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Simulacra

By Rachel Brown

Department of Art and Design

Abstract

The concept of simulacra is most known for its discussion of images, signs, and how they relate to contemporaneity. Jean Baudrillard, a French philosopher, claimed that our current society has replaced all reality and meaning with symbols and signs, and that human experience is a simulation of reality. The simulacra that Baudrillard refer to are the significations and symbolism of culture and media that construct perceived reality, as well as the acquired understanding by which our lives and shared existence are rendered legible. He believed that society has become so saturated with these simulacra, and our lives so saturated with the constructs of society, that all meaning had been rendered meaningless by being infinitely mutable. Baudrillard called this phenomenon the “precession of simulacra.” In layman’s terms, it means that everything meaningful in our lives has been reduced to—or replaced by—symbols and signs, and this has had a profound impact on our culture.

I wanted to draw something about this concept. I used black Copic ink pens and cool grey and neutral grey Copic markers to draw a gorgeous woman, her hair full of contemporary signs and symbols. She is ultimately beautiful and full of meaningless meaningful symbols. I chose to draw a woman because, to me, women are symbolic of the image itself, while men often stand for the power of text, the written word. In Leonid Shalin’s book, *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess*, he proposes that before the written word, ancient cultures worshipped a female deity and held up the right-brained feminine values of the image, the symbol, and the fertility of the natural world. It wasn’t until the development of the alphabet that a radical shift in consciousness towards more masculine left-brained values took place. Shalin writes that with our culture’s shift to image dominance through photography, video, and the internet, humankind is transitioning into its next stage. Thus, I chose to depict a woman, herself a symbol of the Goddess, surrounded by symbols. She hearkens a new era, the era of women, the era of symbols taken to the extreme, the era of Simulacra.



(Cover Image)



Rachel Brown is a junior at Missouri State University studying art, creative writing, and Spanish. For the most part, her work is driven by reading, traveling, and spirituality. Her goal is to create something new, colorful, and full of symbols and meaning, and to tell a story that only she can tell. She strives to breathe life into paint and to become fleetingly godlike in that harmonious moment of creation.

Diversity, Abundance, and Vertical Segregation of Algae in Two Ozark Reservoirs

By **Lauren Bansbach**
Department of Biology

Abstract

Algae are important in lakes both as primary producers and for impacts on water quality. Several factors influence the community structure of algae, such as nutrient levels, herbivory by zooplankton, and light availability. Thus, the species composition may greatly vary spatially within a lake. I examined algal community structure in two Missouri reservoirs in September 2011. McDaniel Lake in Greene Co. (area of 1.12km², mean depth of 4.9m) is a drinking water source for Springfield. Bull Shoals Lake in Taney Co. (area of 182.7km², mean depth of 23m) is a large reservoir built for flood control and power generation. I assessed vertical segregation of algae by identifying and counting algae from three depths (at the surface, above the thermocline, and below the thermocline) for each reservoir. I identified a total of 54 genera. I calculated a Shannon-Weaver diversity index to compare diversity and abundance between each depth and overall. McDaniel Lake (47 genera) exhibited higher diversity than Bull Shoals Lake (31 genera) among all factors tested.

Introduction

Algae play many important ecological roles affecting aquatic food webs, nutrient cycles, and human affairs. They are primary photosynthetic producers and provide food for zooplankton and thus provide the energy base of many aquatic ecosystems (Graham et al. 2009).

Phytoplankton ecology is highly relevant to human activities and understanding the diverse functions of algae and the ways humans affect the populations is crucial since algae contribute greatly to global ecology and provide numerous economic benefits to humans. Specifically, algal diversity is an important concept to study because as primary producers in aquatic food webs, changes in species diversity arising from global climate change, nutrient pollution, and other influential human disturbances can have significant and

possibly detrimental effects to ecosystems. An important goal of algal research is to better understand these roles of algae and how algal communities respond to environmental change. Tracking this community composition and species diversity can illustrate changes. As there are an estimated 36,000 to over 10 million algal species worldwide (Graham et al. 2009), understanding the importance and interactions of these species is a vital component of aquatic biology.

While one or more algal species is often dominant in a community, many rare species are nearly always found among them (Wetzel 1983). In theory, niche overlap should competitively exclude the less dominant species, but instead, algae maintain a multi-specific equilibrium, often referred to as the “paradox of the plankton” (Hutchinson 1961). Thus, algae diversity is much higher than expected based on traditional mathematical calculations. This is likely due to a number of factors. For competitive exclusion to occur, physical conditions must be relatively constant or uniform. In most lakes, however, this is rarely the case, except in warm, still summer conditions of a eutrophic lake when cyanobacteria often outcompete other algal groups. For the majority of the year in most lakes, more efficient resource utilization is too small for competitive exclusion to occur before conditions change again (Wetzel 1983). Another factor affecting algal diversity is herbivory by predators. Greater consumption of a competitively advantaged species promotes higher diversity overall (Wetzel 1983).

Planktonic algae consist of a wide array of taxonomic groups, many with different physiological requirements and varying responses to physical and chemical changes in light, temperature, and nutrients (Wetzel 1983). However, great diversity of algae can coexist in a single water volume (Wetzel 1983). This species composition changes spatially and seasonally as environmental conditions change over a year or over the course of a water body’s existence (Wetzel 1983). Many of these changes, both temporary and permanent, have been well studied by aquatic ecologists.

Vertical distribution of phytoplankton is strongly related to available light (Wetzel 1983). Light limitation restricts productivity and increased algal biomass further restricts productivity by self-shading (Wetzel 1983). Productivity by volume increases as fertility of lakes increases. However, if productivity is measured by square meter of water column (vertically), this increase is not proportional. Thus, the light extinction coefficient is increased further by increased algal biomass (Wetzel 1983).

One heavily studied factor influencing algal populations and productivity is nutrients. Because algal biomass generally increases with increased nutrients, especially phosphorus (Tilman et al. 1982), the nutrient levels in each reservoir may affect the algal diversity and abundance. The sample sites for this project are McDaniel Lake and Bull Shoals Lake. Between the years of 1978 to 1984, McDaniel Lake typically had total nitrogen of 0.55mg/L and total phosphorus

of $54\mu\text{g/L}$ (Jones and Knowlton 1993). This produces a nitrogen to phosphorus ratio (N:P) of about $10\mu\text{g/L}$. Bull Shoals Lake, however, had roughly $9\mu\text{g/L}$ total phosphorus and 0.21mg/L total nitrogen (Jones 1993). This produces a N:P ratio of about $23\mu\text{g/L}$. Thus, phosphorus is more limited in Bull Shoals Lake.

This project examines the abundance, diversity, and vertical segregation of algae in McDaniel Lake and Bull Shoals Lake, two freshwater reservoirs in southwest Missouri. Because the most useful measures of species diversity consider both the number of species (richness) and the distribution of individuals, the analysis calculates a Shannon diversity index. Because McDaniel Lake has higher levels of phosphorous and nitrogen, I hypothesized that McDaniel Lake would have a greater diversity of algae overall. In addition, I hypothesized that the lowest diversity region will be below the hypolimnion in Bull Shoals Lake at 12m depth where the light is lowest.

Methods

Sample Sites

McDaniel Lake is located in Greene County, MO (USGS) about 7 miles north of Springfield (pop. 160,000). McDaniel Lake is a monomictic, eutrophic drinking water reservoir built in 1929 by impounding the Little Sac River (Youngsteadt 2005). Average depth is 4.9m with a maximum depth of 10.4m and a surface area of 1.12km^2 (Youngsteadt 2005). Depth samples were collected on 15 September 2011 at 1pm. Sunlight was roughly 40% with high winds and a Secchi depth of 1.2m. Figure 2 shows a temperature and dissolved oxygen depth profile down to 7m for the lake this day.

Bull Shoals Lake is located in 5 counties of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas (USGS). Bull Shoals has a surface area of 182.7km^2 , an average depth of 23m, and a maximum depth of 64m (USGS). The lake was created in 1951 by the Army Corps of Engineers by impounding the White River (USACOE 2010). Depth samples were collected on 17 September 2011 at 2pm at the K-dock Marina. Figure 3 shows a temperature and dissolved oxygen depth profile down to 16m for the lake this day. There were high winds, 0% sunlight, and constant rain. Secchi depth was 1.4m. Figure 1 shows the locations of McDaniel Lake and Bull Shoals Lake relative to each other.

Sampling Procedure

Samples were collected in the afternoon within two days of each other from each lake using a Kemmerer bottle. Samples were taken at three depths: surface (0m), right above the thermocline (2m for McDaniel Lake and 8m for Bull Shoals Lake), and below the thermocline (4m for McDaniel Lake and 12m for Bull Shoals Lake). Samples were preserved with Lugol's iodine immediately after collection. In addition, a depth profile was taken at each site the day of sampling using a YSI Model 58 dissolved oxygen meter. Secchi depth was mea-

sured and weather conditions were recorded.

Identification and Counting

Samples were counted using an inverted microscope and 10cm³ Utermöhl chambers. Sample was settled for at least 24 hours in the Utermöhl chamber prior to counting. Thirty random fields were chosen for identification and counting. Two replicates for each depth sample were counted. Thus 60 random fields were counted per depth sample per lake.

Algae were identified to genera with the help and expertise of Dr. Russell Rhodes and *Freshwater Algae of North America* by Wehr and Sheath (2003).

Results

McDaniel Lake exhibited a higher algal diversity than Bull Shoals Lake both overall and for each depth sample. This includes a higher Shannon diversity index value and a higher number of genera identified. Tables 1-8 list all the genera of algae identified for McDaniel Lake and Bull Shoals Lake for each depth sample and the total for each lake. In McDaniel Lake, a total of 47 genera were identified, whereas in Bull Shoals Lake, 31 total genera were identified. For each depth sample, surface and above and below thermocline, McDaniel Lake had almost double the amount of genera compared to the respective Bull Shoals samples. These total genera values are summarized in Table 10.

A Shannon diversity index, H' , was calculated using Excel for each depth sample per lake. Tables 1-8 show the H' diversity value. This value was found by summing the products of the proportion of each genus and the base-10 logarithm of this proportion of each genus. This equation can be written as:

$$H' = -\sum p_i \log(p_i),$$

where p_i is the proportion of each genus out of the total genera for that data set (Bower et al. 1998). A higher total value corresponds to higher diversity, taking into account both species richness and evenness. McDaniel Lake consistently had a higher diversity value than Bull Shoals for all depth samples and overall. Table 9 summarizes the diversity values found for each depth per lake. All diversity values for McDaniel Lake were at least 0.2 greater than Bull Shoals. For the total diversity across all three depth samples, McDaniel had a value of roughly 1.42 compared to 1.17 for Bull Shoals.

Discussion

McDaniel Lake overall has higher diversity and abundance of algae than comparable samples from Bull Shoals Lake. A Shannon diversity index was calculated for both lakes, and the McDaniel Lake values are consistently higher. The Shannon diversity index is typically used when the data are a random

sample of species abundances from a larger community or sub-community of interest (Brower et al. 1998). The Shannon index takes into account species richness and the proportion of species within a zone. Thus, this is an appropriate measure of diversity because the sampling procedure used here procures a random sample of algae genera from a larger aggregation at each depth in each lake. As a whole, McDaniel had a whole lake diversity value of 1.4238 whereas Bull Shoals only had a value of 1.1704. These values are close, though, so it is not reasonable to say that McDaniel has significantly more diversity than Bull Shoals. In viewing the samples under the microscope, though, it was clear that McDaniel had a higher concentration of algae. During the 30 random fields of the microscope, some from Bull Shoals had very few to no algae at all, whereas in McDaniel, there were always algae in the field of view.

However, analyzing these values separately is also of use (Bower et al. 1998). Richness is simply the number of species (or genera in this case) present. Table 10 summarizes the total genera for each depth sample and the total for each lake. As with the diversity value, McDaniel Lake consistently has a higher value. Bull Shoals had a total genera of 31, whereas McDaniel had 53. This translates to McDaniel having 170% more genera than Bull Shoals when combining all three depth samples.

This higher overall diversity for McDaniel Lake is potentially related to the depth samples retrieved. Because light attenuation increases exponentially with depth, less algae are typically found in deeper waters of eutrophic reservoirs like these. The deepest value for McDaniel was only 4m, whereas in Bull Shoals, the deepest value was 12m. Twelve meters deep receives very little light in comparison to the surface waters. Although the depth values were roughly the same places relative to the thermocline of the lake, they are vastly different relative to light attenuation.

However, the depth of sampling is not the only contributing factor to lower algal biomass. Watershed use and internal and external nutrient loading both can contribute greatly to algal biomass.

One reason that McDaniel Lake exhibits higher diversity may be the higher amount of nutrients present for algal consumption. The relationship between phosphorus concentration and chlorophyll from numerous bioassay experiments suggest that phosphorus and sometimes nitrogen and silicon are limiting resources for algal growth and reproduction (Tilman et al. 1982). Phosphorus has been demonstrated to increase algal biomass and proportions of additional nutrients affect the algal species composition (Tilman et al. 1982). Further still, many studies have demonstrated patchiness in nutrient and algal distribution in pelagic lake environments, showing spatial and temporal heterogeneity (Tilman et al. 1982). This is due to depth gradients of light, nutrients, and temperature, as well as smaller-scale changes due to fish excretions or organismal decay (Tilman et al. 1982). All these factors contribute to each algae

cell or colony experiencing varying amounts of resources at any given time. In McDaniel Lake, the significantly higher concentration of total nitrogen and phosphorus allows algae more nutrients for growth and reproduction and thus reduces the likelihood of a nutrient limiting population growth. In Bull Shoals, however, total nitrogen and phosphorus levels are much lower, so algae may be limited in their growth.

Beyond the total concentration of these nutrients, the nitrogen (N) to phosphorus (P) ratio is also important to algal growth. Bull Shoals has a higher N:P ratio than McDaniel, indicating that phosphorus may be more of a limiting nutrient for the algae in Bull Shoals. Because cyanobacteria are equipped with heterocysts to “fix” atmospheric nitrogen, they are favored in lower N:P ratios. In Bull Shoals, roughly 23% of algal genera identified were cyanobacteria. In McDaniel Lake, about 26% of genera were cyanobacteria. Although this difference is small, it is consistent with the trend that cyanobacteria dominate in more nitrogen-limited waters (lower N:P ratio).

Conclusion

McDaniel Lake and Bull Shoals Lake are two drinking water reservoirs in the Ozark highlands of southern Missouri with varying nutrient levels and algal assemblages. McDaniel Lake has a higher diversity of algae genera at the surface, above and below the thermocline, as well as overall. In addition, McDaniel Lake has a larger number of total genera overall and at each of these depths. This is likely influenced by the higher nutrient availability in McDaniel Lake and a lower N:P ratio that can favor cyanobacteria. In general, Bull Shoals is a deeper reservoir with less diversity, less overall nitrogen and phosphorus, and with phosphorus as more of a limiting nutrient, which has been most directly linked with chlorophyll concentration and thus, indirectly, algal abundance. Diversity of algae is influenced by a number of factors, including nutrient availability, light, temperature, and herbivory by zooplankton and other bacteria. Because of the many important ecological roles algae play in aquatic ecosystems and heavy economic impacts of harmful algal blooms, examining the diversity and community structure of algae is critical for effective lake study and management.

Table 1. Abundance and diversity of algae at 0m depth in McDaniel Lake, 15 September, 2011.

Depth of 0m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Cyano	Anabaena	4	6	10	0.0294	-1.5315	-0.0450
Cyano	Aphanizomenon	3	1	4	0.0118	-1.9294	-0.0227
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	25	21	46	0.1353	-0.8687	-0.1175
Diatom	Asterionella	2	3	5	0.0147	-1.8325	-0.0269
Flag.	Ceratium	1	4	5	0.0147	-1.8325	-0.0269
Green	Chlamydomonas	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Green	Chlorella	31	14	45	0.1324	-0.8783	-0.1162
Cyano	Chroococcus	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Green	Closterium	2	0	2	0.0059	-2.2304	-0.0131
Green	Coelastrum	4	3	7	0.0206	-1.6864	-0.0347
Green	Cosmarium	5	5	10	0.0294	-1.5315	-0.0450
Green	Crucigenia	3	13	16	0.0471	-1.3274	-0.0625
Flag.	Cryptomonas	1	6	7	0.0206	-1.6864	-0.0347
Diatom	Cyclotella	7	3	10	0.0294	-1.5315	-0.0450
Cyano	Cylindrospermopsis	0	1	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Diatom	Cymbella	2	2	4	0.0118	-1.9294	-0.0227
Cyano	Dactylocopsis	5	5	10	0.0294	-1.5315	-0.0450
Green	Dictyosphaerium	1	5	6	0.0176	-1.7533	-0.0309
Diatom	Dinobryon	0	7	7	0.0206	-1.6864	-0.0347
Flag.	Dysmorphococcus	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Flag.	Euglena	4	2	6	0.0176	-1.7533	-0.0309
Diatom	Fragilaria	0	3	3	0.0088	-2.0544	-0.0181
Green	Kirchneriella	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Cyano	Lyngbya	1	1	2	0.0059	-2.2304	-0.0131
Diatom	Melosira	5	2	7	0.0206	-1.6864	-0.0347
Cyano	Merismopedia	3	8	11	0.0324	-1.4901	-0.0482
Cyano	Microcystis	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Green	Mougeotia	1	4	5	0.0147	-1.8325	-0.0269
Diatom	Navicula	0	1	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Green	Oocystis	0	3	3	0.0088	-2.0544	-0.0181
Cyano	Oscillatoria	16	30	46	0.1353	-0.8687	-0.1175
Cyano	Pseudoananbaena	1	2	3	0.0088	-2.0544	-0.0181
Cyano	Raphidiopsis	0	2	2	0.0059	-2.2304	-0.0131
Green	Scenedesmus	4	5	9	0.0265	-1.5772	-0.0418
Green	Schroderia	1	0	1	0.0029	-2.5315	-0.0074
Green	Selenastrum	4	3	7	0.0206	-1.6864	-0.0347

Green	Staurastrum	1	2	3	0.0088	-2.0544	-0.0181
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	0	2	2	0.0059	-2.2304	-0.0131
Diatom	Synedra	3	3	6	0.0176	-1.7533	-0.0309
Green	Tetraedron	5	0	5	0.0147	-1.8325	-0.0269
Flag.	Trachelomonas	11	7	18	0.0529	-1.2762	-0.0676
Totals	41 genera	161	179	340	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							1.3556

Table 2. Abundance and diversity of algae genera at 2m depth in McDaniel Lake, 15 September, 2011.

Depth of 2m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Diatom	Acanthoceras	2	3	5	0.0186	-1.7308	-0.0322
Cyano	Anabaena	6	7	13	0.0483	-1.3158	-0.0636
Green	Ankistrodesmus	1	0	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	22	10	32	0.1190	-0.9246	-0.1100
Flag.	Ceratium	1	1	2	0.0074	-2.1287	-0.0158
Green	Chlorella	7	5	12	0.0446	-1.3506	-0.0602
Green	Coelastrum	12	1	13	0.0483	-1.3158	-0.0636
Green	Cosmarium	3	3	6	0.0223	-1.6516	-0.0368
Green	Crucigenia	12	5	17	0.0632	-1.1993	-0.0758
Flag.	Cryptomonas	6	5	11	0.0409	-1.3884	-0.0568
Diatom	Cyclotella	1	2	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Cyano	Cylindrospermopsis	4	5	9	0.0335	-1.4755	-0.0494
Diatom	Cymbella	1	0	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Cyano	Dactylococopsis	5	14	19	0.0706	-1.1510	-0.0813
Green	Dictyosphaerium	4	7	11	0.0409	-1.3884	-0.0568
Diatom	Dinobryon	0	2	2	0.0074	-2.1287	-0.0158
Flag.	Euglena	0	1	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Diatom	Fragilaria	2	1	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Green	Kirchneriella	0	1	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Green	Lagerheimia	2	1	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Diatom	Mallomonas	1	2	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Diatom	Melosira	0	5	5	0.0186	-1.7308	-0.0322
Cyano	Merismopedia	10	12	22	0.0818	-1.0873	-0.0889
Green	Mougeotia	4	1	5	0.0186	-1.7308	-0.0322
Diatom	Navicula	2	1	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Green	Oocystis	0	1	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Cyano	Oscillatoria	10	20	30	0.1115	-0.9526	-0.1062

Cyano	Pseudoananbaena	5	0	5	0.0186	-1.7308	-0.0322
Green	Scenedesmus	4	7	11	0.0409	-1.3884	-0.0568
Green	Selenastrum	1	2	3	0.0112	-1.9526	-0.0218
Green	Staurastrum	1	0	1	0.0037	-2.4298	-0.0090
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	1	1	2	0.0074	-2.1287	-0.0158
Diatom	Synedra	1	1	2	0.0074	-2.1287	-0.0158
Green	Tetraedron	5	2	7	0.0260	-1.5847	-0.0412
Flag.	Trachelomonas	1	3	4	0.0149	-1.8277	-0.0272
Totals	35 genera			269	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							1.3515

Table 3. Abundance and diversity of algae genera at 4m depth in McDaniel Lake, 15 September, 2011.

Depth of 4m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Diatom	Acanthoceras	2	3	5	0.0211	-1.6758	-0.0354
Cyano	Anabaena	8	10	18	0.0759	-1.1195	-0.0850
Green	Ankistrodesmus	3	2	5	0.0211	-1.6758	-0.0354
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	8	5	13	0.0549	-1.2608	-0.0692
Flag.	Ceratium	1	0	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Green	Closterium	1	1	2	0.0084	-2.0737	-0.0175
Green	Coelastrum	2	2	4	0.0169	-1.7727	-0.0299
Green	Cosmarium	7	4	11	0.0464	-1.3334	-0.0619
Green	Crucigenia	5	3	8	0.0338	-1.4717	-0.0497
Flag.	Cryptomonas	2	0	2	0.0084	-2.0737	-0.0175
Diatom	Cyclotella	0	1	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Cyano	Cylindrospermopsis	7	4	11	0.0464	-1.3334	-0.0619
Diatom	Cymbella	0	1	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Cyano	Dactylococopsis	9	17	26	0.1097	-0.9598	-0.1053
Green	Dictyosphaerium	2	3	5	0.0211	-1.6758	-0.0354
Diatom	Dinobryon	3	4	7	0.0295	-1.5297	-0.0452
Flag.	Euglena	1	5	6	0.0253	-1.5966	-0.0404
Green	Kirchneriella	0	1	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Green	Lagerheimia	2	0	2	0.0084	-2.0737	-0.0175
Diatom	Mallomonas	1	2	3	0.0127	-1.8976	-0.0240
Diatom	Melosira	2	6	8	0.0338	-1.4717	-0.0497
Cyano	Merismopedia	9	7	16	0.0675	-1.1706	-0.0790
Green	Mougeotia	6	3	9	0.0380	-1.4205	-0.0539
Diatom	Navicula	2	1	3	0.0127	-1.8976	-0.0240

Diatom	Nitzschia	0	2	2	0.0084	-2.0737	-0.0175
Green	Oocystis	0	1	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Cyano	Oscillatoria	13	16	29	0.1224	-0.9124	-0.1116
Cyano	Pseudoananbaena	2	1	3	0.0127	-1.8976	-0.0240
Cyano	Raphidiopsis	0	3	3	0.0127	-1.8976	-0.0240
Diatom	Rhizosolenia	1	0	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Green	Scenedesmus	4	11	15	0.0633	-1.1987	-0.0759
Green	Selenastrum	1	3	4	0.0169	-1.7727	-0.0299
Green	Staurastrum	1	1	2	0.0084	-2.0737	-0.0175
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	0	1	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Diatom	Synedra	1	0	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Green	Tetraedron	1	5	6	0.0253	-1.5966	-0.0404
Flag.	Trachelomonas	1	0	1	0.0042	-2.3747	-0.0100
Totals	37 genera			237	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							1.3688

Table 4. Abundance and diversity of algae genera for combined 0m, 2m, and 4m depth in McDaniel Lake, 15 September, 2011.

Combined depths of 0m, 2m, and 4m					
Type	Genera	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Diatom	Acanthoceras	10	0.0118	-1.9274	-0.0228
Cyano	Anabaena	41	0.0485	-1.3146	-0.0637
Green	Ankistrodesmus	6	0.0071	-2.1492	-0.0152
Cyano	Aphanizomenon	4	0.0047	-2.3253	-0.0110
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	91	0.1076	-0.9683	-0.1042
Diatom	Asterionella	5	0.0059	-2.2284	-0.0132
Flag.	Ceratium	8	0.0095	-2.0243	-0.0191
Green	Chlamydomonas	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Green	Chlorella	57	0.0674	-1.1715	-0.0789
Cyano	Chroococcus	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Green	Closterium	4	0.0047	-2.3253	-0.0110
Green	Coelastrum	24	0.0284	-1.5472	-0.0439
Green	Cosmarium	27	0.0319	-1.4960	-0.0477
Green	Crucigenia	41	0.0485	-1.3146	-0.0637
Flag.	Cryptomonas	20	0.0236	-1.6263	-0.0384
Diatom	Cyclotella	14	0.0165	-1.7812	-0.0295
Cyano	Cylindrospermopsis	21	0.0248	-1.6052	-0.0398
Diatom	Cymbella	6	0.0071	-2.1492	-0.0152

Cyano	Dactylococopsis	55	0.0650	-1.1870	-0.0772
Green	Dictyosphaerium	22	0.0260	-1.5849	-0.0412
Diatom	Dinobryon	16	0.0189	-1.7233	-0.0326
Flag.	Dysmorphococcus	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Flag.	Euglena	13	0.0154	-1.8134	-0.0279
Diatom	Fragilaria	6	0.0071	-2.1492	-0.0152
Green	Kirchneriella	3	0.0035	-2.4502	-0.0087
Green	Lagerheimia	5	0.0059	-2.2284	-0.0132
Cyano	Lyngbya	2	0.0024	-2.6263	-0.0062
Diatom	Mallomonas	6	0.0071	-2.1492	-0.0152
Diatom	Melosira	20	0.0236	-1.6263	-0.0384
Cyano	Merismopedia	49	0.0579	-1.2372	-0.0717
Cyano	Microcystis	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Green	Mougeotia	19	0.0225	-1.6486	-0.0370
Diatom	Navicula	7	0.0083	-2.0823	-0.0172
Diatom	Nitzschia	2	0.0024	-2.6263	-0.0062
Green	Oocystis	5	0.0059	-2.2284	-0.0132
Cyano	Oscillatoria	105	0.1241	-0.9062	-0.1125
Cyano	Pseudoananbaena	11	0.0130	-1.8860	-0.0245
Cyano	Raphidiopsis	5	0.0059	-2.2284	-0.0132
Diatom	Rhizosolenia	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Green	Scenedesmus	35	0.0414	-1.3833	-0.0572
Green	Schroderia	1	0.0012	-2.9274	-0.0035
Green	Selenastrum	14	0.0165	-1.7812	-0.0295
Green	Staurastrum	6	0.0071	-2.1492	-0.0152
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	5	0.0059	-2.2284	-0.0132
Diatom	Synedra	9	0.0106	-1.9731	-0.0210
Green	Tetraedron	18	0.0213	-1.6721	-0.0356
Flag.	Trachelomonas	23	0.0272	-1.5656	-0.0426
Totals	47 genera	846			47 genera
Shannon Diversity Index, H'					1.4238

Table 5. Abundance and diversity of algae genera at 0m depth in Bull Shoals Lake, 17 September, 2011.

