically situated view of language and the creation of texts—one that takes into account gender, race, class, sexual preference, and a host of issues that are implied by these and other cultural differences” (Bridwell-Bowles 349). Before we may even begin the conception of such an alternative form of academic discourse, we must first take into consideration the various values, creeds, and languages which embody the core of each individual discourse community.

In theory, if we desire to communicate new ideas and modes of thinking about patriarchal termed “other” experiences, in spite of the dominant discourse of the society we live in, then we must first institute a new and innovative model of language that can exist firmly and coherently outside of the dominant, patriarchal confines of academic discourse as a separate entity.

Furthermore, to reiterate, to initiate this process we as a society must “share languages,” which will allow us to begin to understand the commonalities in the “patriarchal oppression” we experience, while simultaneously highlighting and maintaining the differences of such.

I should highlight now that it should not be assumed that I am insinuating that the establishment of a singular, feminist discourse community will provide the same level of creative liberty and freedom of expression to people of differing genders, races, classes, and sexualities from myself. Quite the contrary actually.

Here and now, I am writing as a woman writer. I am not presenting myself as “THE Mythic Woman” or even “THE Mythic WHITE Woman.” Rather, I am continually and concurrently writing as a young, white woman of a typical middle-class background, with a multitude of individualistic thoughts, feelings, connections, and complex emotions which I desire to express in academic discourse, unconfined.

Obviously, I cannot and will not presume to write on behalf of nor even begin to understand the unique and individual experiences of women of color in our society, nor will I claim that my experimental form of writing will serve their narratives and empower their writer’s voices as efficiently as I feel it has mine. Bridwell-Bowles captures the essence of my position thusly: “We [as human beings] write as individuals participating in various discourse communities. We are social beings, from different racial and ethnic communities, not just two-dimensional versions of ‘Woman’ [or of ‘Man,’ trying to ‘write like a woman’]” (Bridwell-Bowles 358).

As I alluded to briefly in a previous paragraph, it is crucial to the development of alternative feminist discourse communities that, congruently, I, a young, white woman of middle-class background, and many other individuals heralding from other discourse communities both unique and separate from my own, share our inner voices with each other, seeing and recognizing our similarities, but also taking care to retain our differences and the significance of those. When conducted respectively, thorough and meaningful “[a]nalyzes of race, class, gender, language, and sexual preference allow possibilities for all writers who want to create their own divergent, alternative discourses” (Bridwell-Bowles 361).

Ultimately, and rather frustratingly, this endeavor seems near impossible with the lack of appropriate tools we have at our disposal, for how can a patriarchal discourse birth a feminist one? How can we use the “master’s tools” to deconstruct “the master’s house?” The truth of the matter is “...we are working within a patriarchal, racist, and classist culture and using a patriarchal, racist, classist variant of language to try to define something outside the culture” (Bridwell-Bowles 353).

This is why I feel like my writing here, and others with the same goal in mind, are pivotal in the realization of such a reality. I disagree with Ripoll’s notion that “...the demolition of the straitjacket [of patriarchal discourse], is an impossible project” (Bridwell-Bowles 354).

The dismantling of such a colossal and dominate literary force is extremely difficult to envisage, especially when such an authority is potent and all-encompassing with the exercising of its influence, particularly within the context of higher-thinking and academia. The swift execution of this movement, at the present, is practically impossible with the lack in variations of language outside of the milieu of the pre-established patriarchal discourse.

Truth be told, there doesn't have to be a swift and sudden take down of academic writing, nor does there have to be an already well-established form of discourse within which we may operate to do so. In actuality, we can begin the slow and steady process towards achieving our desired manifestation of academic discourse through the infusion of the "self," the innermost voice, into our writing.

Likewise, my show of defiance against the traditional form of academic prose in higher education within the composition you are reading now is, I like to believe, a step, albeit a small one, in the right direction. I'm not sure in which direction it is taking me, but I am positive that anywhere is better than the place in which we have been trapped for so long.

So, when considering the intent and context of all I have absorbed and reflected on in this essay, I have determined that I don't care if my writing or my personal voice is interpreted as "cliché," "too emotional," or "too personal" to certain individuals.

In fact, the insertion of the very tones, prose, and language, as well as the incorporation of an obscure and academically unrecognized formatting style, both of which are criticized and policed so heavily by very discourse whose purpose and occupation in the academic sphere and higher education I am attempting to challenge is, in and of itself, the suggestion of provocation.

So, why would I *not* weaponize such concepts in my written opposition of said dominant patriarchal academic discourse?

In conclusion, the creative liberty I have consistently been awarded with throughout this academic engagement has been of the most self-fulfilling and liberating I have experienced in the last three years of my college career. Indeed, I sense that I have been able to interact with the feminist literary works of writers such as Jane Tompkins and Lillian Bridwell-Bowles now more than ever, and on a much more intimate and personal level, allowing me to place myself within

the context of their writing, eliciting a deeper and more impactful understanding of the their words and rhetoric in relation to my own personal and individual life experiences.

I celebrate now, here in my mind, that I was able to reconcile with that little girl, clinging to her golden retriever diary and “Chubby-Buddy” pencil.

I celebrate because I have reestablished my individuality, my voice.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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