Depth of 0m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	13	14	27	0.1849	-0.7330	-0.1356
Cyano	Arthrospira	16	9	25	0.1712	-0.7664	-0.1312
Green	Carteria	0	6	6	0.0411	-1.3862	-0.0570

Green	Cosmarium	1	3	4	0.0274	-1.5623	-0.0428
Flag.	Cryptomonas	2	5	7	0.0479	-1.3193	-0.0633
Diatom	Cyclotella	1	1	2	0.0137	-1.8633	-0.0255
Green	Euastrum	0	1	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Flag.	Eugelena	3	3	6	0.0411	-1.3862	-0.0570
Green	Golenkina	0	1	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Diatom	Mallomonas	2	2	4	0.0274	-1.5623	-0.0428
Cyano	Merismopedia	0	3	3	0.0205	-1.6872	-0.0347
Diatom	Navicula	5	4	9	0.0616	-1.2101	-0.0746
Diatom	Nitzschia	0	2	2	0.0137	-1.8633	-0.0255
Flag.	Ochromonas	1	0	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Green	Oocystis	1	1	2	0.0137	-1.8633	-0.0255
Cyano	Oscillatoria	9	8	17	0.1164	-0.9339	-0.1087
Dino	Peridinium	4	8	12	0.0822	-1.0852	-0.0892
Cyano	Pseudoanabaena	2	2	4	0.0274	-1.5623	-0.0428
Green	Scenedesmus	4	2	6	0.0411	-1.3862	-0.0570
Green	Selenastrum	1	0	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	1	0	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Diatom	Synedra	1	0	1	0.0068	-2.1644	-0.0148
Green	Tetraedron	2	2	4	0.0274	-1.5623	-0.0428
TOTALS	23 genera	69	77	146	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							1.1449

Table 6. Abundance and diversity of algae genera at 8m depth in Bull Shoals Lake, 17 September, 2011.

Depth of 8m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	17	21	38	0.2289	-0.6403	-0.1466
Cyano	Arthrospira	17	10	27	0.1627	-0.7887	-0.1283
Diatom	Aulacoseira	1	0	1	0.0060	-2.2201	-0.0134
Flag.	Cryptomonas	2	0	2	0.0120	-1.9191	-0.0231
Green	Dictyosphaerium	2	0	2	0.0120	-1.9191	-0.0231
Flag.	Eugelena	2	2	4	0.0241	-1.6180	-0.0390
Green	Lagerheimia	1	1	2	0.0120	-1.9191	-0.0231
Diatom	Mallomonas	3	1	4	0.0241	-1.6180	-0.0390
Cyano	Merismopedia	7	5	12	0.0723	-1.1409	-0.0825
Cyano	Microcystis	10	7	17	0.1024	-0.9897	-0.1014
Diatom	Navicula	1	0	1	0.0060	-2.2201	-0.0134
Cyano	Oscillatoria	24	20	44	0.2651	-0.5767	-0.1528

Flag.	Peridinium	1	0	1	0.0060	-2.2201	-0.0134
Cyano	Pseudoanabaena	1	2	3	0.0181	-1.7430	-0.0315
Green	Scenedesmus	0	6	6	0.0361	-1.4420	-0.0521
Green	Tetraedron	1	1	2	0.0120	-1.9191	-0.0231
TOTALS	16 genera	90	76	166	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							0.9058

Table 7. Abundance and diversity of algae genera at 12m depth in Bull Shoals Lake, 17 September, 2011.

Depth of 12m							
Type	Genera	A	B	Total	Prop., pi	Log(pi)	Product
Cyano	Anabaena	1	0	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Cyano	Arthrospira	3	4	7	0.0897	-1.0470	-0.0940
Dino	Ceratium	1	0	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Diatom	Cyclotella	2	4	6	0.0769	-1.1139	-0.0857
Flag.	Dinobryan	5	11	16	0.2051	-0.6880	-0.1411
Flag.	Eugelena	0	1	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Flag.	Mallomonas	2	1	3	0.0385	-1.4150	-0.0544
Cyano	Merismopedia	0	1	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Cyano	Microcystis	3	2	5	0.0641	-1.1931	-0.0765
Green	Mougeotia	6	1	7	0.0897	-1.0470	-0.0940
Diatom	Navicula	2	4	6	0.0769	-1.1139	-0.0857
Diatom	Nitzschia	1	2	3	0.0385	-1.4150	-0.0544
Cyano	Oscillatoria	8	7	15	0.1923	-0.7160	-0.1377
Cyano	Pseudoanabaena	0	1	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Green	Scenedesmus	1	1	2	0.0256	-1.5911	-0.0408
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	0	1	1	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Diatom	Synedra	2	0	2	0.0256	-1.5911	-0.0408
TOTALS	17 genera	37	41	78	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'							1.0506

Table 8. Abundance and diversity of algae genera for combined 0m, 8m, and 12m depth in Bull Shoals Lake, 17 September, 2011.

Combined depths of 0m, 8m, and 12m					
Type	Genera	Total	Proportion, pi	Log(pi)	Product
Cyano	Anabaena	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Cyano	Aphanocapsa	65	0.1667	-0.7782	-0.1297
Cyano	Arthrospira	59	0.1513	-0.8202	-0.1241
Diatom	Aulacoseira	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066

Green	Carteria	6	0.0154	-1.8129	-0.0279
Flag.	Ceratium	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Green	Cosmarium	4	0.0103	-1.9890	-0.0204
Flag.	Cryptomonas	9	0.0231	-1.6368	-0.0378
Diatom	Cyclotella	8	0.0205	-1.6880	-0.0346
Green	Dictyosphaerium	2	0.0051	-2.2900	-0.0117
Diatom	Dinobryan	16	0.0410	-1.3869	-0.0569
Green	Euastrum	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Flag.	Eugelena	11	0.0282	-1.5497	-0.0437
Green	Golenkina	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Green	Lagerheimia	2	0.0051	-2.2900	-0.0117
Diatom	Mallomonas	11	0.0282	-1.5497	-0.0437
Cyano	Merismopedia	16	0.0410	-1.3869	-0.0569
Cyano	Microcystis	22	0.0564	-1.2486	-0.0704
Green	Mougeotia	7	0.0179	-1.7460	-0.0313
Diatom	Navicula	16	0.0410	-1.3869	-0.0569
Diatom	Nitzschia	5	0.0128	-1.8921	-0.0243
Flag.	Ochromonas	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Green	Oocystis	2	0.0051	-2.2900	-0.0117
Cyano	Oscillatoria	76	0.1949	-0.7103	-0.1384
Dino	Peridinium	13	0.0333	-1.4771	-0.0492
Cyano	Pseudoanabaena	8	0.0205	-1.6880	-0.0346
Green	Scenedesmus	14	0.0359	-1.4449	-0.0519
Green	Selenastrum	1	0.0026	-2.5911	-0.0066
Diatom	Stephanodiscus	2	0.0051	-2.2900	-0.0117
Diatom	Synedra	3	0.0077	-2.1139	-0.0163
Green	Tetraedron	6	0.0154	-1.8129	-0.0279
TOTALS	31 genera	390	1.0000		
Shannon Diversity Index, H'					1.1704

Table 9. Summary of diversity values for each depth and lake.

Lake	Diversity Value by Depth			
	Surface	Above Thermocline	Below Thermocline	Total Lake
McDaniel	1.3556	1.3515	1.3688	1.4238
Bull Shoals	1.1449	0.9058	1.0506	1.1704

Table 10. Summary of total algae genera for each depth and lake.

Lake	Total Number of Genera by Depth			Total Lake
	Surface	Above Thermocline	Below Thermocline	
McDaniel	41	35	37	47
Bull Shoals	23	16	17	31

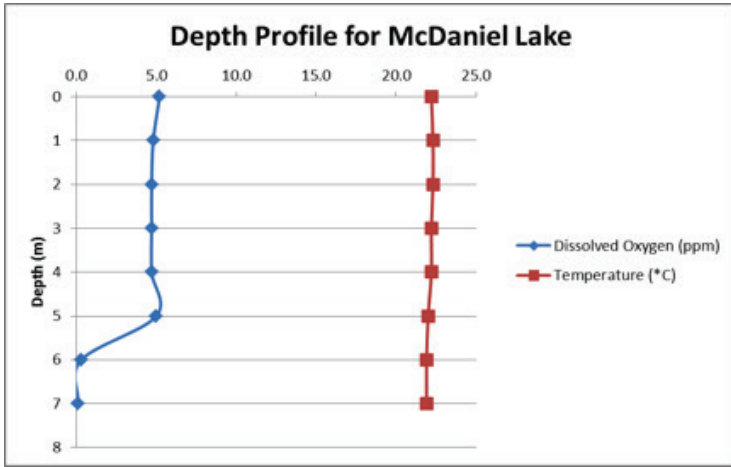


Figure 1. Temperature and dissolved oxygen depth profile for McDaniel Lake on 15 September 2011.

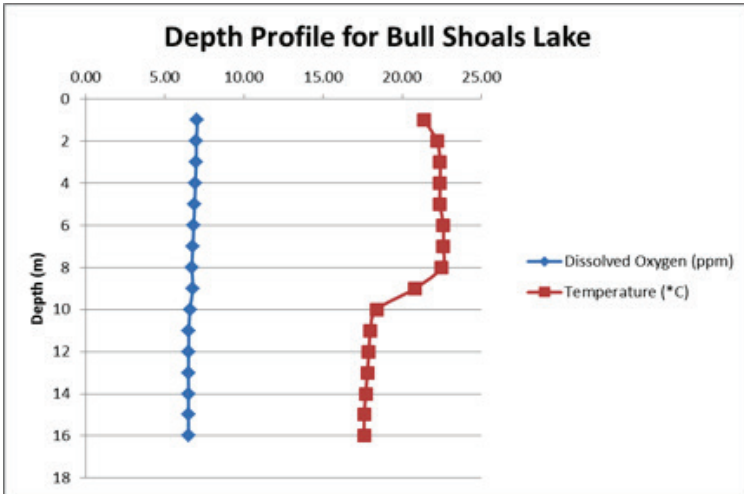


Figure 2. Temperature and dissolved oxygen depth profile for Bull Shoals Lake on 15 September 2011.

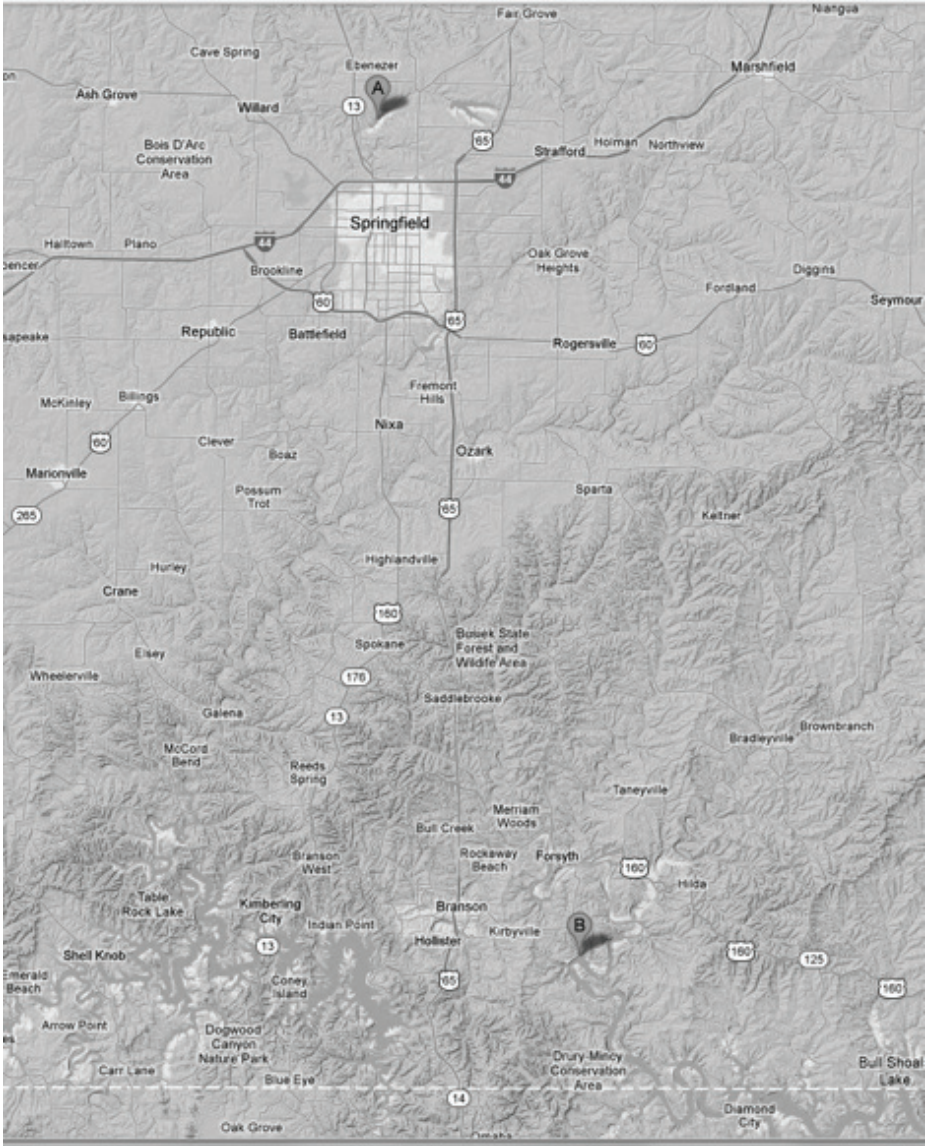


Figure 3. Terrain map showing relative locations of McDaniel Lake (A) and the sampling site on Bull Shoals Lake (B) in southwest Missouri. The dotted line near the bottom represents the Missouri-Arkansas state line. Image from Google Maps.

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Monsters of Their Own Making: Understanding the Context of the Rise of the “Golden Age of Piracy”

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Abstract

This paper examines in larger historical context the state of affairs that precipitated the “Golden Age of Piracy.” After considering recent scholarly answers to the causes of the upswing in piratical violence and terror in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the need to provide a larger scope of study became apparent. Through examining the cases of Richard Hawkins, Sir Francis Drake, and the Governorship of Thomas Modyford in Jamaica, this paper explores the context within which the English Crown purposefully promoted and encouraged the growth of piracy in the New World. Their expedient use of piracy to the greater benefit of financing and expanding the English Empire resulted in the rise of the “Golden Age of Piracy.”

Introduction

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries witnessed a generation of seamen who enacted their fantasies of trepidation and cruelty. The dawn of a “Golden Age of Piracy” instituted a reign of terror on the seas that England felt compelled to correct. Historians studying the sub-field of piracy differ in their opinions of when the period began,¹ but most agree the violence peaked following the end of Queen Anne’s War (1702–1713). This difficulty in establishing an exact timeline stemmed from the fact that “the pirate, the privateer, and the armed merchantman often blended the one into the other.”² During these years, a brand of outlaw took to the sea called “hostis humani generis (enemies of mankind).”³ This new brand of seamen created a culture of terror among the merchants and colonists in the New World regardless of nationality. The widely published stories and descriptions that circulated of these men

¹ Here we will discuss the period in its broadest terms as the years between 1680 and 1725.

² George Francis Dow. *The Pirates of the New England Coast, 1630-1730* (New York:Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1968), 19.

³ Hans Turley. *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality, and Masculine Identity*. (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 1.

conjured a sense of terror at the very mention of their arrival. Depictions of pirate captains such as John Teach (c. 1680–22 November 1718), better known as Black Beard, helped create the image of the pirate captain at sea:

“The effect of his beard, which gave a natural ferocity to his countenance... by suffering it to grow to an immoderate length, and twisting it about in small tails like a Ramillies wig, whence he derived the name Black Beard. His portrait, in time of action, is described as that of a complete fury; with three brace pistols in holsters, slung over his shoulders like bandoliers, and lighted matches under his hat sticking out over each of his ears.”⁴

Descriptions of pirate personas one could encounter at sea, like those of Teach, were commonplace in colonial newspapers by the early eighteenth century.

Furthermore, the tales of cruelty and outright demonic behaviors instilled the greatest level of fear. Teach was known for carrying out recreations of Hell in the galleys of his ship, complete with smoke and brimstone, until his crew begged to be released for the taste of clean air topside.⁵ Other tales of cruelty aboard ships surfaced like those witnessed by the crew of Captain Jeane⁶ in 1726, as the captain beat a young cabin boy to death over a period of eighteen days. Tied to the main mast of the ship, and beaten for breaking into the captain’s rum cabinet, Captain Jeane beat the cabin boy and stepped on his chest until “his Excrement came up involuntarily from him” which he proceeded to feed to the young boy.⁷ Although in the case of Captain Jeane, his crew turned him into the authorities for the murder of the young cabin boy, stories of the villainous nature of the pirate captains continued to gain notoriety. The causes and lasting results of the reign of these “enemies of mankind” have been a topic of growing interest among historians of the Atlantic World.

The sub-field of pirate history, within the greater study of the Atlantic World, has produced scholarship regarding the “Golden Age of Piracy” focusing on the reasons why individuals would choose a life as a pirate. These explanations fall into one of three areas: general scum of the earth theories, Marxist, and economic.⁸ Since piracy has existed since the earliest days of sea travel, theories

⁴ “Bahama Islands—Cruelty of Spaniards—Black Beard the Pirate—Naval and Military Heroism.”, *Oriental Herald and Journal of General Literature*, 7:23 (1825:Nov.), 221.

⁵ *Ibid*, 221-222

⁶ There is little known about Captian Jeane; outside the published version of his trial, he is not known historically.

⁷ *Unparallel'd Cruelty; or the Tryal of Captain Jeane (1726)*, Quoted in Turley, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash*, 10-11.

⁸ The first of these three theories claims people became pirates because they were the worst parts of society and their going rogue was inevitable. Marxist theories claim they were driven by the desire to break away from the traditional structure of society, and economic theories suggest people went rogue in search of economic gain or means of subsistence. See Ian K. Steele. *Politics of Colonial Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968). Lydon. *Pirates, Privateers, and Profit*. Philip Gosse. *The History of Piracy* (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1946) and John L. Anderson. “Piracy and World History: An Economic Perspective on Maritime Predation,” *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader* for examples of historical debate on individual motivations.

explaining the individual’s decision to go “rogue” do not adequately explain the explosion of violence and pirating activity experienced during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries involving primarily English citizens.

Scholarly attempts to explain broader shifts in English policy as causal exist in works such as Markus Rediker’s *Villains of All Nations*. Rediker argues that shifts in the English colonial labor markets led to a rise in unemployed sailors seeking a means to support themselves. Following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the number of sailors employed by the Royal Navy dropped from 49,860 men to 13,475 in 1714, many of whom found themselves left at the nearest port upon cessation of hostilities.⁹ This shift in the labor markets provided the required catalyst of unemployed manpower necessary for the widespread wave of violent criminal piracy.

The peace that followed Utrecht, and the unemployment of the sailors of the English Royal Navy, is widely accepted by historians as the catalyst of the “Golden Age of Piracy.” Such explanations are guilty of denying a core principle of historicism: the principle that events in history are a result of a process and not the result of individual events, no matter how significant they may seem. The process that resulted in the “Golden Age of Piracy” requires further analysis within a longer period to understand how England, a sovereign nation, came to lose control of trade and their monopoly on sanctioned violence within their empire. This paper seeks to demonstrate how the actions of the English Crown caused the “Golden Age of Piracy,” when examined in the larger context of their attempts, to expand their empire through the promotion and use of piracy.

The Emergence of England’s Empire

“Cry Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war.” In Shakespeare’s words from Julius Caesar lay a warning the English Court failed to heed. The significance and history behind this phrase foreshadows the dangers of war and the difficulty of controlling the chaos associated with armed conflict. When Elizabeth I (7 September 1533–24 March 1603) began her reign and England started to emerge from a period of turmoil in their national history, the island nation looked to the seas to establish its future. As sanctioned English privateering evolved from gentleman adventurers seeking profit to seeking revenge, the English Crown encouraged and promoted the valor and successes of their nation’s new heroes. They thereby encouraged adventurous seamen to head to the New World to seek their share of wealth and glory. With a growing force of experienced seamen flooding into the New World, the Crown took full advantage of their exploits to protect their colonies while encouraging the exploitation of Spanish possessions. As England’s power and influence grew, both in Europe and in the newly settled New World, the Court found control-

⁹Rediker, Markus. *Villains of All Nations*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 23

ling the “dogs” they unleashed presented its own difficulties. The methods employed by the Crown enabled them to establish a colonial empire by the end of the seventeenth century. With peace and eventual Spanish recognition of English holdings in the New World, the seamen used to gain the previously mentioned empire turned to bite the hand that had fed them. England found herself fighting to control a reign of terror on the seas, known to history as the “Golden Age of Piracy,” that they themselves had created.

Elizabeth Takes Charge

Before Elizabeth I assumed the crown in 1588, England had a long tradition of sanctioning privateers through issuing Letters of Marque, continuing the tradition of allowing those robbed at sea to seek reparations. As early as 1353, King Edward III (13 November 1312–21 June 1377) provided an avenue in the Admiralty Courts to sue for damages done to them or their property at sea.¹⁰ In 1415, King Henry V (16 September 1386–31 August 1422) established the practice of issuing Letters of Marque to his subjects deprived of property at sea to seek reparations from any persons sailing under the offending nation’s flag.¹¹ By Elizabeth’s reign, regularly issued Letters of Marque provided sea captains legal protections for attacking foreign vessels without the requirement of proving cause. However, a captain found guilty of attacking a vessel of his own nation, or a vessel of a nation not specifically endorsed in his Letter of Marque was deemed a pirate, a charge carrying the death sentence.

Elizabeth inherited the throne to a country in tatters. The turmoil left to her required the utmost skill and intention. Elizabeth faced difficulty in delivering timely solutions to the problems facing her nation or risking King Philip II of Spain’s (21 May 1527–13 September 1598) attempt to assert his claim to the English throne.¹² Elizabeth turned to men of the seas with brave new ideas about how to assert her power as monarch as she struggled to hold authority.¹³ By doing so, Elizabeth threw her lot in with the men of the sea trade, forever tying England’s success to the exploits of their “Sea Dogs.”¹⁴

Elizabeth’s attempts to assert her new authority and challenge Spanish power without assuming direct responsibility is evident in her support of John Hawkins (1532–12 November 1595) and later of Francis Drake (1540–27 January 1596). Although the English had been involved in trading slaves since

¹⁰ *The Statutes Relating to the Admiralty, Navy, Shipping, and Navigation of the United Kingdom, From 9 Hen. III to 3 Geo. IV.* “27* Edw. III. Stat. 2. A.D. 1353” (London: George Eyre and Andrew Strahan, 1823), 3. Note: Source hereafter abbreviated as *Statutes*.

¹¹ *Statutes*, “Anno 4* Henrici V. Stat. 2. A.D. 1415-1416,” 7-8.

¹² Phillip II of Spain married Mary I of England in 1553 thereby entering into the English Royal line. The dispute over succession presented an opportunity for the strong Spanish King to assert his claim. Had Elizabeth struggled with her control of the country, Phillip may have attempted to challenge her authority.

¹³ Susan Ronald, *The Pirate Queen* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007), 38-54.

¹⁴ “Sea Dogs” is the historical name given to English privateers sponsored by the Crown.

1552, John Hawkins would be the first Englishman to trade slaves in the New World. Until 1562, the English had not officially challenged¹⁵ the Spanish claim to monopolized trade west of the “Line.”¹⁶ Hawkins was granted permission to trade slaves by Elizabeth by promising her “...[a] variety of gold, silver and spices and other treasures...”¹⁷ upon his return. The news of the wealth generated by Hawkins’s slaving expeditions spread and attracted new investors, including increased support from Elizabeth, who gave Hawkins use of her personal vessel, the *Jesus of Lubeck*, a 700-ton merchant vessel. In a letter to the Queen, Hawkins made his illegal¹⁸ intentions known as he explained he would take his ship and “...lade Negroes in Genoya (Guinea) and sell them in the West Indies.”¹⁹ Francis Drake obtained a privateering commission from Elizabeth in 1570 to strike at Spanish possessions. Three years later, after sacking the Spanish towns of Nombre de Dios and Panama, and capturing a Spanish silver mule train, Drake returned to a hero’s welcome in England with three hundred and forty tons of silver. Under Elizabeth’s patronage, Drake set sail on 13 December 1577 with intent to raid Spain’s Pacific colonies that he proved undefended. Along the way, Drake pillaged every town and ship he encountered as he proceeded to circumnavigate the globe, becoming the first Englishman to accomplish the feat. Elizabeth, desiring to encourage the continued effort against Spanish possessions, knighted Francis Drake, bestowing on him the honor of performing the ceremony on the deck of his ship.²⁰ Sir Francis Drake’s successes, his new title, and his new status made him a national hero.

By promoting the exploits of John Hawkins and Francis Drake among the English population, Elizabeth created a privately-funded navy to generate revenue and defend the island nation at sea. Upon John Hawkins’ homecoming from his 1564 slaving expedition, he returned to his investors, including the Queen, a sixty percent profit. When Francis Drake returned from his first journey to the New World with over three hundred tons of silver plunder, Elizabeth quickly agreed to sponsor his next trip. Drake’s return from his second trip in 1580 returned enough money for Elizabeth to finance the royal defense for a decade. Elizabeth’s share of the profits allowed her to pay off all her debts and finance her investment in the Levant Company, which later became the

¹⁵ Ibid, 67-77.

¹⁶ “The Line” refers to point of the division of trading territories in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494.

¹⁷ See the reference to Hawkins letter in *Letter from the Queen to the Portuguese Ambassador, May, 23 1568*, in *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Elizabeth, 1558-1589*, Vol. 8:1566-1568, SP 70/98, f.73.

¹⁸ While Hawkins’ actions were completely legal under English law (he had received all the proper approval from the English authorities) the Spanish viewed all trading beyond the line to be illegal and a form of piracy. Hawkins, his investors, his crew, and Elizabeth were well aware of how their actions would be viewed by the Spanish.

¹⁹ See *Letter from John Hawkins to Queen Elizabeth, Sept. 16 1567* in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, Vol. XLIV, 7, SP 12/44, f.16

²⁰ Ronald, *The Pirate Queen*, 148-153.

East India Company.²¹ After the successes of Hawkins and Drake, Elizabeth institutionalized the use of privateering as a means to support her national defense and enrich England.

The Spanish came to the same conclusion as Elizabeth and attempted to stop her diplomatically. The Spanish ambassadors among Elizabeth's royal court regularly kept the Spanish King informed of the activities and discussions of the Court. The Spanish Ambassador in England wrote to the King of Spain after John Hawkins' return, "*They tell me that the profits have boosted the spirits of the merchants for another expedition...They even say that the same Hawkins will go again in May, a matter of importance that will need some resolution...*"²² The Spanish feared what would follow if the world learned of the riches to be had in the New World. After the Spanish defeated Hawkins at the Battle of San Juan de Ulua, the Spanish moved to arrest and try all Englishmen found in the New World as heretics by the Inquisitors in New Spain. After the publicity of Drake's adventures, the Spanish realized their efforts to prevent the eventual flood of fortune seekers bound for New Spain was futile. Don Francisco de Zárata, a Spaniard taken hostage on Drake's voyage, commented:

*"If up to the present time they have sent their second sons, from now on they will come themselves, seeing...that all his promises have turned out so true, for with such a great sum of gold and silver he will have proved his plan. Although this loss is so great, I do not think it any a lesser one that there have been made during this voyage more than twenty finished pilots of the Peruvian route..."*²³

The Spanish decided to take a new approach to handling intrusions in the New World. Don Bernardino de Mendoza, Spanish Ambassador to England, urged his king to pursue a policy of dealing with pirates so that "...every one should be sent to the bottom, and not a sole on board of them allowed to live."²⁴ Their approach to eliminating piracy preceded and paralleled the eventual efforts of the English by one hundred and fifty years.

The Legitimizing of Pirate Culture in the West Indies

The rise of the Buccaneers gave England another opportunity to encourage piracy against the Spanish. The Buccaneers willingly participated in England's war at sea in the New World. The Buccaneers were experienced seamen who lived for the opportunity to pillage from the Spanish. The Buccaneers, mostly

²¹ Nick Lane, *Pillaging the Empire* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 33-61.

²² See *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth*, cciv. 16, 17, 18, 21; and *Lansdowne MS.* vol. lii. cap. 43.

²³ See *Letter from Francisco de Zárata to the Viceroy of New Spain, 16 April 1579*, published in Wagner, *Sir Francis Drake's voyage around the world: its aims and achievements* (San Francisco, 1926), 377.

²⁴ See *Letter from Ambassador Bernardo de Mendoza to Philip II, 16 October 1580* in *Calendar of State Papers: Spanish*, III, 55-6.

English and French, were led by captains who had no national loyalties. The men of the Buccaneers became superb marksmen during their time on the island of Hispaniola, and during their experiences attacking shipping in the Caribbean.²⁵ European planters moving into the islands long abandoned by the Spanish were colonizing the Antilles.²⁶ England’s new plantation colonies required a surge of population, often consisting of runaways and criminals who bolstered the ranks of the Buccaneers.

The Crown developed a policy of encouraging the migration of English citizens to the new colonies. By 1670 the migration of criminal elements of English society to the colonies had become commonplace. A criminal convicted of a felony in court could have their sentence waived by agreeing to seek transportation and settle in the new colonies.²⁷ Such commuting of sentences for felons began causing problems within the colonies.

In addition to swelling the ranks of those who would join the Buccaneers, the influx of criminals and vagabonds being “encouraged”²⁸ to go to the English colonies created an atmosphere the more respectable planters and English officials did not wish to endure. On 20 January 1670 the General Court of James City issued orders to ban the further acceptance of more “...*felons and other desperate villains being sent over from the prisons in England, the horror yet remaining... the subversion of our religion, laws, liberties, rights, and privileges...*”²⁹ Although these new arrivals found themselves shunned, and in places like James City, Virginia actually banned, those newcomers with previous criminal careers encountered a culture where their illicit skills made them a desired commodity among the Buccaneers and pirates of the sea.

The Crown did not control the Buccaneers as they did the privateers of Sir Francis Drake’s day; however, they did enjoy using the Buccaneers’ services under such men as Henry Morgan (ca. 1635 – 25 August 1688).³⁰ The Buccaneers ran their own society and England made little attempt to reign in their lawlessness,³¹ even making use of them as their un-official navy in the Caribbean. Sir Thomas Modyford (c. 1620 – 2 September 1679), the Governor of Jamaica, openly argued to the King and his advisors of the benefits of retaining the Buccaneers in His Majesty’s service in protecting the island of Jamaica. In his

²⁵ Alexander O. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1969), 54-59.

²⁶ Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 96-98.

²⁷ *Calendar of State Papers: Colonial Series, America and the West Indies 1669-1674*. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1889), 6. Note: Source hereafter referred to as *Calendar of State Papers*.

²⁸ The English Crown often passed statutes of “encouragement” to ensure their desired outcomes. Most often practiced in Mercantilism and the populating of England’s North American colonies. See *Calendar of State Papers*.

²⁹ *Calendar of State Papers*, 63-64.

³⁰ The Crown was more than willing to praise Morgan, eventually appointing him Lt. Governor of Jamaica after publicly showing displeasure of his exploits.

³¹ David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag* (New York: Random House, 1996), 42-55.

petition in 1670, Governor Modyford laid out his reasons why the King should continue to retain the services of the pirates. The privateers provided the necessary naval security to protect the interests of Jamaica from the Spanish, who refused to recognize England's claim over the island. Modyford argued that if the King desired to recall and expel the privateers, he should first negotiate terms with the Spanish to recognize the territorial rights of England in Jamaica, or prepare for the Spanish to take the opportunity to recapture the island.³²

The protection of the island in the hands of the privateers provided other benefits to the island of Jamaica. Modyford continued to try to persuade the King to consider the economic impact to the island should he recall the commissions of the privateers. First the plunder that "*...is gotten by the privateers is bought into Jamaica, and assists the planters, and encourages the merchants to come there.*" Second, the protection of civilians in the empire required a large investment on the part of the Royal Navy to maintain the peace, an expense made unnecessary by the service of the Buccaneers. Modyford went on to point out that the privateers would not simply revert to planting and farming, but would seek out new spoils at sea without proper commissions.³³ Although the arguments of Thomas Modyford may seem selfish (the Governor benefited financially from the spoils of the privateers), his analysis of the results of decommissioning the privateers was prophetic. Within a decade of their decommissioning, the "Golden Age of Piracy" began to take hold, requiring England to incur large naval and legal expenses to overcome the culture they had created.

The Treaty of Madrid in 1670 brought an official peace between England and Spain³⁴ resulting in England finding itself struggling to restrain the very tactics they unleashed. The peace resulted in the English Navy laying off tens of thousands of sailors and breaking their ties with the Buccaneers whom they had employed for the greater protection of His Majesty's colonies. With the intermittent peace between the Treaty of Madrid in 1670 and the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the Royal English Navy no longer needed the massive number of soldiers or vessels all over the Caribbean, and saw no need to pay for their transportation home. Leaving them at the nearest port with the last of their pay, unemployed seamen quickly began looking for a way to sustain themselves. Outright piracy became an easy solution for men who knew nothing but life at sea.

Conclusion

Without the wealth or political strength to challenge Spain's dominance, England employed the eager seamen filled with a desire for success to unleash the

³² *Calendar of State Papers*, 105.

³³ *Calendar of State Papers*, 106.

³⁴ Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 122-123.

private war the Crown could operate with plausible deniability. Differing only in the manner in which the eager seamen desired success, whether fame or fortune, they found a friend, a sponsor, and a legal safehaven in the Court. By sanctioning piracy through the legally recognized use of privateering, England effectively chipped away at Spain’s hold and newfound wealth in the New World. By issuing licenses of piracy to the lawless Buccaneers, the Crown obtained their ambitions of empire with little expense of military or naval presence in the Caribbean. Only after England decided to assert their sovereignty and monopoly over sanctioned violence was there a rise in piracy affecting the English colonial trade.

From John Hawkins through Henry Morgan, the English population thrived on the tales of the Atlantic Sea captains, and the British government provided many opportunities to hear of their new adventures in an attempt to bolster national pride. They tried to create an effective weapon against the Spanish, during both peacetime and open hostilities. Through their promotion of men of fortune, they enabled the fledging English Empire to challenge the hold of Spain in the New World. As the Crown extended their influence in the Atlantic World, their actions directly increased the number of seamen taking to the Atlantic to pursue their livelihoods through all-out piracy.

The Crown was directly responsible for the terror experienced in the “Golden Age of Piracy” through their direct support of men like John Hawkins, Francis Drake, and Henry Morgan. By patronizing these men, the Crown encouraged others to set off in search of fame and fortune, most of the time resulting in destitution and a turn to criminality. As long as piratical acts benefited England’s rise, English monarchs would continue their efforts to encourage such acts. However, after a loss of control and a desire for peace entered into English politics, the proverbial Pandora’s Box remained open. England spent countless resources and years trying to recapture the seas for their use in their newly developed trading empires.

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Caught Up: The Tenability of the Rapture

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Abstract

From Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* to the *Left Behind* novels, many evangelical Christians believe that the rapture—a sudden divine “snatching away” of all Christ-followers from earth—will signal the beginning of a treacherous seven-year Tribulation that will culminate in the triumphant reappearing of Jesus to usher in his eternal kingdom. These doctrines—part of the greater worldview of ‘Dispensationalism’—claim their foundation in a literal biblical interpretation. This paper critically evaluates this foundation by examining four putative “rapture verses” and shows how a Dispensationalist interpretation is misguided. The paper then reveals philosophical deficiencies inherent in the rapture idea, namely, a construal of the theodicy problem. Hence, the rapture, which has gripped evangelical Christianity, *should not* be expected as a future event.

Imagine what it will be like on the highways of the world's busiest cities when Christians vanish. Consider the airways...pilots, copilots, and flight attendants gone....What a nightmare! The common denominator with every missing person will be that each knew Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.¹

The rapture has become a staple of contemporary evangelical eschatology, with its tantalizing imagery provoking countless pastors (or, simply, fervent Bible-readers) to offer precise predictions as to when the end will come—only to result in disappointment for the faithful and a gracious reprieve for everyone else. Although in many churches the rapture is believed to be an indisputable and biblically-sound doctrine, the search for unequivocal verses in its support is a challenge, which, I contend, is never satisfactorily met. The bricolage of putative rapture verses—of which I will handle four—frequently betrays the standards of “literal interpretation” that are held by those who await the rapture. What is more, when understood through the theodicy problem, the doctrine also betrays the supposed nature of the evangelical Christian God.

In this paper I will briefly explore Dispensationalism—the system of bibli-

¹ Jerry Johnston, *The Last Days of Planet Earth* (Eugene, Or.: Harvest House, 1991), 97. Italics original.

cal interpretation that popularized the idea of the rapture—in order to provide historical context and reveal the evolution that has occurred in evangelical eschatological doctrine. I will critically evaluate this worldview and emphasize the scriptural and philosophical foundation of the rapture idea. My analysis of four putative rapture verses will show that the doctrine is not a tenable interpretation of the relevant biblical passages, and that the rapture *should not* be expected as a future event. I will also show how the rapture idea, and the necessary conclusions that accompany it, are philosophically deficient.

John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)—a leader of the British religious group called Plymouth Brethren—is credited as the main progenitor of *Dispensationalism*², a system of eschatology that holds to a literal and inerrant view of scripture, and which organizes the entire Bible into specific ‘dispensations’. Darby was convinced that the Bible, in its perfect totality, could be analyzed for themes and clues pertaining to the fulfillment of prophecy in his day. He and others who contributed to Dispensationalist thought believed that the Bible tells a unified story (a story not yet complete), and so different passages or books can be used to fortify each other to create a cohesive understanding of scripture. This is understandably attractive and provides the Christian a template with which to make sense of inscrutable passages. The clear and specific apocalyptic timeline also dispenses a covetable hope and security.

In an article examining Dispensationalism and scriptural interpretation, Brock Bingaman explains, “Dispensationalism takes its name from the division of salvation history into distinct periods or ‘dispensations.’”³ God judges humanity differently within each dispensation. The current dispensation is the Church Age, a time in which salvation is found through belief in Jesus. In past dispensations, salvation is achieved through other means. The rapture marks the beginning of the Tribulation dispensation,⁴ and warns humanity of the horrors of imminent judgment.⁵ For the Dispensationalist, Revelation and Daniel—the only two full-fledged apocalyptic books of the Bible—specifically refer to future events and ought to be read exclusively in this way.⁶

This eschatology has swept America and blurred the line between theology and politics. Various current events like the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the military development of Russia, and even the establishment of a worldview banking system each have their place within the dispensationalist worldview

² Ernest Sandeen, “Toward a Historical Interpretation of the Origins of Fundamentalism,” *Church History* 36, no. 1 (Mar. 1967): 67.

³ Brock Bingaman, “Learning from Left Behind? A Call For Coherent Accounts of Scripture,” *Anglican Theological Review* 91, no. 2 (spr. 2009): 258.

⁴ Timothy Weber, “The Dispensationalist Era,” *Christian History* 18, no. 1 (1999): 35.

⁵ Other than those mentioned, distinct doctrines of Dispensationalism include the distinction between Church and Israel and the interpretation of Dan. 9:24-27. To find a more detailed catalogue of these doctrines see Timothy, Sandeen, Bingaman, Lindsey, and Reasoner.

⁶ Weber, “The Dispensationalist Era,” 34.

and stand as markers of the end. Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* (originally published in 1970 and later adapted into a movie) and the *Left Behind* novels (the first of the series published in 1996 and still expanding, including three feature length films) have made the rapture and Dispensationalist worldviews exceedingly salient. The *Left Behind* franchise, mainly propelled by Christian Right activist Tim LaHaye, has galvanized countless Christians into a highly political and formidable movement. Lindsey and LaHaye, in the spirit of their Dispensationalist convictions, decrypt the ultimate meaning of current events by reinforcing their clarion interpretations with scriptural references. This contemporary Dispensationalism has assuaged the uncertainties of many churchgoers who see headlines as overt realizations of the Bible's unified story and who anxiously await the fulfillment of the remaining prophecies.⁷ Bearing in mind this backdrop, I will methodically examine those verses that allegedly describe the rapture to reveal the Dispensationalist's misplaced hermeneutics and ideology.

1 THESS. 4:16-17 & THE BIBLICAL PUZZLE

*For the Lord Himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air.*⁸

The Greek word translated as "caught up" is *rapiemur* in the Vulgate; "rapture" comes from this Latin translation and never directly appears in English versions.⁹ Craig Blaising, in his essay arguing for Pretribulation rapture (the rapture as occurring *before* the seven year Tribulation—the view of Lindsey and LaHaye), says that these terms indicate "a sudden, forceful, removal of the whole lot of resurrected and living believers up to the presence of the Lord."¹⁰ The idea can also be expressed as a "snatching" away.¹¹ Since the term "rapture" is derived from this verse, it persists as the most popular passage for substantiating the doctrine.

The term "meet" in the passage is a technical term signifying the meeting of a delegate that is visiting a city.¹² To "meet" in this sense is to leave one's city in order to accompany the delegate the rest of the way (Matt 25:10, Matt

⁷ Bingaman, "Learning from Left Behind," 263.

⁸ This and all subsequent biblical references are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

⁹ Mark Reasoner, "What Does the Bible Say About the End Times," in *Rapture, Revelation, and the End Times: Exploring the Left Behind Series*, eds. Bruce Forbes and Jeanne Kilde (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 80.

¹⁰ Craig Blaising, "A Case for the Pretribulation Rapture," in *The Rapture: Pretribulation, Prewrath, or Posttribulation*, eds. Stanley Gundry and Alan Hultberg (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Barbara R. Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 176.

26:6, Acts 28:15).¹³ This terminology raises a focal criticism. Rapture proponents believe that this event described in Thessalonians is intended to spare believers from a seven-year Tribulation. However, if the text is to be read *literally*, as Evangelicals claim to read it, the passage suggests that believers will accompany Christ in his descent. Bingaman writes, “1 Thessalonians 4:17 seems to imply that those who meet Christ in the air do so to escort him back to earth.”¹⁴ Rapture-believers attribute a different meaning to the word “meet” with no justifiable reason to do so.

In her book *The Rapture Exposed* Barbara Rossing reveals more issues with the Dispensationalist interpretation of 1 Thessalonians. She argues that the passage only indicates that Christ will “descend.”¹⁵ To believe that he will change directions is to ascribe a meaning nowhere indicated in the text. Such a designation of hidden meaning goes beyond the literal approach and presupposes the truth of a doctrine before examining scripture for evidence. She believes that the passage simply describes Jesus’ Second Coming;¹⁶ she argues, “What the letter [to the Thessalonians] is emphasizing is not that some will be left behind, but rather that we will all be together with our loved ones in our resurrected life.”¹⁷ Paul is a pastor who is caring for the spiritual needs of his church; he is not issuing an apocalyptic statement intended to warn non-Christians, let alone predicting an event that would occur 2000 years after his death.

This verse is crucial to the rapture worldview, yet it cannot stand alone as proof of the event. Irrespective of other parts of scripture, it does not offer any sort of concrete or unequivocal evidence. Because of this, Dispensationalists are compelled to seek clarity by combining numerous verses in hopes of constructing a consistent doctrine (the act of ‘combining’ is an integral facet of Dispensationalism itself, as I show above). This practice is immensely dangerous if the reader wishes to retain any contextual meaning in the relevant texts. Many Dispensationalists—including Hal Lindsey—would admit that no one verse offers full coherence.¹⁸ The question naturally arises: if no clear verse can be summoned as evidence for the rapture, is it possible to claim that scripture clearly teaches it? Why was this doctrine hidden from biblical scholars for 1800 years? This verse and many others indicate that Paul believed in an imminent second return of Christ, but it is untenable to construct a highly specific doctrine on so tenuous a foundation. Dispensationalists often attempt to fortify this foundation by accumulating other, often *more* equivocal verses, to lend support to the doctrine. This is based on numerous assumptions—one being that the

¹³ These verses indicate other instances in which the same term is used in a more overt fashion. Bingaman, “Learning from Left Behind,” 265.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 266.

¹⁵ Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 176.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 175.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

Bible can fit together like a puzzle, which, I have argued, defaces the historical significance of the text—that I will handle in my treatment of the following verses.

JOHN 14:1-3 & LITERAL INTERPRETATION

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may also be.

In *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Hal Lindsey calls on this verse from the onset to invoke optimism in the soon-to-be-raptured.¹⁹ This is, perhaps, an example of Lindsey's inability to make strong, scripture-based arguments for his Dispensationalist convictions. Of all the verses used to argue the rapture, this one is least likely to stand alone as evidence; gleaning eschatological prophecy from this verse is highly dubious. There is no indication of an event separate from the Second Coming of Christ, nothing to indicate a sudden disappearance of Christians. This passage is only used to supplement the already existing rapture doctrine, as was the case in 1 Thess. 4. This sort of interpretation detracts from the text's contextual significance; in fact, when read differently, a more precise and plausible interpretation can be made.

Reading this verse in its context makes a 'rapture' exceedingly unlikely. In John 14:23, Jesus says that he and the Father will make their home in those who keep his word. This mystical language is ubiquitous in these passages and the Gospel of John in general.²⁰ Because of its vagueness, it would be unwise to call on this passage to supplement an eschatological doctrine primarily found outside the Gospel. Rossing argues that the mansions Jesus refers to are figurative; they are intended to be spiritual dwellings in which one finds purpose in Christ.²¹ The plausibility of such an exegesis—one that fits better with the overall message of the Gospel—should cast significant doubt on the rapture interpretation.

Dispensationalists vigorously hold that scripture *must* be taken literally; however, they cannot reasonably argue that scripture is to be taken literally in *all* occasions (what, then, are the "dwelling places"?). The question becomes, when should a passage be read literally? When is it figurative? Opponents of Dispensationalism argue that the 'literal whenever possible' method utilized by Dispensationalists is irresponsible and destructive to the text. Mark Reasoner, author of the essay "What Does the Bible Say About the End Times," highlights that taking the Bible literally becomes increasingly complicated when reading apocalyptic literature. He points out that Daniel and Revelation

¹⁹ Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 138.

²⁰ Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 184.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 185.

are quite different from the rest of the Bible, which makes interpretation more challenging.²² Bingaman argues that “literalism often obscures the nuances of Scripture and sometimes defaces the text entirely.”²³ He contends that the Bible is not a compilation of facts and hence should not be treated as such; rather, it is a vast collection of intricate literary devices. To decode it with a predetermined format of interpretation is to rob the text of its worth. In the view of many biblical scholars, what the rapture truly *leaves behind* is an accurate view of scripture.²⁴

It cannot be doubted that literalists take the Bible very seriously; nevertheless, sincerity is occasionally misunderstood for the need to read scripture *literally*. At some point, seriousness and literalness become conflated. Bible literalists defend the Bible vehemently and feel the need to attest to its divine status. It is through this lens that the literalists read their scriptures. People feel a general uneasiness in uncertainty, and this insecurity often leads to misguided hermeneutics. Craig Blomberg, author of “The Posttribulationism of the New Testament,” says, “Is it beyond doubt that many people in our contemporary world, including Christians, believe a variety of things primarily because they want them to be true, not because there is much (or sometimes any) supporting evidence.”²⁵ Literal interpretation and Dispensationalism in general make reading the Bible much simpler and reassuring. I submit, however, that the attractiveness of this simplicity neglects hermeneutical plausibility, the latter of which, strangely, the Dispensationalist claims as a strength.

1 COR. 15:51-52 & TWO EVENTS

We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

To Hal Lindsey, Christians can be assured that they will be changed and given perfect, heavenly bodies.²⁶ He also says that the rapture is “the hope that Paul offered for the generation which will be alive when Christ returns.”²⁷ In this verse, from a literal reading, it does not seem as if Paul is referring to a distant-future generation. But for the Dispensationalist it provides one of the more explicit references to the rapture. An isolated reading of the verse, however, gives no indication of an event separate from the Second Coming of Christ; and, just as in the above verses, a more appropriate interpretation is possible.

²² Reasoner, “What Does the Bible Say About the End Times,” 76.

²³ Bingaman, “Learning from Left Behind,” 264.

²⁴ Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 42.

²⁵ Craig Blomberg, “The Posttribulationism of the New Testament: Leaving Left Behind Behind,” in *A Case for Historic Premillennialism*, eds. Craig Blomberg and Sung Wook Chung (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 64.

²⁶ Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, 141.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

The Second Coming of Christ is a standard Christian doctrine (the disputation of which lies beyond the purview of this paper). The Dispensationalist holds that two sorts of “Coming” will occur: first, the rapture, and then the final judgment after the Tribulation. How is it possible to delineate between these two events? If this singular verse is to be taken as representative of this end-times doctrine, there appears to be no reasonable way to split the Second Coming into two occurrences. This is when the Dispensationalist again sets out to solve the biblical puzzle.

The answer can be found in Titus 2:13, which reads, “while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” This is interpreted by some Dispensationalists to denote two separate events: the “blessed hope” is the rapture, and “the manifestation of the glory” of Jesus (or “glorious appearing” in the NIV and KJV—and the title of the final *Left Behind* novel) is the return of Christ to earth.²⁸ Ironically, these two events are not separated by a comma, yet they *are* separated by the seven-year Tribulation. It is tremendously difficult and slippery to interpret this verse as two events. Such an interpretation derives from the need to make scripture meet a prearranged apocalyptic timeline.²⁹

The two-part return of Christ is uncorroborated in scripture. Dispensationalists sometimes read verses that express a rescue from future trial as a promise to be spared from the Tribulation (1 Thess 1:10, 5:9, Rev. 3:10).³⁰ However, this is used predominantly to argue a Pretribulation rapture and not explicitly the two-event return of Christ. In all, I find that the delineation of two Comings of Christ arises solely from the need to make the Dispensationalist system coherent.

MATTHEW 24:39-41 & PREDISPOSED READING

And they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. The two will be in the field; one will be taken and the one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and the other will be left.

To those predisposed to Dispensationalist concepts, the rapture seems to jump out of this passage from Jesus’ Olivet Discourse.³¹ However, a simple question must be asked: should one desire to be *taken* or *left*? When proper context and language is considered, the interpretation of this verse runs directly contrary to Dispensationalism. In this passage, Jesus, who is speaking, never identifies which is to be desired. Rossing argues that the verbs for “taken” and

²⁸ Reasoner, “What Does the Bible Say About the End Times,” 83.

²⁹ Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 30.

³⁰ Blaising, “A Case for the Pretribulation Rapture,” 70.

³¹ Blaising, “A Case for the Pretribulation Rapture,” 35.

“left” are definitionally neither positive nor negative.³²

Benjamin Merkle of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in an exegesis illustrating why “left” is to be desired, explains the Old Testament language Jesus uses to convey his message of judgment. By unraveling numerous pericopes (Isa. 4:2-4, Jer. 6:11-12, Zeph. 3:11, Zech. 13:8), Merkle argues that God typically *takes* the unfaithful and *leaves* a holy remnant.³³ He remarks, “The idea of judgment is consistently bound up with the concept of being taken away.”³⁴ Consider the Passover of Exodus 12: it is clear that the ones who are killed in judgment are taken, whereas those who are left are shown mercy.³⁵ It is Merkle’s contention that Jesus uses similar language in Matthew 24. Jesus’ listeners would have associated his words with the prophets and understood that “taken” meant judged and “left” meant saved.³⁶ What is more, Matthew 24 is a judgment-oriented discourse. It describes the destruction of the temple (v. 2), and false Christs and lawlessness (vv. 3-14).³⁷ Jesus mentions Noah and the flood directly before saying that some will be taken and others will be left. It could reasonably be argued that the unrighteous outside the ark were *left*, but it does not seem sensible to then say that Noah was taken.³⁸ The author of Matthew also seems to believe that Noah was left rather than taken: “the flood came and swept them all away” (Matt. 24:39).³⁹ Genesis 7:23 states, “Only Noah was *left*, and those that were with him in the ark.”⁴⁰ Early readers would have associated being “taken” with judgment and being “left” with mercy. Viewing this verse in the opposite manner is a misinterpretation springing from a pre-supposed worldview.

Another example of predisposed reading can be found in the interpretations of Revelation that support the rapture. Hal Lindsey writes, “In the first five chapters of [Revelation], the church is mentioned thirty times.”⁴¹ However, starting in chapter six “there is not one mention of the churches.”⁴² Lindsey means to suggest that this is evidence for the rapture. When the *absence* of words is evidence for a doctrine, it is obvious that the doctrine is taken from other passages. These other passages, as I have shown, fail to convince that

³² Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 178.

³³ Benjamin Merkle, “Who Will Be Left Behind? Rethinking the meaning of Matthew 24: 40-41 and Luke 17:34-35,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 72, no. 1 (spr. 2010): 171.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 175.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 178. Italics mine.

⁴¹ Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, 143.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 144.

the rapture is a “sure event.”⁴³ My examination of the major rapture passages has shown the misinterpretations committed by rapture-believers. There are, however, other critiques of the rapture. The idea is not only biblically, but also philosophically, unjustifiable.

THEODICY⁴⁴

Apocalypses often serve as commentaries on the problem of evil, demonstrating God’s love and justice in His creation. Whether an Apocalypse succeeds in presenting a cohesive response to the problem of evil is consistently debated. The apocalyptic doctrine of the rapture—which, to many, shows God’s love and mercy—implies much more than hope and optimism. If one is to accept the rapture idea, there are certain conclusions that one must draw. To most people, these conclusions would be appalling vis-à-vis the problem of evil. My critique is intended to provide a different perspective: the rapture is not only *internally* unjustifiable (i.e., the verses in its support are equivocal and require implausible interpretations), but also *externally* indefensible (i.e., its philosophical and ethical implications intersect the problem of evil in an atypical and, I believe, *intensified* way).

If the rapture suddenly occurs and millions of Christians instantly disappear, then airplane pilots, truck drivers, surgeons, and other important individuals will automatically exit their current situations. (The *Left Behind* films depict this chaos with especial vividity.) Such an event would cause the deaths of multitudes of non-raptured sinners; these people, who are clearly ‘unsaved’, would immediately go to eternal hell as a direct consequence of a miracle (the rapture is most certainly a miracle).⁴⁵ The question arises: what kind of god would cause this? Although the rapture believer could retort in several ways (as I will outline), ironically, these responses are rarely heard because, quite simply, after the rapture, there will be no Christians to respond to theodicy-based cavils.

Perhaps it is true that, on occasion, people die suddenly and unexpectedly and that it is God’s will each time someone is called to the next world. Many people have experienced these sorts of tragedies and ‘freak accidents’. But such situations differ greatly from those caused by the rapture. People are conscious of the possibility of dying in unlikely ways, yet no one can reasonably expect the driver of the car next to him/her to *disappear* and cause chaos on interstates.

⁴³ Johnston, *The Last Days of Planet Earth*, 94.

⁴⁴ Theodicy is the apparent contradiction between God’s character and the natural world. It contends that, if God is all loving, powerful, and knowing, then there is no rational way to explain evil in this world. God would, by definition, want to destroy evil, be able to, and know about it. It is also called the problem of evil.

⁴⁵ This criticism is pulled primarily from two sources. Neither of them fully elucidates this criticism; I merely take their observations to the logical conclusion. Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 21. Blomberg, “The Posttribulationism of the New Testament: Leaving *Left Behind* Behind,” 61.

In fact, daily life would be unlivable if individuals acted as if these events were reasonably possible. Events are deemed miracles when there are *no* natural explanations to account for them; hence they cannot be compared to everyday accidents (the rapture is clearly not like everyday life). Natural deaths almost always have causes and people who can be identified as responsible, if at least partially. Of the deaths that result from the rapture, God and God alone causes them. Many responses to the problem of evil contend that God, strictly speaking, does not *cause* evil: God may be acceding to the free will of others or allowing evil events to occur. Such conclusions avoid the uncomfortable notion of a god who deliberately performs immensely destructive and *unprecedented* acts. In terms of the rapture, these methods of circumventing the problem are unsustainable.

The likely response to this criticism, however, recalls the flood of Noah. This is an example of a miracle that directly caused mass death. Nonetheless, even if God were righteous in his flooding action, God is not exculpated in his ‘rapturing’ action; the two scenarios are vastly different. The aim of the flood was to purge the evil of the world, to directly cause the deaths of all humanity except Noah and his family – in other words, to cause death (“And the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, ‘I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created... for I am sorry I have made them.’ ” Gen. 6:6-7). The purpose of the rapture is to save the Christians from the Tribulation, meaning the deaths of millions would be a byproduct. The deaths that result are not the aim of the miracle and neither is the event labeled as a judgment by Dispensationalists. The putative rapture verses are unmistakably optimistic and encouraging, whereas the tone of the flood passage (in regards to the action itself, not the covenant afterwards in Gen. 9) is different. The manifold dissimilarities between the flood and the rapture make the analogy unusable. The Dispensationalist also believes that God deals differently with His creation in each dispensation, meaning that there is no way to compare the two that is consistent with Dispensationalist theology. It is unclear how those killed in the flood would be judged in the afterlife due to the fact that the redemptive work of Jesus had not taken place, whereas with the rapture, salvation is available through belief in Christ. Those who neglect this offer (i.e., those left behind in the post-rapture chaos) would be punished in hell (another marked theological difference between the flood and the rapture).

The soon-to-be-raptured will surely rebut that God is a god of justice and that his actions, though seemingly harsh and unnecessarily from the perspective of humans, are part of God’s perfect character and hence righteous. This remarks on the incredible power of perspective that arises when examining issues such as the rapture—the truth of which would be universally binding regardless of who believed it. Namely, who believes in the rapture? *Precisely those who believe that they will be among those raptured.* Who believes that God

is retributively just and wrathful? *Those who will be spared from those disagreeable traits.* Are there any who believe in the rapture and yet acknowledge that they will not be taken? The attempt to philosophically justify unconscionable doctrine is simple when one is not subject to it; the justification is ancillary and insignificant. It is only the outsider that sees the problems. And while those who should possess the answer will be caught up to meet Christ, those who ask questions will be left to deal with the aftermath. While the outsiders are told to have faith in this mysterious God, they are told that the Bible is true and good. If so, where does one look to find the rapture?

The salience of the rapture idea in modern society is palpable. I believe that I have shown how the falsity of this idea is just as palpable upon examination. Those who attempt to argue for the rapture do so on a basis of poor hermeneutics leading to misunderstandings of the relevant texts. The verses they cite as evidence for the rapture are misread and, when proper context is understood, allow for more plausible interpretations. The problem of evil is apposite when one considers the rapture, leaving the perspicacious reader to reject the doctrine on moral grounds. In fact, those who hold to the rapture cannot *also* hold that God does not directly cause evil. Despite the fact that there is one very obvious way I can be proven wrong, I have shown that there is no good reason to expect the rapture as a future event.

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The Many Faces of Adolescent Depression: A Multi-Cultural Review

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Abstract

With the ever expanding ethnic minority population in the United States, there is a need for a more diversified look at mental health. Depression has become the foremost mental health issue for ethnic minorities, ages 10-24. Recent research indicates that adolescents in general, and minority adolescents in particular, fail to seek or receive treatment for depression (Cummings & Druss, 2011). In addition, traditional preventative techniques and treatment may not be as successful with ethnic groups due to cultural clashes, economic hardships, and language barriers (Paxton, Valois, Watkins, Huebner, & Drane, 2007). This paper reviews current research on adolescent depression in four ethnic groups, African American, Latin American, Asian American, and Native American, looking specifically at differences in risk factors, treatment needs, and preventative strategies.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2005) the populations of the four major minorities in America (i.e., African American, Latin American, Asian American, and Native American) have grown exponentially, with the largest increases being in the Latin American and Asian American populations at 17% and 16.4%, respectively, since 2000. More importantly, the ethnic minorities in the United States are a young population, with an average of 30% in each ethnic group under the age of 18 years. This paper will review the latest research in risk factors, treatment, and obstacles to seeking treatment for adolescent depression in each of the four ethnic groups¹, specifically addressing special needs arising out of cultural norms, economic difficulties, lack of access to care, and language barriers.

Until recently, most research on depression assessment and treatment has been on European Americans. Researchers are now finding that these standards are not universal and can become barriers when treating ethnic minorities (Cummings & Druss, 2011). This amplifies the negative impact on individuals already overlooked by the mental health system. Also, just being a member of

¹ There are several divisions and subcategories within each ethnic group; however, for the purposes of this paper and the sake of simplicity, only the four groups will be discussed.

one of the four major minority groups makes an adolescent high risk for depression and suicide, with cultural norms often preventing ethnic adolescents from seeking treatment (Paxton, Valois, Watkins, Huebner, & Drane, 2007). When they do seek treatment, they may be faced with a mental health service system that does not recognize or understand their needs (Cummings & Druss, 2011).

African Americans

Risk Factors

African American (AA) adolescents are the most researched demographic of the four major groups. They face many of the same risk factors as their European American (EA) counterparts, yet socio-cultural differences can affect a professional's ability to properly recognize a teen at risk. For example, the greater probability of an AA teen to be exposed to violence before the age of 18 creates a greater risk for this demographic to experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a predictor of later depression (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). Researchers also found, in a self-report survey, that if adolescents perceive their social environment to be lacking in opportunities they may fall prey to a cycle of hopelessness. At the same time, if they report a high level of perceived racism in their daily environment they exhibit a lower than normal self-concept and, again, a feeling of hopelessness (Bolland, Liam, & Formichella, 2005). These precursors to depression are exacerbated for teens living in an inner city or impoverished environment. The perceived chaos and disorder of these areas add fear to a sense of hopelessness that has become so pervasive that Bolland and his colleagues are now calling it a "defining characteristic of the under-class personality" (p. 293).

One category where researchers are beginning to see AA youth catch up to EA teens is negative body image, which has been widely known to prompt depression in EA teens. However, many researchers have held the belief that AA youth were immune to the effects of idealized beauty in our society (Grant, Lyons, Landis, Cho, Scudiero, Reynolds, & Murphy, 1999). Unfortunately, this is no longer holding true. In a 1999 study, researchers found that negative body image, eating disorders, and reports of depression due to body image are on the rise for *both* male and female African Americans, ages 10-15. Further research needs to be done in this area in order to properly prevent these symptoms and treat this specialized group.

When experiencing a major depressive episode, an AA teen may exhibit more externalizing behaviors, unlike their EA peers. This can be seen as overly violent, defiant, or aggressive behavior which can then lead to a misdiagnosis of a conduct disorder (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). Some diagnoses of conduct disorder may be valid; yet, when AA teens are compared to other groups, trends show that they are over diagnosed in this category, while being under diagnosed for depression. Conduct disorder can also be a precursor or even co-mor-

bid to depression for all adolescents. In addition, Davis and Stevenson (2006) found that AA youths are the least likely to be given screenings for depression either at their family doctor's office or through their school. Whether this is due to economics or environment is unknown, but it is a deficit that needs to be addressed.

Treatment and Prevention

According to Cummings and Druss (2011) adolescents, in general, are the least likely of all age groups to receive treatment for depression. Most likely this is an environmental factor due to lack of access to care and parental decision making. However, this is particularly true for ethnic populations. They found that 7.3% of their AA population (out of 90,855 total subjects), experienced a major depressive episode in the past year; however, less than one third of these depressed teens received any type of treatment. Upon review of the data, health insurance and socioeconomic factors did not account for the disparity, leading researchers to believe it to be a result of social stigma.

This stigma could be born out of the widely held cultural value of self reliance (Hammond, 2012). While this value is held predominately by males in the AA community, it is prevalent throughout this minority group. W. P. Hammond theorizes that this ideal not only prevents individuals from seeking treatment on their own, but may also cause people in this community to deny a problem when confronted with it. His study evaluated only older adolescents and adults, yet in this instance, it is safe to assume that younger adolescents also ascribe to this belief.

On the bright side, recent research has shown that a strong racial identity can inoculate AA youths against depressive episodes by helping them to avoid internalizing negative stereotypes (Mandara, Gaylord-Harden, Richards, & Ragsdale, 2009). In their study, researchers used a multi-dimensional definition of racial identity: an understanding of society's racial labels, knowledge of racial history and culture, community involvement, and a sense of pride in one's race. Racial identity is extremely malleable in adolescent years giving parents, teachers, and community members the ability to positively impact a teen's identity.

During the high stress of transitioning to adulthood, mentoring has also been found to be effective in helping AA teens maintain an increased sense of self-esteem, racial pride, and a sense of coping efficacy (Hurd & Zimmerman, 2010). All three have been found to mediate negative environmental effects and, therefore, decrease the risk of depression in adolescents (Prelow, Weaver, & Swenson, 2006). Hurd and Zimmerman found that mentoring had a positive effect on their subjects whether the relationship was formal, such as through a mentoring program like Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, or cultivated informally through extended family, coaches, or members of the clergy. The relationships and the

positive effects were longer lasting with informal or natural bonds.

Latin Americans

Risk Factors

A Hispanic² teen is twice as likely as a Non-Latino White teen to experience symptoms of a major depressive episode (Mikolajczyk, Bredehorst, Khelafat, Maier & Maxwell, 2007³; Robles-Pina, 2011). Specifically, researchers have found that being female or homosexual, living in an impoverished household, having little support at home or living in a single parent household, and attending a school lacking a supportive environment, all amplified the likelihood that a Latin American (LA) teen will experience depression. Even more disconcerting is the fact that suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among Hispanics ages 10-24 (Fornos, Mika, Serrano, Jimenez, & Villarreal, 2005), and of the four ethnic groups, LA adolescents have the highest rate of suicidal ideation, planning, and attempts (Zayas, Hausmann-Stabile, & Kuhlberg, 2011).

Homosexuality becomes a risk factor when it converges with the family values many Hispanics uphold (Duarte-Velez, Bernal, & Bonilla, 2010). The Latin American culture ascribes to two main values, Familismo and Machismo. Familismo places family at the core of all social structures; whereas, Machismo favors masculinity and a patriarchal family system. Each of which can conflict greatly with the identity of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) adolescent. Additionally, many Latin Americans live by a set of Judeo-Christian values that state homosexuality is a sin. Coming of age in this hostile cultural environment can cause many conflicts within the identity of an LGBT youth. If this dissonance is not reconciled within the teen, he or she can experience depression, anxiety, and some may ultimately commit suicide.

Support at home has become a common theme documented in recent research on adolescent depression. Sadly, a reported 29% of the LA population live in single-parent homes. Most often this places the household income at or below poverty level (Mikolajczyk et al., 2007), effectively compounding risk factors. A further effect of the single parent home is a perceived disorganized and chaotic environment. When an LA teen reports a family environment lacking mutuality, feelings of connectedness, and open communication, he or she also reports higher incidents of suicidal ideation and planning (Zayas et al., 2011).

Unexpectedly, Latin ethnicity is also documented as a risk factor even in higher socio-economic spheres (SES). At the same time, Hispanic youth with a higher SES also report higher levels of perceived discrimination. Such discrimi-

²Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably in this writing and refer to anyone currently living in America who came from or whose ancestors came from Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Central America, or South America.

³These researchers also wanted to emphasize that their study might lack universality, as all of their subjects resided in the state of California, and most originated from Mexico.

nation is a well-documented risk factor for depression and may explain these results. Many Hispanic families remove themselves from their cultural centers or neighborhoods as they climb in SES. This would expose them to the influence of the EA culture, while also separating them from their own culture, allowing perceived discrimination to have a greater impact on the identity of an adolescent.

After home life, low school support was the best predictor of depression in both male and female Hispanics (Mikolajczyk et al., 2007). Regrettably, when researchers asked students why they did not discuss their depressive symptoms with their teachers, counselors, or the school nurse, most responded that they felt their educators were “too busy,” “did not care,” and were in a hurry to get them “back to class” (Fornos et al., 2005). Students also reported high levels of mistrust toward school employees and felt confidentiality would not be maintained.

Mikolajczyk et al. (2007) compared acculturation levels among the teens in their study. As anticipated, reporting low acculturation was a predictor of depression, yet a report of high acculturation combined with low parental acculturation was also a forerunner of depression. They hypothesized that this was due to the potential for high rates of family conflict in this type of situation.

Treatment and Prevention

Latin teens face several obstacles that interfere with receiving or seeking treatment; prohibitive cost, social stigmatization, and fears of legal consequences were among the most commonly reported. Cummings and Druss (2011) found that while 8.4% of the Hispanics in their study admitted having a major depressive episode in the past year, only a third of them sought or received treatment.⁴

Fornos et al. (2005) found that most Hispanic youth did not seek treatment because they felt that depression was the fault of the sufferer and that the only way to “get over it” was to make themselves get over it. Subjects also reported a fear of psychiatrists; they stated that doctors were scary, and they might send them to jail. Evidence of social stigmatization was found within their research population as well. For example, the belief that they would be perceived as weak, just trying to get attention, or that “they were gay,” was a common response for teen males.

The previously mentioned value of *Familismo* is also documented to be a barrier to seeking treatment in Hispanics of all age groups (Duarte-Velez, Bernal, & Bonilla, 2010). They often express the need to solve problems within the family and any acceptance of help from outside reflects negatively on the family as a whole. Also, a fear of anyone in a perceived position of authority by many immigrants encourages an isolationist view. This includes a fear of teachers,

⁴ Their study was adjusted for SES and health insurance availability; therefore, “ability to pay” was not a factor.

school counselors, doctors, and case workers, and may prevent a teen from being open when discussing his or her mental state.

A promising new program has been implemented in Arizona public schools (Melnix, Jacobson, Kelly, O'Haver, Small, & Mays, 2009). COPE healthy lifestyles TEEN program was added to the curriculum in three high school health classes. This program focuses on learning coping skills, increasing self-esteem, and maintaining an all-around healthy lifestyle, all of which have been known to mediate the risks of depression. Providing this kind of intervention was shown to be more successful than after school or weekend programs that may be difficult for the teens who have already entered the workforce. Similar programs are being evaluated across the Southwest. Researchers further recommend that teachers and other school faculty are given training and ample time to provide the supportive environment adolescents need at the high school level (Mikolajczyk et al., 2007; Zayas et al., 2011). While it may be a struggle to get this demographic into formal treatment, several researchers have had positive results.

Culturally Adapted Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has seen impressive outcomes (Duarte-Velez, Bernal, & Bonilla, 2010). First, researchers matched subjects with a culturally congruent therapist (someone with the same gender, the same ethnicity, and the ability to speak the subject's first language). Then, by adapting each behavior module with respect to Latin cultural values, the therapist was able to assist the subject in reaching his or her goals, maintaining cultural identity, and in alleviating depressive symptoms. Most of their participants had maintained their positive results at their one year follow up.

Success has also been seen in family therapy with a focus on the cultural value of *Familismo* (Fornos et al., 2005; Zayas et al., 2011). The therapist sees either one or both parents individually and then with their teen *throughout* treatment. In each session, family members are taught new communication and conflict resolution techniques which are later applied at home. This has been seen to increase positive communication and mutuality in the home environment. It has also had the added benefit of decreasing marital conflict and, thereby, making the teen's home life more stable.

At home, parents can encourage involvement in community and cultural activities. This increases an adolescent's positive racial identity, which will help prevent integration of negative stereotypes and combat the effects of discrimination. At the same time, it is also important for parents to encourage their teens to become more accepting and involved in the dominant American culture, or to "mainstream." Finding a balance between these two worlds is essential in feeling connected and valued within the greater world (Zayas et al., 2011).

Asian Americans

Risk Factors

This demographic has been largely ignored by the research community, except when discussing scholastic achievement (Serafica, 1997). F. C. Serafica hypothesized that this may be due to the heterogenic nature of the Asian category. The U.S. Census (2005) considers 25 subgroups of the Asian population to be large enough to be recognized as a legal category. This makes a difficult argument for universality of any study of the group as a whole, and yet no single subgroup is large enough for an empirical sampling. Most researchers acknowledge this limitation within their work, yet still attempt to formulate a few theories.

C. B. Gee (2004) theorized that Asian American (AsA) adolescents are the most under diagnosed of the four minority groups, yet she has found that the rates of depression are similar to those of EA and AA adolescents. AsA adolescents are more likely to exhibit somatic symptoms for depression, such as an inability to sleep, appetite disturbance, decline in school performance, as well as other physical symptoms that do not translate to English. This deep internalization of symptoms may be due to the high cultural value placed on self-control (Ringel, 2005) and may lead to a missed or delayed diagnosis.

Due to the cultural emphasis on family and social harmony, causes of depression in an AsA adolescent tend to have an interpersonal focus (Ringel, 2005). This can be seen in high levels of social anxiety, as well as an avoidance of familial conflict and social isolation. They may also require a greater sense of connectedness, which can be disrupted by immigration and a lack of contact with extended families. AsA youth are also not immune to the risk factor of acculturation status, as seen with other ethnic groups, and it can be exacerbated by language barriers (Serafica, 1997).

New research on community violence has shown surprising parallels to this group and AA adolescents (Chen, 2009). A contributing factor to this similarity is the likelihood that an individual in each group will also live in an impoverished community where crime is more likely. With that in mind, researchers in various studies have found that more than half of this population will witness or personally experience violence in their lifetime. These individuals have exhibited more internalized aggression, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and depressive symptoms; all of these factors lead to negative developmental outcomes for adolescents of both ethnic groups (Schoenbach, Kaplan, Wagner, Grimson, & Miller, 1983).

Treatment and Prevention

In the study by J. R. Cummings and D. G. Druss (2011) previously mentioned, only 2.2% of their self-reported depressed AsA subjects received any kind of

psychological treatment.⁵ This is probably not due to lack of access to care but rather a personal or family choice.

The Asian culture diverges from American culture in two basic ways: internalizing versus externalizing emotions and individualism versus collectivism (Ringel, 2005). Expressing negative emotions (externalizing) is discouraged, so it is important for individuals working with AsA youth to recognize what might be somatic symptoms of depression, including headaches, stomach aches, and insomnia (Gee, 2004). Only by probing further will a counselor be able to determine the root of these symptoms.

The American ideal of individualism may create the greatest clash with Asian culture. Many AsA parents value the collectivism of their home country (Ringel, 2005). This can lead to the belief that all problems should stay “in the family” and they may try to assist their youth in overcoming their symptoms on their own rather than taking them to see a professional. Researchers recommend therapists and counselors receive multi-cultural training in order to better design treatment plans that respect these aspects of AsA culture.

When trying to prevent mental health issues in AsA teens, these cultural divergences may actually be a benefit (Chen, 2010). According to Chen, the best buffer against the effects of violence and poverty on any teen is strong family relationships, which are highly emphasized in AsA culture. Other preventatives include community connectedness and a sense of balance between the family’s culture and the dominating culture.

Native Americans

Risk Factors

The Native American category is the smallest of the four minorities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005) and also the least researched (Scott et al., 2008). This ethnic group contains many confounding socioeconomic risk factors for depression such as extreme poverty, low life expectancy of 50 years, and a population unemployment rate of 80% (McLeigh, 2010). McLeigh theorizes that it is a depressed outlook that has led to an alarming suicide rate for Native American (NA) adolescents, which is more than three times the national average. Unfortunately, this group also has a high co-morbidity for substance abuse (Gary, 2005).

Current research suggests that the Historical Trauma (HT) experienced by the Native American population has created an environment where a depressed mood has become the norm for generations (Brave Heart, Chase, Elkins, & Altschul, 2011). HT includes not only mass genocide of NA tribes, but also the disruption of burial and grief practices, the geographical displacement of entire populations, and the separation of families due to the practice of sending NA children to boarding schools to be forcibly acculturated.

⁵ Their study was adjusted for SES and health insurance availability, therefore “ability to pay” was not a factor.

To date there are conflicting studies on the effects of HT on adolescents. A few theorists propose that HT has actually created a cultural resiliency within some tribes (Brave Heart et al., 2011). Without this, they predict that depression rates would be even higher in light of the decaying environment NA teens face every day. This theory is supported by other researchers who have explained the high rates of depression and suicide as a continual cycle of grief and helplessness (Gary, 2005).

This cycle is exhibited in the everyday life of the NA community. It has a low life expectancy, high unemployment rate, and high substance abuse rate, all of which are witnessed by the youth of modern day tribes. This leads to a perpetual sense of helplessness, combined with grief experienced by survivors and leaving them with no hope for the future (Gary, 2005). It creates an “environment lacking in opportunities” that helps maintain the cycle of depression in the entire community but specifically in NA adolescents. This acts as the cause for teen depression not in the distant past but into the present. The Indigenous Peoples of the Americas Survey, a massive data collection survey and analysis, is currently under way with the intention of bringing light to some of these issues (Brave Heart et al., 2011).

Treatment and Prevention

Although there is minimal research on the treatment of NA adolescents, recent research suggests that 75% of the NA adults experiencing depression go without any kind of treatment (Goodkind, LaNoue, & Milford, 2010). Adolescents can be expected to have treatment percentages similar to or less than those of adults, based on comparisons of other ethnic groups.

Brave Heart et al. (2011) proposed that family interventions would be extremely beneficial for adolescents in this group. With the disruption of the family unit and the community at large, parenting skills were not necessarily passed on from one generation to the next. As seen with other groups, supportive parenting as well as strong mutuality and communication within the home can be a compelling mediator for teen depression.

Involving urban youth in cultural activities, pow-wows, sweat lodge rituals, and other ceremonies has been shown to increase an NA adolescent’s sense of racial identity (Schweigman, Soto, Wright, & Unger, 2011). These practices have also increased racial pride, self-confidence, and a sense of purpose in life, in both urban and reservation residing youth. All of these factors have been shown to negatively correlate with depressive symptoms.

Facing Adolescent Depression

The literature consistently states that there is insufficient data on adolescent depression, symptoms, and treatment in ethnic groups; yet, little is being done to encourage researchers to take up this challenging matter. Unfortunately, eth-

nic adolescents are a high risk, fast growing population that has not received the attention necessary for their diverse requirements. This is being reflected in the distressingly high rates of major depression and suicide within each group. If this trend continues to be ignored it will become the next great epidemic of adolescence. More research must be done in the areas of assessment, treatment, and prevention. Researchers should be asking questions about depression and culture and how this dynamic affects teens. Current research needs to be reviewed and implemented into training programs for any professionals who come into contact with adolescents on a regular basis. A decrease in these statistics will only be evident after proper attention is granted to this issue.

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Spontaneous

By Patrick Chism

Department of English

Abstract

“Spontaneous” is a short fiction story that focuses on a world overcome with endless disaster. As a result, the characters have become desensitized to the terrors around them. This piece, mainly experienced through the students of a third grade classroom, seeks to bring a new meaning to the term “grin and bear it,” while addressing the dangers of an apathetic life, even for the sheer sake of sanity.

The first time I saw it happen was in college. We’d all heard about the combustions on the West Coast but treated them as confined tragedies that only affected those less fortunate than us. But when Professor Einglebredt, so left-winged that he flew in circles, exploded in the middle of American Democracy, we were forced to reevaluate.

It wasn’t the greatest loss; no one really liked the bald turtle of a man. The opinionated Apostolic-Christian girl from the first row even danced on his charred remains. She repented shortly after, whether it was for her rudeness towards the dead or for dancing we may never know, and we all left wondering if we would still get credit for the class.

As the years blew by, so did a large number of the global community. No race or nationality was exempt from the poppings, as they were soon named. Usually, I’d see one or two a week. Public transportation was the worst with so many people crammed together in a single place. There was usually one for every trip, and my hands would tremble until I knew who it would be. I’d do my best to ignore it on my daily ride by pulling out the morning newspaper from my pocket and burying myself in its pages. The front page was always a gripping piece, usually about lawn furniture, and I would pretend to read about the newest trends. I also kept a set of headphones over my ears that blocked out the noise and kept strangers from trying to make conversation. Even then, it was hard to stay concentrated. I couldn’t go downtown without bits of my dear friend Harriet igniting and clinging to my hair or pink fluid from Carl, a childhood companion, dripping into my mouth.

Those probably weren’t their real names. But it was always more rewarding to have something to say, an anecdote to share, when the cleanup crews

climbed aboard and asked what I knew about the victim. They'd scratch their heads as the last of the residues were mopped away. "Harriet, you said? Well that's the fifth Harriet we've lost on the bus line this month." I'd nod and say something about writing that data down in case it was somehow related to the nature of the poppings.

We were always writing down information like this. But without a cure or a known cause, we could do little more than speculate. The scientific community said it was nature's way of population control. The Catholics said it was the Lord's judgment upon sinners. The government said it was China. Most of us just thought it was from standing too close to the microwave.

Whatever the reason, we grew to accept it and did our best to move on. After graduation, I left the city to start teaching. A school in the south had hired me as a replacement for the late Ms. Alford who popped during a unit on the water cycle. Her thin body bloated and erupted, splashing the students with a light shower of steaming red liquid. Teaching until her final breath, she graced the children with a first-hand example of condensation.

Every Wednesday there was a time of silence for the victims. We were supposed to stand and bow our heads as the national anthem crackled through the speaker system. They each stood with grim faces, some of their cheeks scarred by the boiling explosion of my predecessor. At the end of the anthem, I was required to ask if anyone wanted to visit the counselor to talk about how the poppings had affected them emotionally. Over time, the question turned into our personal joke, and when I'd ask, each of the students would raise their hands in unison and they'd feign swooning or pretend that they heard voices coming from inside their desks. By the end, most of us were laughing so hard that tears would sting in the corners of our eyes. When that happened, I knew it was time to put aside our games and get back to studying.

One week when I asked, my third-graders kept their hands down and looked to Susan Wicks on the front row. The girl proudly put her arm in the air and waited for me to acknowledge her. Thin, loud, and voted 'most likely to be caught up in a political scandal,' Susan's fingerprints were all over this organized behavior. "But what about the different colors when they pop?" she asked that day. The rest of the children grew silent as they waited in expectation.

I chuckled and walked to the front of the room. "There are four primary combustion colors," I explained, pulling the chart from under my desk and showing it to the class. "When a person combusts, the flames spewing out of his or her body are either Malevolent Maroon, Beelzebub Blue, Gelatinous Green, or the rarest of all, 'Sploding Silver.' The cause of these differing colors is still widely debated."

The children all whispered with morbid awe, and sat on the ends of their chairs so they could hear more. Caving in, I continued with statistics. "Look

around the room," I instructed. The small heads oscillated slowly under my command. "According to the most recent national poll, three out of every ten of you will have popped by the age of twenty-four."

The children hurriedly nodded as if they already knew the information so I pointed to Curtis on the third row for additional learning. "Left-handed people are at a greater risk with seventy-five percent of them popping by their early teens."

The class looked to the southpaw briefly as he sat alone with a pencil curled up in his left hand.

"Truly, the universe frowns on minorities," said Gracie as she patted him on the back and set an oatmeal cookie on his desk. He ate it thoughtfully.

After the students took their water cycle test—all of them received high marks with the exception of Gregory who drew his rain with a scarlet marker—we started a historical unit in which the children had to write a report and present it to the class. I allowed them to choose any topic, person, or philosophy throughout history. "Anything from the molestation of the Native Americans and their lands to cannibalism within concentration camps during the Second World War," I said. And with near-limitless options, they were each given a week to prepare.

Susan was the first to present. She had chosen to study popular merchandise purchased within the country and how it had changed in the last ten years. Carefully pulling out a container from her bag, she uncapped it to reveal a single red firecracker and a pack of bubble gum. The class gasped. It was a magnificent hook for a presentation. Through bar graphs, Susan explained how sales of these items had dropped exponentially while other goods such as high-powered stain removers and flame retardant rain coats were so popular they couldn't be kept on the shelves. "It's really an *exploding market*," Susan Wicks concluded. We all choked on our laughter and gave her a standing ovation.

Gregory did his report on the termination of the one-child policy in China and an approaching end to world hunger. Steven shared his hypothesis that the popping epidemic had created a fear and respect for karma and fate, causing felonies in a calendar year to become scarce. Gracie gave a wonderful presentation on musical artists who had been influenced by the poppings. However, she added the phrase "*pop music*" three times to her performance. The first time we chuckled mildly but by the second and third uses, the vast majority only gave queasy smiles of pity.

The left-handed boy, Curtis, who hadn't been listening when I gave the assignment, came to class prepared to give a report on situational irony and its uses in the English language. Although off-topic, Curtis had studied the literary device well and kept the class mildly interested. Sadly, he never finished.

While giving examples, Curtis stopped in mid-sentence, put his left hand over his mouth, and exploded in front of the class.

As the janitors came to clean up his remains — they removed everything except a dark smudge that stained the pale tiles along the floor — the students were quick to comment that Curtis had been a “Sploding Silver.” I told someone to write that down in case there was a possible connection between being left-handed and the combustion color that followed.

The little girl, Margo, presented after the cleanup with a rudimentary report on the most recent presidential election. She was new to the school, previously one of those feral children who was abandoned and left in the wild until she was seven. As rumor had it, the late Ms. Alford had some real hope for Margo’s acclimation at the beginning of the year. The child picked up the English language with relative ease, only growled when someone approached her lunch, and for the most part, was well-liked. Gracie was especially taken with her, calling her “both a pet and kindred spirit wrapped into one.” But the longer Margo remained in the school, the more troubled she became. By the time I had arrived, she was intolerable and emotional, shifting from her lovably animalistic self into a daily migraine for the rest of the students.

When she shuffled to the front of the class, chewing on her dirty hair, Margo explained through bites the victory of our current Commander in Chief. He’d been the underdog, coming from the Independent Party, but his competitors had popped simultaneously (both Malevolent Maroons) during an on-air debate, causing the polls to turn in his favor.

Margo’s report had potential but she spent too much of our time showing a donkey and elephant piñata she’d made out of Paper Mâché. The memorial had been painted with bright shades of red, white, and blue. It felt forced. The majority of the class rolled their eyes and sighed as loud as they could.

But by the time she cried for the once potential leaders and presented a monologue about their impact on society, the class was booing and the students in the back were banging their desks with closed fists. I held my breath, pleading in my mind for her to end. But the child kept speaking. She glanced down at the dark smudge where Curtis had once been and concluded her presentation by encouraging the class to remember all the great things the victims had done or would have done, had they the chance. And then Margo kneeled to the ground and softly kissed the darkened tile.

The class went mute. But only for a moment. Cursing the whole way, Susan Wicks jumped from her chair and charged to the front of the classroom. Grabbing ahold of Margo’s hair with a claw-like hand, Susan threw her to the ground with a crunch and began slapping her in the face, palms beating down with a growing speed. I felt my hands shake but I waited in my chair at the back of the room.

Stephen, he'd always been a follower, was right behind Susan, growling and spitting at the child on the classroom tile. He hissed and mocked, using my roll of tape to form a white faux chain around her neck. The class burst into cheers.

I slowly stood and began to walk forward, but Gregory and Gracie knocked me out of the way as they joined the others. Taking ahold of the piñata monuments, they bashed them on the ground, each impact spewing caramel marbles wrapped in colorless bits of plastic. I took another step, and then paused. When the attacking students saw the candy, they howled and tears slid down their faces, and I knew it was because they were disappointed that the insides hadn't been made of blood.

Before the other students were affected as well, I continued down the aisle and pulled the students from Margo's body. Each of them screamed and squealed until I put them back at their desks where they simmered to the point of an even wheeze. I turned back to the girl on the floor. She sat, bruised and bloodied amongst the Paper Mâché and candy. Making an executive decision, I sent Margo to the principal's office for being insensitive of her fellow student's feelings. The small girl limped out the door and down the hall, whimpering like a sickly animal. The class cheered again. Margo spent the rest of the day writing sentences as punishment for her behavior. *I will be considerate of my peers' emotional stability. I will be considerate of my peers' emotional stability. I will be considerate of my peers' emotional stability.*

After everyone had calmed down I told the behaving and surviving students how proud I was of their work, and we concluded the day with a class photo for the monthbook. Yearbooks were no longer as accurate when you started in the fall with thirty kids and ended in the spring with an average of eighteen.

Pulling out my digital camera, I instructed the third-graders to line up according to height. When they had, I snapped a single shot of the children. They looked at the lens with stoic expressions and waited politely. Susan Wicks, restored to her productive self, asked what I would do about Curtis' picture. I quickly soothed her fears by telling her we'd edit him into this month's issue.

As the students left for the day in two uniform lines, I gathered the graphs and boards from the presentations and sat down to my computer to modify the picture of the children. My hands still shook and my chest heaved, making it harder to steadily work. Copying Curtis out of the previous month's picture took some time but I eventually placed his image on the edited photograph. I even added a bit of silver to the color of his eyes for effect. The students would like that.

I printed off the latest installment of the monthbook and added it with the others on the wall. It was always a joy to go back through the months and see

how my pupils had changed. They started the year with the late Ms. Alford, a thin woman with large rimmed glasses and wispy brown hair. She stood there in August smiling with thirty bright-eyed children. They all looked fatter and dirtier than they did now. A few of them were even making rude hand gestures or looking off in the distance with mouths hanging open.

I smiled as I compared the past and the present. My own students looked nothing like their originals. Now they stood in uniform lines, all dressed in shades of grey, and each was complimented with dark circles around their eyes, the trademark of level-headed maturity.

When I took another step, I stumbled on the shreds of one of the piñatas on the floor. It hardly resembled a donkey after being bashed against the ground. I picked it up, but jumped when a few pieces of candy spilled out from its core. They fell like gravel to the floor, the caramel marbles now sprinkled with the crimson red of Margo's blood. I reached down to pick them up, only to realize that I stood on the dark smudge that had been Curtis.

Like the air had left the room, I gasped and doubled over so my knuckles pressed against the ground and my eyes faced the ground. But with hands and legs shaking, I crumpled, heaving and heaving until my stomach's contents spewed forth upon the caramel candies, the piñatas, the blood, and the smear on the tile.

When I was finished, the putrid smell filled the classroom while my stomach acids covered the floor, engulfing the tile and the objects on top of it. As the air came back I smiled faintly and rose to my feet. Stepping around the vomit, I pulled my newspaper out of my coat, and walked to meet Harriet or Carl on the afternoon bus route.



Patrick is currently a creative writing major at Missouri State University. After he finishes his bachelor's degree, he plans to pursue a master's degree, a doctorate degree, and however many other degrees it takes to get a job that will pay for all of his time at school. He enjoys camping, horticulture, hiking, and most other activities that involve some sort of survival aspect. That's probably why he decided to major in English in the first place.

Form in Light and Shadow

By Kelsey Duncan
Department of Art and Design

Abstract

As an artist, my favorite subject is the human figure. It is complex, sensuous, and beautiful, and it challenges me. In my work, I explore the effect of light on the lines and curves of the human form, and the process of recreating these shapes on paper. I find it fascinating how all the nuances of the human form can be described with a few simple lines of charcoal or the application of an eraser. Shapes that, up close, appear as jagged marks made by the human hand become the curve of a hip, the jutting edge of a shoulder blade. Even complex shapes—the eye, the mouth, the elbow—can be recreated in striking detail with just a few marks.

This piece is an exploration of the capabilities of charcoal in rendering the human form. Delicate gradations, hard-lined shadows, wisps of hair—in translating these forms, the charcoal becomes more than a medium of lines and marks. It takes on a life of its own, and in doing so transforms into flesh. This ability to create something *more* is what draws me to art, and to drawing in particular—something simple becomes something meaningful, worthy of existence in and of itself.



“Form in Light and Shadow”
Charcoal



Kelsey Duncan graduated *magna cum laude* in the Honors College in May 2012, receiving her BFA in drawing. She is now doing freelance work in drawing and sculpture and plans to pursue work in scenic design for the theatre.

Oil on Canvas

By Allison Hall

Department of Biology

Abstract

“Oil on Canvas” is a short fiction piece that focuses on the unique human experiences of grief, love, guilt, and expression. The story follows the thoughts and emotions of a high school counselor as she struggles to face the guilty verdict of one of her own students. With this piece, I endeavored to explore the complex relationship formed between those people who take a leap of faith and decide to trust one another. Many influences for this piece came from interviewing several people who have worked with and counseled children from damaged homes. “Oil on Canvas” questions whether or not it is possible to love someone despite their background, appearances, and even after they’ve done something irreparable.

You stare up at it, rooted to the spot. “Isn’t that something,” the man to your right says. “Done by some crazy kid. Killed a man. Heard he painted this right after he did it, too.” He says it with a shake of the head. “I don’t reckon it’s right that he even got something in the show, do you?” His attempt at conversation sends a chill down your spine into your toes, a gut-wrenching feeling of recognition engulfing you. It may or may not be the way your face looks as it freezes into a mask, but the man must have given you up as a bad job, because he turns shuffling away toward the next painting.

Of course, stupid, that is why you are attracted to the piece. It’s all too familiar now, as familiar as the feel of your husband’s hands in your own. The bright lights of the gallery have suddenly turned cold. Closing your eyes, you take a deep breath. You aren’t in the gallery anymore, but in the mahogany chair of the witness stand. There they asked you for facts, facts only.

“Please state your name.”

No one asked you why he stashed his coat behind your door every day at school. It was too short in the sleeves and he couldn’t wear it without embarrassment, but they didn’t ask you that. No one asked you why you bought the new shoes he was wearing and stuffed them in his locker. The holes in his hand-me-down boots left his feet soaking wet for that past week, when the hurricane rains had drifted past Carolina and watered the county. But they didn’t ask you that either. They asked him why he stabbed the other boy three times.

They asked him where he got the knife. They asked him why not stop at one? Why three times? They asked him if he meant to kill the boy. They asked him if he felt sorry.

“Please tell the jury when you met the defendant for the first time.”

Had you met him over the desk at the counseling center downtown? Or over the desk in your school office? Or had you really met him with that first drawing, and the characteristic, graceful lines on the page? Those graceful marks were so at odds with the awkward, stumbling way he moved, and you found them to be even more beautiful. It was one of your Tuesday meetings, and instead of having the usual forced, one-sided conversation, you were trying a different tactic. You pulled out a piece of paper, and saying nothing, placed it before the boy with a charcoal pencil rescued from the art room. Fingers as thin as the web holding him to this world, picked up the pencil, and as the first mar of charcoal stained the page, the glaze melted from his eyes, and it was if nothing in the room mattered but him and that paper, the only piece of infinite opportunity he had ever been given.

“I’ll repeat the question. Please tell the jury when you met the defendant for the first time.”

Did you meet him with a handshake, a cold stare, and a file labeled Robert Cavalli? Or was it when he sat down with as much rebel attitude as he could muster, and asked you sarcastically if you felt sorry for him? His attempted glare was more pathetic than defensive. His demeanor matched that of the shabby, not-its-original-color carpet of your office, trodden on so many times it wouldn’t even take indents from your shoes. Instead of answering, you again picked up a piece of copy paper and placed it in front of him. The outline of a young boy and a younger girl appeared, as if they were waiting inside the fibers of the page for him to touch them and make them alive.

Maybe you met him that time that he came into your office just as you were packing up the Tupperware left over from lunch. It was a surprise; Robert never came of his own accord. The school was quiet. You were one of the last to leave. He must have waited until the hallways were completely empty.

“She’s gone!” He slammed the door so that the panes rattled in their frames. “She shouldn’t be on her own, she won’t have anyone left! She won’t, she won’t...” The words were cut off by sobs until he couldn’t breathe anymore. He slid to the floor, his face in his hands to hide the tears, some weakness he wasn’t allowed.

“Who is gone?” You paused and thought. “You mean Lena. Your foster sister.” You remembered now. His response was only a tighter grip on his hair and throaty breaths as he tried to calm himself. The strain in his forehead was just visible through his long fingers. You heard this morning in passing that a girl in Robert’s foster family had been moved to another town, another state, a different family. A boy her age had been threatening her, they said. He’ll

straighten out in detention, they said. And so it was that the young girl in the previous drawing had been taken away. You couldn't stand to see Robert like this. He wasn't supposed to show this side, this soft side, this weak side, this oddly human side. You didn't know what to do with this side. Where was your training, your cool instinct? But you couldn't stand his pain, so you did the only thing you could in an unprofessional attempt to cheer him up. You told him about the time you had been arrested at a something-or-other protest rally and had to call your mother from the police station. She had shown up still in her nightgown and slippers, hair in curlers, storming into the station, wagging her finger at the policemen. He sat up and laughed at that, caught completely off guard, embarrassed tears still on his face, a broken laugh with rough edges. It started slow, hoarse from disuse, thick with emotion, and built until it brought tears to his already wet eyes. His laugh touched you and you had to laugh along. The two of you sat there, you cross-legged on your desk, Robert propped against your door, until the sun was below the horizon. You laughed about nothing, until you didn't want to laugh anymore and you both just sat there in silence eating your way through the entire jumbo bag of Halloween candy you kept secretly stashed in your bottom drawer. Remember?

You heard about this painting just before the trial from one of the social workers you knew. "Didn't you hear?" You can still picture the way her face looked, serious with the news. Robert had stabbed the other boy three times in the abdomen. The boy's body had been found behind the grocery store, by the spare shopping carts, where he had probably been smoking his contraband cigarettes. The boy would never get those detentions after all. Guess he would never learn. Maybe Lena could come back now. Or maybe she wouldn't want to with Robert gone. "And, if that wasn't enough" the social worker continued, "he completely ignored the policeman who found him later. Didn't say a word." They had found him in his room, sitting simply on his bed, his forehead resting against the painting.

The painting is a human's outline, a profile, abstract in nature, oil on canvas in vein-colored blues, bruised purples. There is something odd about it, entrancing, like seeing a car crash and not being able to turn away. There is something about it you cannot see or recognize, only feel.

There were pictures of the dead boy at the trial. He was short and bulky, his junior high chub just starting to turn to muscle as he matured and discovered sports. His face looked so innocent. Freckles, dimples even. He looked just like his mother. The photos were spread around the outside of the courthouse, along with flowers, stuffed bears, candles, even yearbooks recording his silly antics. No one recorded his belligerence, his foul words, his cruelty. You wondered how well the givers of the stuffed bears and photos knew the boy or if they cared as much before his death. You cried for the boy's parents at the trial, not even bothering to wipe your tears when you saw the father put his arm

around the freckly mother's shaking shoulders. No dimples that day.

Robert was tall and thin, had grown too fast for his body to catch up, and stood half a head taller than most. He was much taller than you, so that you had to crane your neck to look into his face. You hadn't seen him before, not until you met with him that first Tuesday. How did you miss him in the hallway? He should have been impossible to ignore, and you still feel guilty for never noticing him before. Years of practice must have taught him to curl his shoulders, bow his head, eyes down, glazed look, just as years of childhood gymnastics taught you shoulders back, nose up, smile. You couldn't help but wonder what he could have been if only he was cast a different lot, one that wasn't marked with the scar close to the hairline of his left cheek.

He sat at the trial in an ill-fitting suit not becoming to his frame. You were distracted by the suit. Where did it come from? How did that sort of thing work? Was it lent to him by the court, the lawyer, charity, or even a distant relative? Or did he really own a suit? If so, where on God's green earth had he ever worn it? It was too short in the arms and cheaply made. The fabric must have been itchy too, because he fidgeted, uncomfortable. Every eye in the courtroom was on him, watching him sweat through the ugly grey material. You couldn't look at him. You focused instead on a scrape on the table, distracted by it as you were by the suit. Maybe it was made by someone's nervous fingernails, maybe your own, maybe a briefcase dragged across the surface. But the scratch reminded you of the scar on Robert's cheek, so you looked away. Anything so that you didn't have to think about the dead body on the pavement, didn't have to listen to the medical report taken by the coroner at the scene.

He did look at you once before the end of the trial. You hadn't known what his eyes were saying to you. Maybe, *I'm sorry*, or *you shouldn't have bothered*, or *that wasn't me*, or *I just couldn't take it anymore*. Maybe they were saying *help me*, or *he deserved it*, or *you thought you knew me but really you didn't*.

You stand in the gallery, alone at your painting now. Yes, it is yours, because you were the one who held his hands so they would stop shaking and took him to the clinic when he said he wanted to kill himself. You were the one who bought that canvas, those oil paints. You loved him like his own parents should have. You loved him as you loved your child that was never born, the little girl or boy you and your husband never got to hold. You think of the doctor and the cold office waiting room, the sterile couch, sterile chairs, the sterile half smile on the receptionist, the sterile scar on your belly, and the sterile condolences the doctor had spoken when you found out you could never have another child together. You adopted this boy in your heart the way you hadn't been able to adopt him in reality. He was yours, save for the dirty dishes and discarded socks lying in the hallway, the scolding for watching TV before homework. Save for the pictures of his first prom, teasing him about the pretty girl he had brought home, for the family vacations, and never cooking

asparagus because he hated asparagus. For writing in your Christmas letter how he won this and that art show, and your sister and her husband would be jealous that you had such a talented and amazing young boy. His report card hanging on the refrigerator next to the grocery list, "Don't forget the eggs," your husband would write on it like he always did. Bugging him to send in his college applications because he'd never be accepted anywhere if he didn't mail them in. Crying, holding his hands together between your own on the day of his wedding as he wore a new suit, a nice one that accented his tall slender frame and wasn't too short in the sleeves.

Maybe you really hadn't known him at all. You didn't know if he watched cartoons when he was younger, or if he would've preferred the Batman or Spiderman pajamas, or if he would be good at baseball when your husband taught him. You didn't know if he'd like Cap'n Crunch or that dehydrated strawberry kind of cereal, or if his cowlick would necessitate a barber instead of your snippers. You didn't know what kind of terrible music he'd listen to, if you would be yelling through the walls to turn it down, or if he would scare the bejeesus out of you when you let him drive for the first time. You knew his sorrow, his troubles, his challenges, never his joys or triumphs. You knew what his file said, but you were never able to read between the lines. You cared about him, but did he know that? Did he ever realize you loved him, even a little? Did you ever know him at all?

Another elderly gentleman drifts your way, and his presence at the painting breaks through your bitter, racing thoughts. He stands next to you and looks at the painting in silence. "This is beautiful, don't you think?" he says, turning to you, and oh God, not another talker, keeps going. "It was done by a young boy, the buzz is saying. They say he painted it of a boy that he killed, may or may not have been an accident, I don't know." He talks very slowly, and traces the air over where the lines arch out. "But see these lines here and here? They sort of look like hair don't they?" His hands have a gentle wobble acquired with age, and he points to more brush strokes. "You can see a profile there, but it's not of that dead boy I don't think. I watched the news and all, and he didn't look like this." He pauses and gingerly puts his fingers to his lips. "If it wasn't so unlikely, I'd say that could be, well, that could be your nose and maybe your mouth too. Heck, it could be your entire profile!" He laughs. "But how silly, I'm sorry, of course that isn't you." He keeps admiring the painting. Oh, now you can't even imagine it. Robert killed the boy, and maybe painted you, and this was the best painting you had ever seen, or the worst, and of course it would win the show no question, but what would they do with the money? You shouldn't collapse in this gallery, the lights are too bright, the space is too small, and you don't even know if you can collapse. But it seems dramatic and fitting in this moment, and this nice man next to you is staring at you too intently and then looking back to the painting. You have to get out

of here, but you owe it to Robert to stay. So you nod to the man and pick your way over to the other side of the room where everyone is gathering for the announcement of the awards.

There is a woman already talking, making the crowd laugh a little, enjoying herself. The pleasant faces of the crowd surround her. Artists are mingled among their friends, family, supporters, because this is a joyous occasion, a celebration of creativity in fact.

Shock and awe and hurt and pain make everything move like you're underwater, but you hear, just like you knew you would, "... by Robert Cavalli." There is a slight pause, and smattered applause starting, heads turning, waiting for the artist to show up to receive his envelope, his money, his honor, but oh wait, you see them realize, that's the murderer kid. Some people clap louder and harder, and others give them side glances. But your feet are moving towards the stage and you see that last look he had given you across the courtroom. You feel your husband's hands around your waist as he walks with you to the car after the trial. There is the old man still across the gallery looking at the painting. And there is Robert sitting in your chair, intent, drawing, eyes down, strand of long hair in his face, dirty fingers clutching a small piece of charcoal pencil, his report card tossed in the trash as he gets on the school bus. And that is your profile in the painting.

You should see and feel the wide eyes of the art guild president as she holds up the envelope and ribbon. You should hear her asking why Robert isn't here, but there's a deafness inside you, a blindness, an empty hole where your Tuesday meetings should be. There's a scar on his face and a manila envelope on your desk with his name written on the outside. There's a child in prison, a painting in a gallery, and there is you, standing in front of strangers, and you're grabbing an envelope out of a surprised hostess's hands, with a check that he will never use to pay for college applications or buy a corsage for his prom date. There are too many words to ever describe what a wonderful person he could have been. There is a jury's verdict, another child dead. There are too many things you wish you could've said to him: that you loved him, that there was someone out there who cared for his existence, that you were so, so, so disappointed in him, but you would never, never give up either. Too many things. You wish that you too could paint or draw or even sing or do something, anything so that he would know that there was someone to whom he could have turned.

There is a boy with a knife, tall and awkward, forsaken, depressed, but so strong, and so weak, who doesn't speak but a few words, but who actually did love someone, who drew and painted and cried and ate Halloween candy. And there is you, now holding his envelope, and his blue ribbon, in that upscale gallery, and there is an old man still staring, and he said it was your profile in the painting. Your husband is busy whispering hushed explanations to the art

guild president, but you're walking away now, holding Robert's envelope, his ribbon, taking your camera out of your purse as you go. You didn't know why you grabbed the thing as you walked out of the house tonight. It was a second thought, needless. But the old man is still standing at the painting. He smiles as you walk up, and without a word takes the camera from your hands. How does he know? You hold up the ribbon, not even bothering to wipe the stray tears that have found your cheek. A smile breaks your lips as he flashes the camera, because you're imagining the look the prison staff will have when they open the envelope sent to Mr. Robert Cavalli. It will contain only the photo of a woman with a blue ribbon and a winning painting, the best they have ever seen, or the worst, a painting with a small placard to the bottom right that says:

Untitled

Robert Cavalli, 16

Oil on Canvas



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The Confession

By Aaron Henson
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Abstract

“The Confession” is a stand-alone short story written for ENG 315. It was intended primarily to entertain, but it was also meant to explore how philosophical discussions could be made interesting to an average reader who does not have a philosophical bent. Plato also tried to appeal to the everyday reader, but had limited success. However, he was influential to the effort. Ideally, readers will find themselves engaged in this story and questioning what they believe about the nature of justice and the importance of truth.

Two tall, burly men dragged Number 71312 behind them, who was himself struggling to keep on his feet as he dragged his right leg uselessly behind him. They stopped at an iron-bar door near the middle of the torchlit, stone hallway. As the man to Number 71312’s left unlocked the door, the man to his right stepped on his ankle, grinding the heel of his boot against the bone.

The guard leaned down and hissed into the injured man’s ear as he shifted his weight back to the floor. “Now I wouldn’t talk to Number 21215. He’s raving mad—always either very strange or very violent, depending on the day, and I’d hate to deprive Lady Justice of due process with you getting killed in prison.” His breath was stale, and spittle bathed the cripple’s face with every consonant uttered.

The door slid back with an angry squeal and the two guards threw their prisoner into the cell, locked the door, and walked away without another word to him.

Number 21215 was huddled in the far right corner of the cell, his back to the door. Something was dripping from the ceiling, hitting the top of his head, and running through his patchy, stringy hair and soaking into the neck of his shirt. A puddle was forming somewhere below him, no doubt. It smelled worse here than it had anywhere else in the entire prison, as though the first cart of eggs dragged to market was allowed to rot inside this man’s clothes.

Yet for all this, Number 21215 never stopped a slight movement of his arms. Shadow obscured whatever he was working on, but there was a faint scratching coming from his corner as he went on and on, like a mouse trapped in a wall or a grating file.

"You're blocking my light."

Number 71312 jumped at the sound of his cellmate's voice and, when his leg gave out, fell to the floor, through the veneer of mud and straw and to the unforgiving stone just below it. The voice was abrupt, irritated, and it quivered—likely the fruit of a constitution perched on the razor's edge between madness and sanity, if what the guard said was true.

He watched his cellmate hunched over his light-poor project, ever making the shadowed motions and causing those noises. The man failed to move from his damp position for over twenty minutes before Number 71312 decided to disregard the guard's warning. There was no reason to think those guards were looking out for his health. Surely the man would not want to be stared at indefinitely. He knew that he would not want that. He opened his mouth to say something.

His new cellmate preempted his effort at conversation. "Don't tell me where you are going or where you have been, and don't ask me either."

Number 71312 shut his mouth and dragged himself back to the far corner, near the door. His leg hurt—which hardly seemed worth noticing at this point—and he was tired from the abuse that had given him the pain. His eyes closed themselves without giving him relief, and he curled up, trying to brace himself against the stale cold that pervaded the cell.

He fell asleep counting his pains to the irregular grating coming from the corner.

Something hit him in the chest. It bounced hard and stopped in the mud.

"Wake up," his cellmate's voice demanded.

"I'm awake," he returned. He felt rage growing inside, the heat already rising past the brims of his eyes.

"Throw that back to me." The voice still wavered.

Before Number 71312 could object, he yelled, "Throw it back to me or the next one cracks your skull!" The demand was distorted as it bounced around the cell so that it sounded like the voice of some hulking monster.

Number 71312 complied to the sound more than the demand. It was some sort of tool, like a chisel, perhaps, or a carpenter's gouge. It was only after it had left his hand that he realized he could have killed him with the throw. Just as well, though. He knew he was in enough trouble without "depriving Lady Justice" of another one of her prizes.

The voice continued its demands out of the corner, "I need a name."

Number 71312 was hesitant. The guards had not led him astray; it would be a mistake to interact with this devil.

"Give it to me!" The echo was not so severe this time, but it was as shrill as a bad violin.

Maybe if he just gave him what he wanted, he could go back to sleep. "My name is Jameson—"

"Not your name!" He sighed, truly offended. "Too late now. It will have to do."

The scraping continued.

"What are you working on?" Jameson asked after several uneasy minutes. He was muttering something into his corner; Jameson leaned forward, trying to hear. But he would only lean in. No reason to put himself through the pain of moving closer, only to be killed.

"If you tell me your number," 21215 started, "maybe I will be able to get your name out of my head, but there also stands the quite probable outcome that I will just know two things about you, rather than just one, which is annoying enough already. However, I would much rather call you a number than a name. Anything can be a number, but I only know one of someone with your name."

"You want my number?" His chest was still throbbing, and the shadowy torchlight was playing evil tricks on his sleepy eyes; it was unreasonable for this man to expect him to follow his back-turned muttering.

"What did I just say to you!"

Jameson ducked down, expecting the tool to come flying back at him. When it did not, he cautiously answered, "Seventy-one, three, twelve."

"Not the way I would have grouped the numbers, but I'm sure you have your own special reason for doing things."

Jameson closed his eyes, trying to shut out his environment. Prison was shaping up to be worse than he expected when he was arrested. He brought his left leg to his chest and thought back on the last few months that had brought him to this internment. Maybe it started earlier than that, or maybe there was never a start. A start implies a course, and a course implies order. Instead of a peaceful ending—the ending most of his life had pointed him toward—he would either be murdered by this maniac or be executed by a bloodthirsty State.

Steady footsteps approaching brought him out of his brooding. He cursed the guards for their easy gaits. There was something unjust about it.

They opened the cell door and waited wordlessly in the threshold.

Number 21215 did not notice the guards' arrival for several moments. When he did, his slight shoulders raised and dropped slowly—another slight sigh. But while the last one seemed like a natural reaction, this one seemed forced, like a ritual. 21215 climbed to his feet and walked toward the door, via Jameson's side of the cell. "Do not so much as look interested in what I have on my side," he said.

"Easily done," Jameson replied. "You think yourself too important if you believe your project makes me think twice."

21215 suddenly looked to Jameson like his father used to when he scolded him. "When I come back—"

“Get out here!” one of the guards roared at last.

Number 21215 looked around suspiciously before hurrying out the door with them. They closed it with the sound of finality that always accompanies slamming doors.

With his cellmate’s demanding to be left alone and then throwing things at him and interrogating him with senseless questions no longer in the picture, Jameson allowed himself to close his eyes again and to stretch himself out on the cold, damp layer of filth that served as flooring surprisingly well. His leg, which felt thoroughly trampled and like it had been pricked and stabbed, prevented him from relaxing no matter how he lay. Even when he hooked his toes over one of the many roughs on the stone wall to suspend it, he found that the bottom of his feet were trashed—bruised, blistered, or cut on every inch. He decided it was his closest brush with comfort, but still unbearable.

He shifted again, and the maneuver left him staring straight at Number 21215’s special corner. A faint ray of light from a torch in the corridor cut an indistinct arc through the gloom and rested on that wall, illuminating it just enough to catch Jameson’s attention.

Idle curiosity visited him, and he caught himself wondering what an insane prisoner could be secretly working on in a corner with a chisel. He might be tallying the seconds as they passed, but there was another possibility.

He nearly jumped to his feet and ran for the corner, now perceiving the light as coming from some holy source therein and not from the hall. Freedom. A tunnel. It would explain everything. A swift breeze caught him up and sun beamed over his face as he floated just off the ground with green grass tickling his back.

But it could not happen. The slightest movement was more pain than he could bear. And if his cellmate had, in fact, carved a hole from here to somewhere that was not here, it made no sense that he would not be there.

“But what if?” he thought. Maybe there was only a bit more digging to do before he broke free. It would explain his bizarre and anti-social behavior. If the man were on the verge of escape, all attention would be bad attention. No matter that he was working on this side of the wall rather than someplace out of sight—Jameson had never dug a tunnel and knew he had no way of knowing what was involved, not to mention the fact that he had been asleep for a certain amount of time. The little devil might very well have been half a mile away at the other end, breaking through the last few inches of dirt.

There was nothing to do but try. If he escaped, he still had a chance at continuing on in life. They would not allow him to leave through the gate alive, regardless of how the official investigation turned out. He laughed at the idea. Too many powerful people hated him too much for any evidence or confession to make the slightest difference. If he wanted to leave and live, he would have to see himself out.

So, he started crawling—on his hands and knees first, but that cursed leg would have none of it. He fell to his face again and again. Resolutely rising to his elbows, he began pulling and dragging himself onward, never taking his eyes from that shadowy corner until he finally reached it, squinted desperately into the corner for a hole or loose stone, and was gravely disappointed. The wall, the floor—all of it—was completely intact. The breeze and the sun were forever gone. He beat the stone with both fists, only barely stifling his urge to cry.

The urge was replaced by a fit of mirthless, dead laughter. He saw what the fuss was about now—all the secrecy. All the screaming, demanding, and insanity.

Words. Tiny, crooked words cut into the stone. He read, a bitter smile on his shaking lips:

MY CONFESSION

MY NAME IS ALEJANDRO DE LA MAR. I WAS BORN ON OCTOBER 3, 1385, TO FISHERMEN PARENTS. MY LIFE WAS AS GOOD AS COULD POSSIBLY BE EXPECTED—MY FATHER AND MOTHER WERE THE SMALLEST FISHING BUSINESS IN THE REGION, AND THAT BY FAR. I NEVER REMEMBER GOING HUNGRY OR BEING COLD; I EVEN FOUND MYSELF UNDER THE CARE OF A TUTOR MANY MONTHS OUT OF THE YEAR. I LOVED MY PARENTS VERY MUCH, AND I KNOW THAT THEY LOVED EACH OTHER AS WELL.

IN A WAY, I SUPPOSE THIS IS THEIR CONFESSION TOO.

IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME AS A CHILD THAT THERE WAS NO CHANCE THAT THEIR APPARENT PROFESSION WAS PROFITABLE ENOUGH FOR US TO LIVE AS WE DID.

IT TOOK THEIR DEATHS, WHEN OUR HOME WAS SET ABLAZE, FOR THEIR REAL PROFESSION TO COME TO LIGHT. THE SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION SHOWED THAT THEY WERE TRADING STOLEN GOODS. THE MAGISTRATE QUICKLY ARRESTED A LIKELY SUSPECT—BERNARDO CORTILLA, GENERALLY CONSIDERED INSANE—AND BROUGHT HIM TO TRIAL THE NEXT YEAR. THEY NARROWLY CONVICTED HIM...

Footsteps echoed down the hallway, bringing Jameson out of the narrative with a start. It might be Number 21215, apparently Alejandro now, on his way back. He hurried to finish reading.

...BUT WITH NO CONFESSION, NO ONE KNEW FOR SURE THAT THEY HAD IT RIGHT WHEN THEY BURNED HIM AT THE STAKE.

EXCEPT FOR ME. I KNEW WHO IT WAS. HE HAD COME BY SEVERAL TIMES IN THE DAYS LEADING UP TO MY PARENTS' DEATHS, ALWAYS LOOKING VERY RICH AND VERY ANGRY. HE HAD CLEARLY BEEN ROBBED AND TRACED HIS MISSING ITEMS BACK TO THEM. PEOPLE KNEW HIM SIMPLY AS SEÑOR JORGE, AND, ON FEBRUARY 9, 1419, I WAS ARRESTED IN THE PROCESS OF STABBING HIM. HAD

I NOT BEEN STOPPED, I WOULD HAVE DONE IT. I HAVE SPENT THE REST OF MY LIFE SINCE THEN IN THIS DUNGEON, IN THIS CELL.

There was more, for some reason—much more—but Jameson dared not stay to read it. He pulled himself back to his side of the cell, but it was too late. The guards pushed Alejandro into the cell, and it was instantly clear to him what Jameson had been up to.

The slamming cell door accentuated Alejandro's stare perfectly. As Jameson looked into his cellmate's eyes, he could only think about how he would defend himself in the next few seconds when the inevitable altercation escalated.

"Outrageous. Unforgivable," Alejandro said.

Jameson barely noticed that the man did not sound Spanish. He was more concerned with what would happen next.

Alejandro's glare suddenly lost much of its edge. "I think I understand you, Number 71-3-12."

"Do you?" he managed.

"Yes. Mirrors. You need to see a mirror and you will understand everything, Number 71-3-12."

"You think that I am without understanding?"

Alejandro broke his stare with Jameson and walked back to his corner, muttering something about how it could not be helped and how he would have to make the best of it.

Jameson watched him go, wearing the look of someone stumped by a riddle. The same look became more pronounced when he saw several thin, meandering trickles of blood through tears in the back of Alejandro's shirt.

Jameson continued to watch, but said nothing.

Alejandro continued to chisel, and also said nothing.

It went on like this for a day or a day-and-a-half, by Jameson's best estimation, until the guards came back to take Alejandro again. This time both parties seemed weary, but Alejandro went to them willingly.

As the guards flanked him in the usual way, Jameson thought he saw Alejandro turn his mangy head and wink at him.

"Perplexing man," Jameson thought, and started to stretch his leg.

But the wink would not leave his mind—there was really nothing else to think about. It was completely unexpected, and therefore completely extraordinary, as strange of a man as Alejandro was. However, it was the first remotely friendly thing he had done to him.

He looked back to the corner and saw the faint light touching it, as ever. The gesture could have been some sort of silent assent to his returning to the narrative.

There was no reason for him to look—there was no escape to be had through reading Alejandro's words, however moving they might be. Except for the fact that he could not help but wonder why there was more writing. The

confession was over—his summation of his time since his incarceration had practically finished with “The End.” But it was not enough of an allure to make him suffer all the way across the cell.

He stared at the corner, felt his eyes droop, and dreamt again of fresh air.

The crisp, odorless air had just filled his lungs, and he was deciding whether or not to let it go free, when the door slammed open and closed again. As Jameson came out of the dream and his eyes focused, he saw Alejandro standing sedately over him.

Jameson glanced up at him idly, not caring particularly what nonsense the man was about to spew.

“You must be wondering why I have returned so quickly.”

“Why must I?” It had been a pleasant dream, and Jameson would not have been happy if anyone had interrupted it.

Alejandro nodded to himself and slunk back into the corner.

Strange man. Something like that would have earned him an angry tirade a few days ago.

For the next few weeks, Alejandro would be taken in and out of the cell by the same two, weary-looking guards. Sometimes, he would barely be gone five minutes before they returned him, a new bruise forming on his face. Other times, he would be gone for hours, once for over a day, and would be returned bloody and trembling. But no matter his condition, he always stopped and looked sadly at Jameson before returning to his corner.

“This could be it.” Alejandro said one day, with great significance, standing over Jameson, as though he expected their final farewell to prime some deeply hidden feeling of fellowship.

There was nothing there but the guards at the door.

Alejandro left without a sound, but with a lingering look. Weeks of sporadic torture had left him shaken; he obviously wanted someone to ease his suffering. Jameson told himself it could not be him.

The door closed as Alejandro left.

Jameson watched them go for as long as he could. If he was truly never to see him again, there was nothing left to do until his turn came to walk down the corridor and take what was coming to him. Then his life would be over—over before he had a chance to do anything worthwhile.

But if there was no chance of doing anything useful here, there was no reason not to go someplace else. Even if it would not let him escape as he hoped, he could at least lie to himself and pretend that he had.

So he made the slow, painful trip to the far corner of the cell, scanned the chiseled chicken-scratch until he found where he had left off weeks ago.

...ON FEBRUARY 9, 1419, I WAS ARRESTED IN THE PROCESS OF STABBING HIM. HAD I NOT BEEN STOPPED, I WOULD HAVE DONE IT. I HAVE SPENT THE REST OF MY LIFE SINCE THEN IN THIS DUNGEON, IN THIS CELL.

MY NAME IS DEVEREAUX RENARD, THE SON OF STREET VENDORS. POVERTY WAS THE ONLY THING I KNEW FOR MOST OF MY LIFE. SEVERAL TIMES, I CONSIDERED STEALING OUT OF HUNGER. NEVER OUT OF ENVY OR COVETING, ONLY SHEER, FIERCE HUNGER. BUT I NEVER DID. MY PARENTS WERE DEVOUT, AND MY UNCLE WAS A PRIEST. IT WOULD NOT HAVE GONE WELL FOR ME WHEN I WAS FOUND OUT. WHAT I DID DO WAS WANDER THE STREETS AT NIGHT. I NEVER WENT LOOKING FOR MISCHIEF, AND THERE WAS ALWAYS PLENTY TO DO AT HOME—I JUST FOUND MYSELF SUDDENLY AND UNEXPLAINABLY DOWN AN UNFAMILIAR STREET, OR I WOULD WAKE UP IN THE MORNING IN A DITCH OR ON THE DOCKS. THIS I KEPT FROM MY PARENTS. MY UNCLE SAW IT AS HIS HOLY DUTY TO HUNT DEMONS WHEREVER HE IMAGINED THEM. HAD THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT MY CONDITION, THEY ALL WOULD HAVE SEEN ONE IN ME.

OUR LUCK CHANGED ONE DAY. MY FATHER CAME HOME AND TOLD US THAT HE HAD A NEW BUSINESS PARTNER, ONE WITH CONNECTIONS TO ALL THE BEST SUPPLIERS AND GREAT LOCATIONS WHO WANTED TO SELL ON OUR SIDE OF THE CITY. HE PROMISED A THREEFOLD INCREASE IN PROFITS, AND HE MADE GOOD ON HIS PROMISE IN SHORT ORDER. WE WERE SWIMMING IN WEALTH FOR MONTHS AND MONTHS. I WAS SO HAPPY, I NEARLY FORGOT ABOUT MY PROBLEM. AT LEAST, I FORGOT THAT IT WAS A PROBLEM.

THEN, ONE DAY, I WOKE UP COVERED IN BLOOD, A BLOODY KNIFE IN MY HAND. I WAS FAR OUT IN THE RIVER IN A TINY ROWBOAT, WHICH I STAYED IN, TERRIFIED, EVEN AFTER THE CURRENTS CARRIED ME TO THE FAR BANK. SHAKING, I THREW MY CLOTHING INTO THE WATER AND TRIED TO GET THE DRIED BLOOD OFF MY HANDS AND ARMS AND FACE AND TOOK A LONG, TERRIFYING ROUTE HOME.

I DID NOT HAVE TO WONDER WHAT I HAD DONE FOR LONG AFTER I HAD ARRIVED. THE ENTIRE VILLAGE WAS IN STATE OF PANIC OVER THE MURDER OF MY FATHER'S BUSINESS PARTNER. HE HAD BEEN FOUND DEAD IN HIS HOME. THE PEOPLE TOOK ONE LOOK AT ME, THE BLOOD I HAD NOT SCRUBBED AWAY, AND THREW ME IN JAIL.

MY NAME IS GENERAL MARCUS SCOTT. I SPENT THIRTY YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF MY COUNTRY, WORKING MY WAY UP THE RANKS OF THE 3RD ROYAL CAVALRY IN THE MAINLAND. AFTER BEING AWARDED THE GOLD STAR FOR DARING BRAVERY DURING A SURPRISE ATTACK AS WE PATROLLED THE EASTERN BORDER OF THE KINGDOM, I WAS COMMISSIONED TO OVERSEE THE KING'S ROYAL GUARD. NOT LONG INTO MY COMMAND, I WAS APPROACHED BY A MAN WHO REFERRED TO HIMSELF ONLY AS 'W.' I NEVER MET THE MAN, BUT, YOU SEE, HE OFFERED ME MUCH MORE THAN THE KING EVER DID. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT...

Jameson realized what was happening. There were more than twenty other stories in the same shaky letters of imaginary people confessing to imaginary

crimes—infidelity, blackmail, robbing churches. He saw his name go by as a character in a prison who was killed for revenge by another inmate on the day of his release.

He tore his raging gaze from the wall, sprung to his feet, and instantly crumpled to the ground. There was no need to read more. It was nothing. All of it was a lie. And how the fool had slaved over it, carving and scraping misleading messages for years and years. For nothing!

Jameson waited at the door for hours, defying his cellmate to die under torture so that Jameson could get the real story.

Finally, after countless hours, the door slid open and Jameson forced his fellow prisoner to the ground.

“Explain yourself!” he thundered, struggling to stay on his feet.

Number 21215 slowly but desperately crawled away. “I have nothing to explain to you.”

“Oh yes you do! You most certainly do!”

Number 21215 looked up at him blankly, as though he genuinely could not think of anything.

Jameson sighed in frustrated resignation. “For example, why you made such an issue of my keeping away from your precious corner, when all that is there is a cacophony of meaningless lies.”

“If they are meaningless, then why are you so upset? If they were meaningless, then after one look, you would have walked away and never gone back. Instead, they have never left your mind. If they were meaningless, you would have gone back to waiting for your death.”

“I’m not interested—”

“Lies! I’ve seen you watching me, wondering at the wisdom and mystery of my words.”

Jameson said nothing, but kept watching.

“If you want to know, just ask.”

After an appraising glance, he said, “Where do you go?”

“Where do they take me?” He said it like a teacher correcting a student.

“They want a confession.”

“And...”

“There is very little that I have not confessed to.”

“Then why do they continue?”

“They do not believe me.”

“And why not?”

“Because, when I say that there is very little I have not confessed to, I mean to say that when I first came here years ago, I would admit to everything they asked me. Eventually they caught on, and in the course of time I have confessed to a myriad of crimes.”

“Such as what?”

"Such as stealing the Ark of the Covenant out of Solomon's temple, stabbing Julius Caesar, and orchestrating the Black Death. At other times, I would have let them torture me for countless hours before I would even consider guessing the time of day if they asked."

There was only one question on Jameson's mind. "Why?"

Number 21215 pulled himself to a sitting position and gingerly leaned his lacerated back against the wall. "What would the truth gain me?"

"Justice!"

He shook his head. "You don't believe that. If you believed in justice, you would not have gone to my corner with the hopes of escaping through a tunnel. I am correct in assuming that is why you made the trip, yes?"

"Yes. But those who know they are guilty still try to escape if they can."

"Of course they do! Of course they do, but only because they want to live, not because they believe in justice. If they believed, they would participate."

"But if I am innocent, then I flee for fear of injustice."

"No. Belief in something ultimately requires you to disregard its opposite."

The pain in his leg suddenly broke to the forefront of Jameson's mind. He had to sit down. "But why lie?" He managed—he was losing the conversation's thread.

"Why not lie? Truth and lies lead to the same end, as do love and hate, happiness and despair. You walk the same staircase to go up as to come down. But I can tell by your face that you do not believe me yet."

As far as Jameson knew, his face said that he had stopped listening and was wishing that he could die.

But Number 21215 continued. "Why are you here?"

Jameson looked up, as though taken aback to notice someone talking to him. There was nothing he wanted to relive less than this, but it was likely he could either tell Alejandro without an argument or be attacked by his angry side. So, his tired mind protesting as he took in a deep breath of dank, mildewy air, he began, only barely denying the urge to lie to save himself the pain of telling his story. "I was born in a city ten miles north of here. I had two older brothers. My father was a blacksmith, and I never knew my mother or how she died. Father never liked to talk about it, you see, and it never seemed like the right time to ask."

21215 listened passively.

"Anyway, we never drew much attention to ourselves; we just wanted to survive. Well, one night, my brothers disappeared. We woke one morning and their place in bed was empty. Never saw them again—they were simply gone. Father and I drew some attention to ourselves after that, demanding that the magistrate look into it, but what was that to him? He was on the governor's business, and my brothers were not in the governor's business. We did quite a lot of searching, and father almost lost everything because he had no more time

to work. And that caught the attention of our neighbors, and soon everyone was relaying information from all over the region about any leads they had.

"It all came to nothing in the end. Eventually we had to move beyond it, but we did not stop without making our objections about the local government known. Father died a few months after he gave up on his sons. There's only so much death a man can experience before being strong in its face takes too much from you." Jameson paused solemnly. When he looked at his cellmate, he saw only a blank stare. This was just another story to him, one that might very well go up on the wall next. But he was still waiting to hear the end, so Jameson continued.

"I carried on the business, and quickly developed an even better reputation than father had. Then, one day a few years later, the magistrate died without sons, and it trickled down like things do that the governor was not sure who to appoint in his place, and before I could stop them, the people had made it abundantly clear that I was their man, not that that usually does much good when dealing with rulers, but they kept it up. I kept expecting to wake up to a riot every morning if the governor had made his decision against me in the night. Eventually, I decided to get on board with it. I even appeared before the governor, and we had a long talk. I will refrain from boring you with the details, as they would only annoy anyone, particularly someone such as yourself, but I left that meeting feeling fairly good about my chances."

Jameson knew the next part of his story made little sense. He had often thought about it as the guards tortured him to confess to murder. Every needle prick and every crushing blow drove it home deeper: nothing he had ever said or did to anyone had ever done him any good.

Suddenly, he wanted nothing but to be done telling the story. He summarized until the end: "Three days later, a rich landowner bought the position right out from under me. There was nothing for me to do, as angry as I might have been about the ordeal. The people, on the other hand, were outraged. And not two days later, the governor was dead, and the new magistrate's fields and houses were all burned to the ground. It killed some of his family. I found out when the new magistrate himself came to my home, dragged me out of bed and brought me here."

Jameson stopped talking with a shrug of his shoulders. A priest and his other cellmates had told him that telling the story to someone would make things better. It never did. The only difference now was that he knew Number 21215 was right. There was no justice. But it did not matter what he believed about it, or whether he told the truth or lied. There was no escape either way.

Apparently Number 21215 could not perceive that he had won the argument. He continued, "If anyone should disbelieve justice, it should be you, you who have had so much taken from you when any sort of justice would have watched over your family. Now, with the magistrate against you, your trial will

come soon—if you get one—and it will lead to your execution—”

“Don’t you think I know that!” Jameson raged forward like a dog fighting its chain.

Number 21215 was unimpressed by the display. “I ask you what you will do when that time comes.”

Jameson said nothing. There was hardly any time left for him to do anything, and it was clear now that Number 21215 did not want someone to absolve him by hearing his confession as much as he wanted a disciple to pass his knowledge on to. A lot of good picking him was going to do. They both knew he was as good as dead—he would never know another person besides him.

A few days later, Jameson woke up, rearranged his legs, idly picking off a few stalks of straw, and found himself alone. He sat up to get a more complete view of the room, but came to the same conclusion.

There was something lumpy and hard under his other leg. He lazily investigated with his hand, and found the tools: two chisels—one with a wide head and one narrow—and a worn wooden mallet with a crooked handle.

Jameson stared at them for a moment, as if needing to be sure of every quality of the metal and every grain of the wood, where the knots were and how the base of the handle had been sanded smooth by rough hands, and the myriad of tiny divots driven into the misused soft-wood faces of the mallet’s head.

Number 21215 was right, of course. What else was there to do with the little time he had? His life was a wreck, and there was never any chance that something so purposeless could have turned out any different. There was nothing to do but lie to himself, to put down a story where the characters got what they deserved. Maybe he had come close in actuality—just one less landowner getting in his way or a magistrate who cared about his brothers and everything would have been different—but what did that matter in the end?

Something snapped inside him. He violently ripped the tools free of the floor, struggled to his feet, and stumbled across the room to the light.

He worked constantly, sleep finally driven away from his eyes. It was awkward at first: he had hardly ever written in his life and never engraved anything, let alone solid rock with tools made of scavenged supplies. For the first few days, he only managed one part of a letter an hour, and his atrophied muscles begged to stop at every moment.

At last he finished.

Then he waited.

And when the guards finally came for him, they did not have to pull him to his feet. He met them, leaning lightly on the door, and silently shoved the tools to one guard’s chest. They looked at him curiously, as if they were expecting this to be the beginnings of an escape.

"It has to matter," Jameson said. He led the way from the cell, with one quick glance at the dark corner, the light now gone, obscured by their silhouettes, where there was a new inscription.

MY CONFESSION

MY NAME IS JAMESON SMITH, PRISONER 71312, AND I AM INNOCENT.



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Ozark Jubilee: A Crossroads in American History

By Nathaniel Lucy

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Abstract

Today, a plaque can be found at the crossroad of St. Louis Street and Jefferson Avenue in Springfield, Missouri that marks where the Jewell Theater once stood. On Saturday nights during the 1950s, people would be lined up on the street and eventually fill all twelve hundred seats in the theater. The audience was there to see the *Ozark Jubilee*, a country music variety show, and millions of other eyes were watching its broadcast across the globe live on television. Some of the most well known stars in country music graced the stage and screen on *Ozark Jubilee*. In this essay, I will present what *Ozark Jubilee* was, where it came from, and what it represented. I will also examine how the show was received locally and nationally and its impact on society.

Background on Hillbilly Music

During the time of *Ozark Jubilee*, country music was often called hillbilly music and associated with hillbillies. Though the hillbilly stereotype did not often reflect the people playing the music or the music itself, it was popularly portrayed as such. Music was generally classified in very broad genres, unlike today. From the 1920s to the 1950s, any music that could be perceived as by or for rural white Americans was called hillbilly music (Green 1965).

Associating a type of music with the term hillbilly emerged in the late 1920's during the "Hillbilly heyday"; though who originated the commercialization of rural white music is contested (Harkins 2004). One of the first recognized hillbilly music acts was known as The Hill Billies, an all male quartet from Washington, D.C. featuring a guitar, a banjo, a fiddle, and a singer (Green 1965). Even though they were from a large city, record companies decided to label the group as "hillbilly" because they performed old ballads and it was assumed the hillbilly label would sell more music. In March 1929, the band debuted on the radio with a musical variety show that featured their typical songs with skits and instrumentals in between on WRC, a Washington station. During that same year, a film short featuring the band was shown along with *The Singing Fool*, starring Al Jolson, which brought the hillbilly image and the

hillbilly sound together.

Hillbilly music eventually became a blanket term for rural white music. Music genres such as old time, folk, bluegrass, and country-western were all classified as hillbilly from the 1930s to the 1950s (Green 1965). Because hillbilly music was such a general term, the image of hillbilly music in media had a variety. The Hill Billies of D.C. were promoted featuring stereotypical southern mountain stereotype dress: overalls and floppy hats. It is also important to note, that the group was once billed as the Ozark Hillbillies while touring. On the other hand, western movies featuring cowboys and the untamed west depicted entirely different imagery. By 1935, musical westerns starring hillbilly music stars such as Gene Autry cemented the connection between the mountains and the West.

Ozark Jubilee: Beginnings and Format

Ozark Jubilee grew out of the Springfield radio station KWTO (Spears-Stewart 1993). KWTO, the call sign standing for “Keep Watching the Ozarks,” and its 156 live shows a week were popular throughout the Ozarks region in the early 1950s. Even stations outside the Ozarks broadcast KWTO’s shows. Hillbilly programs, like the one by The Hill Billies, were KWTO’s specialty. *Korn’s-a-Krackin’* was the most popular of these shows, and Ralph Foster, along with Si Siman, Lester Cox, and John Mahaffey, decided to venture into live television by creating Crossroad Television Productions Inc. KWTO and a Springfield television station known as KYTV shopped the idea of a live hillbilly music show broadcast from Springfield. In 1954, ABC-TV agreed to air *Ozark Jubilee* (Spears-Stewart 1993).

Ozark Jubilee ran from 1954 to 1960 at the Jewell Theater in downtown Springfield; it was the first live hillbilly music show on network television. The success of the show would not have been possible without Red Foley, the host of the *Ozark Jubilee* throughout its entire run. By the time he signed onto the show, Kentuckian Red Foley had made a name for himself in the music industry for being the host of the *Grand Ole Opry*, and his celebrity was a key factor in getting a large studio and television audience (Mercer 1956). As host, Foley was the most prominent figure on *Ozark Jubilee* and defined the look of the program and how audiences perceived the show.

As a result of *Ozark Jubilee* being the first of its kind and due to Red Foley’s reputation, the show was able to have a steady stream of musical guests from the hillbilly music industry. Most of the special guests were up-and-comers to the country music scene, including the likes of Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, and Porter Wagoner (Spears-Stewart 1993). Some of the special guests were also older acts that were past their prime like Gene Autry, who also served as a fill-in host during some episodes.

The show’s format was fairly consistent throughout its run and did not

stray from other hillbilly music variety shows like the *Grand Ole Opry*. Foley would greet the audience at the onset of the show and sing. Entertainment between musical acts consisted of comedic skits or square-dancing. The skits would feature hillbilly characters such as Uncle Cyd or the duo Lenny and Googoo. Some of the comedic actors had previously been in the hillbilly films of the Weaver Brothers. Square dancing performed between the featured musical acts was always performed by local groups. One of the most prominent groups to perform on the show was the Promenaders led by caller L.D. Keller (Carter, *The Ozarks Greatest Hits* 2006). The Promenaders was a student organization at Southwest Missouri State University, now Missouri State University, in Springfield that had gained some awards at state competitions and were known for square dancing with elements from traditional Ozarks music and dancing (Carter, L.D. Keller and the Promenaders 2005). The tempo was faster and they implemented the Ozark jig-step.

There were some changes made during the show's run. *Ozark Jubilee* was initially only twenty-five minutes long, but after ratings success, ABC-TV expanded the show time to ninety minutes (Radio: *They Love Mountain Music* 1956). The title of the show changed twice during its run. For one season it was called *Country Jubilee* and it was titled *Jubilee USA* for its last two seasons (Spears-Stewart 1993). The show also experienced a change from black-and-white to color toward the end of its run when NBC-TV briefly broadcast the variety show.

The imagery in the *Ozark Jubilee* reflected how people perceived hillbilly music and even the hillbillies. The country-western aspects and typical hillbilly features were meshed together to create a unique atmosphere fitting for the Ozarks. Red Foley, who sang more typical country music, was associated with the positive attributes of the mountain man. He was like a father figure on stage and always dressed with a suit and tie (Foley *Fears Hillbilly Era Is About Over* 1956). The square dancers and music performers would wear the popular western attire of the day adorned with flashy jewelry (Spears-Stewart 1993). The show also depicted the stereotypical comic hillbilly. Tractors would be parked in front of the Jewell Theater before the show for all to see, and the skits during the show featured hillbilly characters tossing one-liners back and forth. The set and scenery of the show reflected this dual imagery of the romantic west and the unsophisticated hillbilly. The background of the set would change throughout the show. Some backgrounds featured cornfields on rolling plains while others depicted mountains similar to those in Appalachia or the Ozarks. One constant set piece was the log cabin which seemed to be a unifying figure for both the western and mountain representations (Spears-Stewart 1993).

Reception

Ozark Jubilee became quite popular and attracted twenty-five million viewers over its entire run (Spears-Stewart 1993). Part of the reason for this popularity was that the show tapped an unused market in its day; it was aimed toward rural families, as well as urban families that were nostalgic for the rural life. The show reached a broad audience and was received around the world.

Ozark Jubilee was well received in the Ozarks region, especially locally. The ratings showed that *Ozark Jubilee* was more popular than nationally known television stars like Jackie Gleason (Wilson 1956). Due to the show's popularity, Springfield also became a popular tourist destination around the country, bringing in an estimated fifty thousand visitors (Mercer 1956). It was common for audience members to bring large signs that stated where they had come from. The show even capitalized on the demand to attend live recordings by having a one dollar admission fee which was very rare for television shows during that time. It was claimed that the show raked in over two million dollars (Foley Fears Hillbilly Era Is About Over 1956). Don Baker, a dancer in the Promenaders, stated that the administration of SMSU always supported their presence on the show even though it took them away from classes (Carter, L.D. Keller and the Promenaders 2005). Because of the popularity of *Ozark Jubilee*, Springfield claimed to be the country music capital of the world.

Don Baker stated in an interview that he and the other dancers were told that *Ozark Jubilee* was most watched in the states of Oklahoma, California, and New York. The show garnered further national attention when publications across the nation ran stories about Red Foley, Springfield, and the show itself. *Ozark Jubilee* became a big hit in large cities such as New York, Detroit, and Hollywood (Find Plenty of Hillbilly Fans In Large Cities 1956). Not all of the attention was positive. One *Time* magazine reporter wrote that the show marked a "hillbilly boom" and the show was a venue where singers could "howl their way to success." (Radio: They Love Mountain Music 1956). The article also called Springfield the "hillbilly capital of the world."

Jubilee Legacy

Ozark Jubilee had quite an impact on national television. During the run of the show, Springfield, Missouri, was the third leading source of live television programming, behind only New York City and Chicago (Spears-Stewart 1993). ABC-TV, due to its success with *Ozark Jubilee*, added the *Grand Ole Opry* as a weekly show which also became nationally known (Radio: They Love Mountain Music 1956). Cincinnati's *Midwestern Hayride* was another hillbilly show that emulated the *Ozark Jubilee* model. *Ozark Jubilee* was also a pioneer in color television. The show was the first to be broadcast in color on a regular basis when it was broadcast on NBC-TV (Carter, *Ozark Jubilee: A Living Legacy* 2003).

The lives of the *Ozark Jubilee* performers were often greatly changed because of the publicity from the show. Dozens of careers were formed because of the show, and several acts later became famous. The Promenaders had been relatively unknown outside of the Ozarks before square dancing on national television with Red Foley, but they soon became widely recognized during their stint on the show and even afterwards (Inman 2010). While being a part of the show, the group toured with *Ozark Jubilee* veteran Gene Autry and was featured in an issue of *Seventeen* magazine (L.D. Keller and The Promenaders n.d.). One notable later performance by the Promenaders was when they appeared in an episode of *The Beverly Hillbillies* in 1969, when the Clampetts visit Silver Dollar City, connecting *Ozark Jubilee* to another hillbilly-themed television show and Branson, Missouri tourism.

The greatest example of *Ozark Jubilee's* legacy is in Branson, Missouri. Even though the show predates the large tourism boom in the city (Chiles, Meyer and Hench 2004), there is an example of a direct connection between *Ozark Jubilee* and today's Branson music theaters. Red Foley was involved in the local music scene while working in Springfield and would meet to jam with local acts (Carter, *Beginnings of the Branson Music Theaters* 2007). One of the acts that he encountered was the Presley family band. Gary Presley, one of the members of the band, later stated that Foley had inspired them to create their own show. The Presley's would later become the first musical act in Branson with its own show and theater. Many of the shows in Branson also have similar formats to the *Ozark Jubilee*. The shows are family oriented and feature music not usually associated with large cities. In some shows, hillbilly characters entertain with comedic skits in between musical numbers. Branson shows also often feature young musicians alongside those who have had decades of experience in show business.

Conclusion

Ozark Jubilee was cancelled in 1960 after six years of square dancing and singing. Springfield could no longer claim to be the country music or hillbilly capital of the world after the network television cameras left. Even though the theater that housed the sold-out crowds was demolished, the show lives on as a symbol of numerous parts of society at a crossroads. Foster aptly named the production company Crossroad Productions Inc. because he knew what the show represented. Above the stage was a sign that read "The Crossroads of Country Music" (Spears-Stewart 1993). At the time of *Ozark Jubilee*, television was taking the place of radios in America as the preferred form of mass media while hillbilly music was diversifying and becoming what we now know as country. The *Ozark Jubilee* marked an important time for the country music industry as the genre was transitioning from one era to the next. Members of a new generation were becoming stars on the show while the legends' careers were waning.

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Leoš Janáček: The Cunning Little Vixen

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Department of Music

Abstract

This research paper explores the development of Czech composer Leoš Janáček's final opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, as well as its influences. Janáček began writing this work in his 70s; his concerns with his own mortality, as well as his unrequited love for a much younger, married woman, are evident in the opera. The music and libretto borrow from Moravian folk music, Italian *verismo* opera, German fairy-tale opera, and the comic strip from which Janáček took the character of the Vixen. In this paper, examination of Janáček's life and the opera itself reveal a man who found love and life transcendent over the power of death.

On a crisp winter morning in 1921, sixty-seven-year-old Czech composer Leoš Janáček found himself distracted by the sound of laughter. Curious, he followed the laughter to its source: his maid, Marie, was laughing over a series of clippings from the town newspaper. A closer look from Janáček revealed a collection of comic strips that tell the tale of Vixen Sharp-Ears, a wily fox who escapes from her master and returns to her woodland home. These cartoons sowed the initial creative seed for what became one of Janáček's last and perhaps most touching operas, *Příhody Lišky Bystroušky* (*The Cunning Little Vixen*, lit. *The Adventures of Vixen Sharp-Ears*). Written from 1922 through 1923 and premiered in 1924, *The Cunning Little Vixen* draws from a variety of sources, including Moravian folk music, the *verismo* style, fairy tales, and Janáček's own life. Despite its origins in a light-hearted comic strip, *The Cunning Little Vixen* explores the philosophical aspects of life, death, and the eternal as the composer sought to come to terms with his own mortality.

Leoš Janáček was born in Hukvaldy, a small Moravian village near the border of Poland in what is now the Czech Republic, in July of 1854 (*Janáček: a brief biography* 2002). In 1865 his family relocated to Brno, the capital of Moravia; this move allowed young Leoš to join the local monastery choir. From these early musical experiences grew a strong desire to cultivate musical ability within himself and amongst his people. After studying at conservatories in Prague, Leipzig, and Vienna, Janáček returned to Brno and founded an organ-

ist's college; classes for voice, violin, and piano; and a thriving orchestra. These experiences and successes certainly resulted from Janáček's love of his local musical culture, but surprisingly it may have been his failures that led him to his greatest achievements as a folk-influenced composer.

In 1887 Janáček completed his first opera, *Šárka*, based on the mythical female warrior of the same name. However, due to difficulties obtaining rights to the libretto, the opera went unproduced and unperformed until Janáček's 70th birthday, nearly forty years later (Janáček 2002). Janáček's disappointment with this setback led him to begin an in-depth study of Moravian folk music. He spent several years collecting, studying, and cataloguing local folk music with his partner František Bartoš. Eventually the two compiled their research and published an intensive collection of Moravian folksong in 1892



"Leoš Janáček." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 11 March 2008. Web. 21 July 2012.

(Cheek 2003, 7). Janáček would later publish his own volumes of folksongs with his own musical arrangements. It is from this comprehensive research into the music of his people that Janáček's composition style emerged.

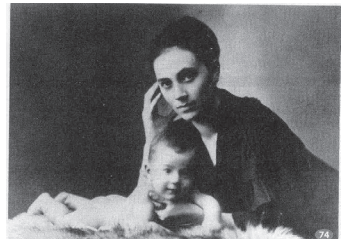
Janáček's style was highly influenced by the Moravian folk music he studied, and this influence is immediately evident in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Folksy but with distinct originality, both the music and libretto borrow lines from local folk music which are interwoven into Janáček's new thematic material. Though often performed in the vernacular, the original language of *The Vixen* is a Moravian dialect of Czech, Janáček's own language, which gives the melodic lines a distinct lilt. In this opera Janáček uses an expanded tonality (but never atonality, as the composer himself considered folk music to be intrinsically tonal and tuneful), modality, and pentatonic scales to bring a rich and colorful musical palette to his pastoral setting. Janáček used so-called "speech tunes," musical lines based upon the natural inflections and emotions of everyday speech, to great effect in this opera and others (Cheek 2003, 8). To accurately portray the sounds of the animal characters in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Janáček took this a step further and actually observed, notated, and recorded the calls of animals in their natural habitats (Těsnohlídek 1985, 180). This clever infusion of local color from both human and animal speech gives *The Cunning Little Vixen* a uniquely Czech voice.

Though its primary essence lies in Moravian folk culture, *The Cunning Little Vixen* also owes its existence to 19th-century operatic traditions. The whimsical, fairy-tale atmosphere comes in part from the *Märchenoper*, or "fairy-tale

opera," genre from Germany, which emphasized the fantastical and supernatural (as in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*). *The Vixen's* anthropomorphic animals, fanciful dream sequences, and the interactions between these animals and the local human population borrow from the fairy-tale genre. Interestingly (and perhaps surprisingly given *The Vixen's* roots in children's tales), the other genre that leaves its mark on this opera is the *verismo* tradition. Initially a literary movement, this post-Romantic Italian style is characterized by realistic and sometimes violent scenes from everyday life, particularly the lives of the modern lower classes (an often-cited example is Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*). Rarely historical or mythical, the *verismo* school stands in sharp contrast to the storybook settings of German fairy-tale opera. In addition to the thematic differences these two genres show a markedly different style of musical exposition. Whereas early Romantic music tended to utilize more formal structures, such as the A-B-A form, later 19th-century opera was often more through-composed. *The Cunning Little Vixen* borrows from both worlds to create an elegantly fluid story that still leaves room for reflective arias. Janáček makes these contrasting styles work by giving decidedly human voices and emotions to his animal characters, as well as allowing enough flexibility in staging to give the story more or less symbolism at the director's discretion. Love, life, death, and even unplanned pregnancy are touched upon in this work, grounding the animals in realism while remaining storybook creatures. Both human and animal alike lead common, sometimes even mundane, lives, and yet they are still treated with a sensitivity that adds honesty and poignancy to the story.

Possibly the most important influence on the conception of *The Cunning Little Vixen* is the life of the composer himself. Intensely autobiographical, the opera is a reflection of Janáček's passions, losses, and mortality. His connection to nature and interest in capturing the sounds of the forest shine through in his innovative score and woodland setting. It is in Janáček's tortured romantic life that he found inspiration for his characters and libretto, which he crafted from Těsnohlídek's novelization of the comic strip (*Into the Woods: the Vixen Grows Up* 2002).

Janáček met Kamila Stösslová in 1917; this meeting would have a profound influence on the composer for the rest of his life (Cheek 2003, 9). Though married to another woman and thirty-eight years Kamila's senior, Janáček developed a deeply obsessive, unrequited love for her. This infatuation led to a correspondence of over 700 letters between the two and several works dedicated to her (Janáček 2002). The titular vixen, a vivacious young woman who cannot be tamed, flees the trappings of the Forester (the opera's representation



"Kamila Stösslová" Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 12 October 2008. Web. 21 July 2012.

of Janáček) to live in the wild. The vixen herself has a human counterpart in the unseen Terynka, the gypsy girl desired by the Schoolmaster; the Pastor; the (married) Forester; and Harašta, the poacher. By the end of the story she has chosen Harašta, leaving the other men disheartened. Janáček presented a copy of the completed score to Kamila in which he wrote, “In every work of mine there is at least a shadow of your soul. It is in this work when the cry *chcu* [I want (you)]!” (qtd. in Cheek 2003, 10).

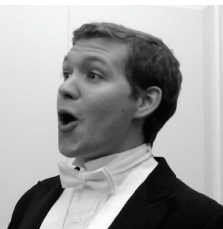
Janáček’s contemplation of his own mortality elevates the story of *The Cunning Little Vixen* from a simple comic-book opera to a philosophical reflection on life, death, loss, and renewal. To achieve this level of depth, Janáček found it necessary to rework Těsnohlídek’s novella in several ways. The most prominent change is undoubtedly the death of the Vixen at the hands of Harašta, a climax Těsnohlídek had only hinted at in his version. The death of Sharp-Ears serves as a solemn reminder that even in the height of our happiness we are all mortal and destined to die, something the nearly seventy-year-old composer was keenly aware of. As a wedding present, Harašta presents the gypsy girl, Terynka, with a muff made from the pelt of the Vixen, fully merging the two characters into one symbolic idea. The passage of Vixen Sharp-Ears and the marriage of Terynka to another man are marked with sadness by the Forester, who accepts his old age and retreats to the woods to find solitude. Tired, he finds rest under a shade tree, where he dreams of the vixen he lost. In a touching scene that mirrors the opening, the Forester imagines he has caught the Vixen, only to realize that it is one of her children. He awakens to find that it is not a fox but a frog that has landed in his lap; it is the grandchild of the frog the Forester sees at the beginning of the opera. These offspring of the animals he once knew help the Forester realize that following death there is always life, that through our children and life’s work our legacies go on forever. This thought, a comfort to the Forester, was also a comfort to the aging Janáček; in fact, he requested the music from this beautiful scene be played at his funeral, which took place less than four years after the premiere of the opera (Janáček 2002).

At first glance, *The Cunning Little Vixen* seems rather paradoxical, a combination of the literal and the symbolic, of the ordinary and the extraordinary. But this opera proves to be a masterfully crafted piece of art that intertwines seemingly contradictory elements into an expression of dramatic truth. For Janáček, this work—written during his twilight years—was surely intended to convey his coming to terms with old age and the loss of love. That these expressions of truth could be told through the simple tale of a fox is a testament to the transcendent powers of life and renewal.



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Andy McIntyre is a senior at Missouri State University majoring in vocal music education and minoring in sociology. After graduation, he intends to pursue graduate studies in musicology. His research interests include French art song, music philosophy, contemporary American and British popular music, opera, and music as it relates to social activism.

The Ring and the Rolling Paper

By Katlyn Minard

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Abstract

I wrote this short story as an assignment for my ENG 315 class. I don't know where the idea came from, but it grabbed on and wouldn't let go. So as kooky as the idea was, I knew I had to just go with it. With this story, I wanted to pay homage to the fears and follies we experience in high school and the unexpected effect they often have on us. The protagonist of my story personifies that unforeseen effect – the idea that one little high school happenstance can change your perception of your life, and yourself, forever.

Todd was running low on pot.

In the past few weeks, his customers had been buying more frequently and in larger doses, so he was running out way faster than usual. He blamed the times. Actually, he thanked them. But, despite the sudden increase in business, Todd was beginning to fret over the urgency of his situation. He had a new customer, referred to him by one of his regulars, who was supposedly dropping by today to browse his current selection. Todd hoped the remainder of his current selection was enough for her – otherwise he could lose a customer.

When the buzzer rang, he put the baggie he was examining back in the drawer and closed it. He walked over to the intercom, jabbed the button and said, "Who is it?"

"It's Ricky's friend," replied a female voice. Todd hit the button to let her in the building and made his way to the bathroom. He looked in the mirror, ran water over his fingers, and worked them through his short, rich brown hair to straighten it out. He wanted to look clean cut, like a businessman, but because he hadn't shaved last night, he just looked like a dealer.

There was a timid knock at the door. Todd shook the water off his fingers and scurried out of the bathroom. When he saw the warped head of a woman through the peephole, he unlocked the locks and opened up the door.

Todd lost his cool completely when he saw the woman's face. *I'll be god-damned, he thought. No. I've gotta be wrong, it just looks like her. There's no way –* "Todd," said the woman. "Todd Brier?"

Marianna Bryce. Todd was seventeen all over again. It was a blast from the past of epic proportions, a wave of nostalgia unlike anything Todd had ever felt

before. Marianna had not been Todd's first girlfriend, but she was certainly his first love – not that he ever got around to telling her. They had broken up following a fight over separate colleges at graduation, after an otherwise perfect five-month relationship. He got over her in college and had managed to forget about her completely by the time he started living on his own. And now, seeing her in his doorway all grown up, Todd did not know what to think.

"Marianna," he breathed. "Uh... hi."

For a long moment they just stared at each other. She still looked awesome. Her burgundy hair was still long, but tamer and softer than when she used to kink it out in high school. He smiled when he noticed that she still wore her cat-eye glasses. Most women would've sold out and gotten contacts. Not Marianna.

"God, it's weird to see you," she finally said. "I mean, good! But just... wow, it's been –"

"Six years," Todd finished.

"Your hair's shorter." She smiled.

Suddenly, Todd remembered why she was here. She said she was Ricky's friend.

"So..." He scratched the back of his head. "Are you here to... I mean, you want to come inside, I'm guessing."

Marianna's heart-shaped face turned bright red. Her mouth made an "O" as she, too, remembered the reason for her visit.

"Oh," she managed. "I... uh... it's not that I, I mean it is, but I didn't... um... God, I'm just making this worse –"

"It's okay." A huge Cheshire cat grin spread across Todd's face. The whole thing was just so funny, but he didn't know if it was appropriate to laugh yet. So he didn't. Instead he beckoned her inside and closed the door.

It only got weirder as they got farther into Todd's apartment. He had never had Marianna in his home without having to check for his parents first. It felt so strange to be with her in this environment – like someone had cut her face out of one photograph and pasted it on another. And they had picked the most ridiculous picture ever. Was he really about to sell pot to his ex-girlfriend?

She followed him into his tiny kitchen, where he opened a drawer and removed a silverware tray to reveal a row of neatly organized baggies.

"This is *too weird*," she admitted, staring hungrily at the pot.

"I don't really know where to start," said Todd, "because I don't know how strong you like it." *What a dumbass, awkward thing to say*, he thought. *Idiot idiot idiot.*

"Well, what would you recommend?" she asked playfully.

He snickered.

"Uh, this is good stuff." He gestured to a baggie on the far left. "They're lined up by strength, so this particular kind is pretty mellow – but still solid.

It's \$300 an ounce." *Did you just charge her for it? Did you really? 'I haven't seen Marianna Bryce in six years, let's CHARGE HER for it!' Smooth move, asshole.*

"And, the strongest? How much does that go for?" She tapped the baggie on the far right.

"Ooh, that stuff's intense. Awesome, though. It's... \$500. But I can always—"

When he reached out to pick up the baggie, their hands touched. He flinched away and felt the heat spread to his ears. It felt just like it used to feel.

Marianna looked at him for a minute before she spoke. "I just... don't want you to think that, like, I'm a loser because I smoke pot."

"I just don't want *you* to think," Todd said, "that I'm a loser because I *sell* pot."

After a moment Marianna smiled, then picked up the bag on the far right and shook it at Todd. "This'll do," she said.

"Big spender," Todd teased.

"Yeah, well..." She looked away from him and eased her way out of the kitchen.

"You don't have to pay me up front, you know," Todd blurted out. "I figure you're good for it."

Marianna faced him. "Alright," she said. "Thanks. I'll pay my bills on time for once... How do you know I won't just make off with this stuff and never pay you back?"

"I trust you," he said quietly.

"Okay." Her face fell, and she tucked some hair behind her ear. "I guess I better go."

But she hadn't walked away yet. There was doubt and desperation in her pale blue eyes, and Todd knew that if he didn't say something stupid right this second, he'd regret it for the rest of his life.

"You don't *have* to go anywhere right now, do you?" he asked tentatively.

"Not really," she admitted.

"Then stay," he proposed. "Smoke with me! I've got nothing going on today, nobody's around, and trust me, I've got the smell control perfected by now. And there's plenty of stuff. Whaddya say?"

Marianna shrugged her shoulders up to her ears like an embarrassed little girl and then dropped them. She grinned and said, "Okay!"

Todd dug his good rolling papers out of his dresser and set them on the coffee table. Marianna squeezed in between the table and the couch and sat down, tossing her newly not-quite-purchased pot on the table. "We might as well break into this!" she said.

Todd opened up the baggie and dumped a few clumps out. He began to grind them up between his fingers, letting them fall into a thick line across one of the rolling papers.

"I have to admit," he said, "this is about the last way I expected to run into you."

"So, you've thought about running into me, then?"

"No, no, no, I didn't mean that, I meant..." He blushed, and wiped his hands on his jeans. "I haven't thought about you in a while, actually. I guess I kind of tried to... *not* think about you."

"I get it," she said. "You don't have to explain. It was a while ago."

Todd felt relieved as he reached for the rolling paper. "Okay," he began. "So, you have to kind of ease it to the side, like this, and —"

Before he could finish, Marianna leaned over and gingerly took the edges of the paper in her hands. She proceeded to roll the most perfect joint Todd had ever seen, running the tip of her tongue over the folds of the paper to seal it. She whipped a plastic yellow lighter out of her purse, lit the joint, took a hit, and slowly exhaled a gorgeous stream of smoke. She gave a low, satisfied sigh that made Todd sweat. Then she tossed her hair over her shoulder, passed the joint to Todd and said, "Were you gonna cut my meat for me, too?"

He was hard as a rock. Hopefully, with a little more weed in her system, she wouldn't notice.

It had been a long time since Todd had smoked stuff this heavy, and it took a minute for him to get his sea legs back. Marianna, on the other hand, seemed just fine. But four or five hits later, the laughing started. They succumbed to an extreme form of relaxed silliness not unlike, Todd observed, the kind of feeling that overtakes you at a high school sleepover at four in the morning, when every nonsensical statement becomes hilarious, every giggle-fit inescapable. The first colossal pangs of hunger hit, and they proceeded to think up ludicrous ideas for food. Chocolate-covered Cheetos! Marshmallows in hot sauce! *Fruitcake!*

"The sky is the limit!" cried Todd, thrusting his pointed finger into the air.

Marianna fell against the couch and sang, "*Off we goooooo, into the wild blue yonder!*" Todd sang with her, and when they both realized they didn't know the rest of the words, they made them up. The singing evolved into unintelligible warbling, powered more by unstoppable laughter than by any conscious effort.

When they ran out of breath, Todd slumped against the couch and looked hard at Marianna. He didn't know if it was the pot or the truth, but at that moment the girl he was staring at was exactly the same as she was six years ago—nothing had changed at all. Not her stunning blue eyes that stared him down during Indian poker marathons; or her radiant, creamy-white skin that always looked flawless except for Todd's love bites; or her kinky, Madonna-fied hair...

Todd lifted his hands and clumsily cupped the sides of her face. She didn't stop him. As the rest of the room blurred out of focus, Todd leaned in carefully and kissed her. It was sweet and simple and easy to lose himself, and it felt new

and familiar at the same time, like going swimming again after a long winter of staying inside. When he pulled away, before he could stop himself, he groggily whispered, "I love you."

After a second, Marianna replied, "Fire."

Todd opened his eyes and saw the alarm in her face.

"Fire!" she shouted, pointing over his shoulder.

Todd turned around to see his stack of rolling papers engulfed in flames. He must have set his joint down at some point and forgotten about it.

"Oh, shit!"

Todd leapt up and practically trampled Marianna to get to the kitchen. His mind raced. *Water water water before it grows, before the alarm goes off and the cops come, shit shit SHIT.* He spotted an old bowl of milk and cereal on the counter, grabbed it by the edge, ran to the table and doused the flame. Globules of milk splattered the couch. The spoon that still lay in the bowl bounced off the coffee table with a sharp *pang* and hit Marianna, who shrieked.

"Sorry," Todd panted, the bowl slipping between his fingers. "Sorry."

"It's okay, I'm good," Marianna said, but Todd could tell she was a little shaken up. He set the bowl on the table and knelt by her to pick up the spoon, which had left a wet spot on her dress. Todd balled up a part of his shirt with his finger and started to scrub at the spot, but Marianna flinched away from him and said she was fine. She hastily smoothed out her dress with her hands.

And that's when he noticed her ring.

Todd stopped cold; his mouth dropped open. He wanted to touch the pear-shaped diamond, to see if it was real, if he had really been this stupid all along.

He looked at Marianna again and came back down to Earth. She *wasn't* the same. She had tamed her hair. She wore a ring. She had settled down. And because she had shown up at his door, he had believed otherwise. He tried to assure himself that he hadn't been stupid – he had just been stoned. But that didn't make it suck any less.

"I should go," she said quietly. "I've got somewhere else to be." She stood up and steadied herself, brushing off the front of her dress.

"Listen, Marianna," Todd attempted. "I'm..."

She blinked her puffy, pink eyes. "Me too, Todd."

He heaved a sigh of relief. At least it was out, kind of.

"I'll walk you out." He put a hand on her shoulder and walked her slowly to the door. "And I'm not charging you for that. I didn't exactly provide the best services, so it's complimentary."

She opened the door, hesitated. Then she turned around, threw her arms around his neck and smiled against his cheek.

"I loved you too, Todd," she murmured. "Thank you. I'm really, really sorry."

She pulled away and added, "But it was fun while it lasted." Then she

smiled, and took off.

Todd closed the door and looked back at the table where Marianna Bryce had just smoked pot with him, dodged his flying milk, and laughed at his jokes. *Yes, ma'am*, he thought, *it certainly was*.



Katlyn Minard recently graduated from Missouri State with a BS in Media Productions and a minor in English. Her short fiction has appeared in *Moon City Review*, 2012, and *LOGOS*, 2011. She aspires to work in the film industry and write fiction for children and young adults.

Is the Stock Market a Viable Short-Term Investment Asset? An Experimental Approach

By Zach Morris
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Abstract

This review examines common stock market investment strategies and attempts to reconcile experimental data with these strategies to determine if stocks can serve as short-term investment asset. The experiment was conducted by Missouri State University students who maintained virtual stock portfolios for a twelve-week-period. Six portfolios were used as data for this review. The average gain on a portfolio was 4.6%. These results indicated that a modified version of the value-adjustment strategy could make an effective asset, using profit from strategically selected stocks to feed an account for short-term use. This strategy is more risky than conventional short-term investments, but has a potential for higher reward. Also discussed are strategies for diversification and risk reduction. The strategy established is recommended as a portion of the total short-term investment. This will prevent a total loss of the investor's assets in case of stock failure.

Unpredictability in the United States economy makes it more difficult to plan for the financial future. Fluctuations in gas, grocery, and utility prices can compound this issue for many investors. With short-term expenses rising, it is a necessity to have liquid assets available to prepare for any emergency spending that may occur. Typically, these exist in the form of a savings account or money market account, and many Americans choose to use credit for surprise purchases. Stock market holdings are usually designated for long-term uses such as retirement. To gain an understanding of the stock market, a group of first-year Honors College students at Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri, conducted an experimental stock market project. This was part of a class designed to introduce students to the college environment. The instructor overseeing this group of students included a financial education component in the curriculum. For the project, each student invested a virtual \$500,000 through an online stock portfolio program. The portfolios were observed

over twelve weeks of the 2011 fall semester. Each portfolio consisted of ten stocks chosen by the students; the goal was to maintain a profitable investment. In order to have some common ground between portfolios, the instructor required all students to have Walmart (WMT) stock and one stock selected from the book *100 Great Businesses and the Minds Behind Them* by business editors Emily Ross and Angus Holland (2006). The hope of this was that students would choose stock from businesses that are considered innovational and successful by the professional world. At the midpoint of the semester, each student reevaluated his or her profile. This process consisted of choosing two stocks to sell from the existing portfolio and two new stocks to purchase with the money from the sales. At the end of the semester, each student sold his or her stocks and recorded the total profit. This review uses data from six student portfolios and attempts to reconcile the data with existing investment strategies. Viability of stocks as a short-term investment will be addressed through the following questions:

1. Does the data from the experiment show promise for stocks as a short-term investment?
2. What are common stock market investment strategies?
3. How can short-term investment be added to existing stock market strategies?
4. Are stocks a viable short-term investment when short-term plans are added to conventional investment strategies?

Does the Data from the Experiment Show Promise for Stocks as a Short-Term Investment?

Methods

For this experiment, a group of Missouri State University Honors College Students created virtual stock portfolios online and watched the stocks for about twelve weeks, reevaluating and managing the portfolios at the halfway point. Some parameters were set by the instructor prior to creation of the portfolios: each portfolio had ten stocks, one was required to be Walmart (WMT), and one was required to be from a company featured in the book *100 Great Businesses and the Minds Behind Them* by Emily Ross and Angus Holland (2006). This book, written by business journalists and editors was chosen with the hope of introducing students to companies considered successful by the professional world.

All stock transactions were recorded, with a \$25 commission charge for each transaction. Students invested \$500,000 in this way. At the midpoint of the semester, about six weeks into the project, each student was required to reevaluate and sell two stocks from his or her portfolio. This money was to be reinvested in two additional stocks. At the end of the twelve week period, students sold the remaining stocks on the same day and recorded total profit.

For this review, one-third of the final portfolios were used, selected randomly to get an accurate cross section of the results. Table 1 shows total and percent gain for the six portfolios.

Table 1: Portfolio Gains

Portfolio	Percent Gain	Total Gain
Student A	7.7	\$38,699.60
Student B	10.1	\$50,600.20
Student C	-0.6	-\$3,047.82
Student D	1.8	\$9,362.47
Student E	8.8	\$44,216.23
Student F	-1.0	-\$5,025.47
Average	4.6	\$22,467.54

Stock Diversification

One of the most important factors in a stock portfolio is diversification. While focusing on one area of the stock market can make an investor a lot of money, in order to continue earning money the investor needs to have many different stocks (Surz, 2007). Even Marc Gerstein, who created a computer program to screen the market for a specific type of stock, suggests that investors not focus on one area of the market (Barth, 2011). There are many different ways to diversify stock, but it is important for investors to purchase stock in more than one area, whether in different markets worldwide, or in different domestic industries (Surz, 2007). With many ways to diversify beyond buying multiple stocks, diversification in a ten-stock-portfolio is not overly difficult to achieve.

Before the findings of the experiment can be reconciled with real-world strategies, the portfolios should be rated on their levels of diversity. Table 2 shows stocks that appear in more than one of the six portfolios and the associated ticker symbols. The results of the experiments show that the portfolios are over 40% similar to each other. That is, 42.2% of the money invested was invested in a stock that was chosen by at least one other student. The parameters for the experiment explain this finding. All students were required to have Walmart stock, and at least one stock from the Ross and Holland book (2006).

Of the stocks in common between the portfolios, only Walt Disney Co., General Electric Co., and Caterpillar were not found in the book (Ross & Holland, 2006). In addition to this, class discussion about favorite companies of the students spawned many of the ideas for investments. Students chose companies with which they were familiar, and it is no surprise that some chose the same companies.

Table 2: Similar Investments

Stock Name	Portfolios Containing Stock	Money Invested	Percent Total Initial Investment
Amazon (AMZN)	2	\$173,182.50	5.8
Apple (AAPL)	5	\$974,840.50	32.5
Caterpillar (CAT)	2	\$69,654.00	2.3
General Electric Co. (GE)	2	\$49,645.50	1.7
Google (GOOG)	2	\$346,664.00	11.6
McDonald's (MCD)	2	\$223,061.20	7.4
Microsoft (MSFT)	3	\$123,978.75	4.1
Starbucks (SBUX)	2	\$31,344.25	1.0
Walmart (WMT)	6*	\$111,369.72	3.7
Walt Disney Co. (DIS)	2	\$39,991.00	1.3
	Total:	\$1,266,731.42	42.4

*Walmart was a required stock for all students.

Despite this finding, each individual profile varied enough within itself to be considered reasonably diverse. Stocks from several different industries were contained within each portfolio, ranging from food service to technology to construction. The results should give a reasonable comparison to real-world investing.

Investing in Apple: Bad Decision or Bad Luck?

The most popular stock, by an overwhelming margin, was Apple. Class discussion determined that almost every student had some kind of Apple product. The popularity of these products no doubt influenced students to select the stock. Apple was listed by Ross and Holland (2006) as one of the one-hundred great companies. Additionally, Apple stock had been doing consistently well prior to the experiment. Figure 1 shows Apple's stock prices over the last year. Note the steady increase during the first half of the month of September, wherein the project began. Portfolios were created in mid-September, when the outlook for Apple was quite positive. The price had risen much over the course of one year, and it looked like a healthy investment.

There are people, however, who would say not to buy Apple stock. An article published in *Forbes* business journal (Baldwin, 2011) quotes economics

expert Bruce Greenwald as saying, “Glamour stocks are overpriced. Stocks with unpleasant aromas are underpriced. You’ll do better over time owning the latter.” Baldwin (2011) suggests that before too long, Apple’s sensational products will fade away and it would be better to sell the stock than to keep it.

It turns out Greenwald was right, although not for the expected reasons. Students who invested in Apple saw a loss of around 3.7%, which is quite a lot considering how much money they invested. Things were going well for



Figure 1: Apple Stock

Apple as they geared up for the release of the new iPhone. Nobody could have predicted what happened next. Steve Jobs, Apple founder and former CEO passed away on October 5, 2011. Stocks took a sharp dip and, although they recovered temporarily, have been unstable ever since. Even though some economists might have suggested avoiding Apple stock, the situation was unpredictable,

and just points out the nature of the market. Certainty of an investment’s value is never guaranteed.

Results

At the conclusion of the twelve-week-period, students sold their stocks and recorded the results. The six portfolios reported in this review posted an average gain of \$22,467.54 and 4.6%. The details are shown in Table 1. The highest gain was 10.1% and the worst loss was 1.0%. The three most profitable stocks, by percent gain were Gap, Inc., with a gain of 18.9%, Pier 1 Imports, with a gain of 25.1%, and Caterpillar, with a gain of 27.4%.

Table 3: Three Big Losses and Gains

Stock	Percent Gain	Stock	Percent Loss
Gap, Inc. (GPS)	18.9	Gildan Activewear (GIL)	6.7
Pier 1 Imports (PIR)	25.1	Amazon (AMZN)	8.5
Caterpillar (CAT)	27.4	Sony (SNE)	11.2

The three stocks that reported the greatest loss were Gildan Activewear, with a loss of 6.7%, Amazon, with a loss of 8.5%, and Sony, with a loss of 11.2%. These results are detailed in Table 3, with associated ticker symbols.

Short-Term Investments

For the purpose of this review, short-term investments will be defined as investments available for immediate use that are liquid, that is, easily turned into cash. Such investments usually have low risk and low return on investment (ROI). Savings accounts and money market accounts are two common low-risk investments. There is no rule that says a short-term asset has to be low risk, it is just safer because of the uses for the asset. Most short-term uses of funds are for emergencies and other expenses that cannot be anticipated. It is good to have a lower risk asset so that the investor does not lose the money needed for these types of situations. However, if a person is financially stable enough to take some risks, this experiment has shown that the stock market has potential to be used as a short-term asset. Due to the unpredictability of the market, this would be very risky, but could have higher rewards in store for a strategic investor. Combining the results with the existing investment strategies can provide some insight into how this might be done.

What are Common Investment Strategies Using Stocks?

Stocks available to investors are innumerable and vary from cheap “penny stocks” to high-dollar “blue chip” stocks. Every investor has a unique strategy and there are nearly as many strategies for investment as there are stocks in the New York Stock Exchange. For the purpose of this review, several of the most popular strategies will be discussed and compared.

Blue Chip Investments

Blue chip stocks are often part of a conservative, long-term portfolio. These high price stocks are considered safe investments because, while growth in value is slow, the companies have consistently performed well and are predicted to continue on that trend (“Blue”, 2011). Blue chip stocks can be an indicator of the market as a whole. In October 2011, after a long period of economic recession, two days of high blue chip stock growth in the United States gave global investors a hope of finally stabilizing the economy (Cheng, 2011). Because of more likely growth, most financial strategists suggest investing in blue chip stocks, even though their slow growth rates are sometimes below the market index (Feinberg, 2011). Most investment strategies centered around blue chip stocks are designed for slow, long-term growth.

Financial expert Kent Croft helped create the Croft Value Fund, which is a group of stocks that outsells the market index in the long run. Croft makes his living finding valuable stocks on the market for long-term investment.

His strategy regarding blue chip stocks is to look for companies that are “leveraged to a turnaround in the economy” (Quoted in Cordeiro, 2010). Two such stocks are Johnson & Johnson (JNJ) and Lowes (LOW), both of which Croft predicts will grow steadily to large sums. This strategy puts The Croft Value Fund’s growth about even with the market index for 2011, and ahead of the index by 2.86% over the last five years (Corderio, 2010). The Croft Value Fund is specialized for long-term growth and uses a specific type of blue chip stock to fuel this growth, keeping growth above the market index.

As a whole, blue chip stocks have not kept up with the market index in 2011 (Feinberg, 2011). Kiplinger Finance Journalist Andrew Feinberg’s recommended strategy is to buy more volatile stocks that have been posting larger gains this year. In a rebounding economy such as we see today, companies that are prepared for expansion are likely to do well. As the economy recovers, companies ready to expand and meet rising demand for products such as building materials will see more gains. Feinberg (2011) believes that buying lower price stocks that are likely to expand soon would be a more profitable investment for the short term. Croft’s investments are geared for the long term, and include blue chip stocks like JNJ that Feinberg rejected (Corderio, 2010; Feinberg, 2011). Because of their slow but steady growth rate, blue chip stocks are a safe long term investment, but do not produce enough growth to be viable in a shorter timeframe.

Buy and Hold Strategy

The buy and hold strategy is as simple as it sounds. An investor will buy a stock and hold on to it. After a period of time, usually five to ten years, the stock should have grown and the investor can sell it for a profit. In order to have a profitable portfolio with this strategy, investors should choose stocks that are likely to increase in price. Three mathematics experts, S. C.P. Yam of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and S. P. Yung and W. Zhou of The University of Hong Kong, created mathematical probability algorithms that confirm this (2009). With this strategy, stocks may be held over a predetermined period and sold at the end of the waiting period.

Some investors suggest that stocks should not be blindly held, but should be periodically reevaluated for profitability (Barth, 2011). If the probability of a stock to increase in value can be defined, the algorithms defined by Yam, et al. (2009) can help an investor decide how long to hold on to the stock. With a high probability of increase (greater than half), an investor is most likely to sell for the highest possible price at the end of the defined time period for the investment. If the probability is close to half, it is less risky to sell the stocks when they reach a price equal to the highest running price they have posted, or if the stocks do not reach that price, to wait until the end of the period. If the probability is less than half, the

algorithms suggest that the stock should be immediately sold to prevent loss (Yam, Yung, & Zhou, 2011). This makes it more important to analyze stocks during the course of an investment period for maximum profit.

Marc Gerstein is an economic specialist who makes his profit from stocks under \$3. His strategy is more aptly called “buy and review” than buy and hold (Barth, 2011). Gerstein reevaluates his stocks for profitability at least every quarter, and doesn’t hesitate to sell if he thinks the stocks might begin to fall in price. Because of the risk associated with cheaper stocks, he doesn’t recommend that investors focus on that portion of the market, but suggests that if a portfolio has room for such investments, it could be profitable if the investor pays attention (Barth, 2011). This idea of selling stocks quarterly to maximize profits involves more input from the investor, but will pay off in the long run.

The buy and hold strategy involves buying stocks and waiting to sell them. This is a longer-term strategy that is safer if an investor reevaluates periodically. Stocks that work in this strategy have the potential to grow one way or another through quality, value and other characteristics (Barth, 2011). Stocks that have a high growth probability over a long period are the most likely to produce a large profit (Yam, et al., 2011). The nature of a buy and hold strategy makes it most effective in the long run.

Mean Reversion Strategy

Mean reversion is a complicated strategy that uses recent market averages to help an investor decide when to purchase stock. In their publication entitled *Very Long Term Equity Investment Strategies: Real Stock Prices and Mean Reversion* (2008), Owain Gwilym, of University of Wales, and James Seaton and Stephen Thomas, of Cass Business School, London, discuss mean reversion investments. The strategy performs best in the long run, and is similar to the buy and hold strategy in that stocks are purchased and allowed to grow over a period of time (Gwilym, Seaton, & Thomas, 2008). The idea is to buy when the stock market is down and stock prices are lower than the ten-year average of the market. This is difficult for investors, because, historically, low stock prices have accompanied high inflation and rising interest rates (Gwilym, et al., 2009). Times when the market is doing well and it seems safe to invest do not fit this criterion either. A patient investor who has the willpower to invest when the market is uninviting and other investors are skeptical can have huge success with mean reversion (Gwilym, et al., 2009). This is best suited for a very long-term goal, because it involves saving assets and waiting to invest until the most strategic time

Many who use this strategy buy short-term government bonds during times when the market is expensive and earnings from stock are low. This actually decreases profit, because the stock market still grows more than cash bonds (Gwilym, et al., 2009). This finding suggests that the buy and hold strat-

egy may be more profitable than mean reversion. Both strategies post the most gain in a long-term time frame (Gwilym, et al., 2009). If an investor invested in bonds or another, more liquid asset when the market was expensive, then used that money to invest in stocks when the market was cheap this could possibly maximize the strategy's effectiveness. Gwilym, Seaton, and Thomas (2009) suggest investing globally and simply moving investments from more expensive markets to cheap markets when possible. Mean reversion can maximize profits in the long term, after a cheap market rebounds.

401(k) Strategies

A common use of the stock market is a retirement investment. 401(k) retirement accounts are traditionally composed of 30% bonds and 70% stocks (Chen & Estes, 2010). Three popular strategies for this type of investing, dollar-cost-averaging, proportional rebalancing, and value-averaging, are discussed by Haiwei Chen, of University of Texas, and Jim Estes, of California State University in a *Financial Services Review* publication from 2010. Dollar-cost-averaging is a strategy in which the investor invests the same amount in stocks each month, regardless of price. Proportional rebalancing is essentially the same, except that investors adjust the amount invested each month to maintain the 30% to 70% ratio of bonds to stocks (Chen & Estes, 2010). The value averaging plan is slightly more complicated. In this plan, a monthly growth goal is set and achieved through stock investments only. Bonds act as a pool in which the rest of the investment is kept. At the end of the month, any excess growth is taken and invested in bonds, or money from bonds is used to offset a loss from the month (Chen & Estes, 2010). Retirement investments are important, and investing following these strategies can help an investor maximize success.

These strategies are mechanical, and help the investor avoid making emotional decisions while trying to second-guess the market. Dollar-cost-averaging is typically done automatically each month with no investor interaction. Proportional rebalancing and value-averaging are more active and allow the investor to choose which stock to buy each month in an attempt to buy less expensive stocks (Chen & Estes, 2010). Value-averaging allows the most control for the investor, and has been reported to have the highest gains. These gains are also accompanied by higher risks, but in the long run it has been shown to be a profitable investment (Chen & Estes, 2010). Investing purposes and strategies vary greatly, but 401(k)s, just like the other strategies examined, are best suited for long-term investing.

How Can Short-Term Investment be Added to Existing Stock Market Strategies?

There seems to be one resounding theme among existing stock market strategies: buy while the price is low. If a stock is purchased at a low price relative to its usual performance, it has a better chance to go up in price. The most important thing to remember is to diversify. A portfolio with a variety of stocks will have a better chance of success in the face of an unexpected event, as we saw with Apple. Of the five portfolios that invested in Apple, only the two that invested most heavily saw losses overall.

Strategically choosing stocks is the key to short-term investment. Buy-and-hold strategies and mean reversion post large profits, but only in the extreme long run (Yam, et al., 2011; Gwilym, et al., 2009). Blue chip investments grow slowly and are not as useful for short-term investments (Feinberg, 2011). Value-averaging, a 401(k) strategy, allows the most investor control (Chen & Estes, 2010); a modified version of value-averaging may work in the short term.

The framework is already there. Value-averaging is set up so the investor can strategically evaluate his or her portfolio each month (Chen & Estes, 2010). An investor could make an initial stock investment, determined by the amount needed for a short-term asset. It is advisable to use an existing short-term account, such as a savings account, to make this investment. Note: it is safest for the investor to only invest a portion of the total desired short-term investment in stocks. That is, if the funds are taken from an existing savings account, only half of the funds should be invested. Using the same principles as the value-averaging strategy, the investor could take any growth past this initial investment value and deposit it in the savings account. This method could help maintain the account for short-term use with stock growth feeding it. Each month, the investor could choose to rearrange the portfolio strategically to enhance profits. If needed, money from the account could help reestablish the value of the portfolio in the case of a loss. This method would be risky because the market is never certain, so it is important to refrain from investing the total balance of the account in stocks.

Selecting stocks strategically is a tricky business. The guidelines that most students followed were to select from companies they believed would do well in the upcoming months. This was often determined through class discussion. During summer travel seasons, airlines and cruise ship lines might be more profitable. Several students chose entertainment companies in anticipation of the release of new video games. Caterpillar, a construction company, did extremely well.

Feinberg (2011) suggests that inexpensive stocks that have potential to expand are better choices for short-term investments. Stocks should be chosen from companies that produce products for which there is demand. Around the holiday season, stores

offering gift deals and layaway may see performance increases. Even in uncertain economic times, there will be profitable stocks. Selecting seasonally productive stocks creates a reasonable short-term investment strategy.

Many strategies exist for choosing stocks. Several were discussed previously, and many more are available to the interested party. Finding the right combination of stocks is difficult, but necessary if a short-term investment plan is to succeed. It is risky, but with a diverse portfolio and some planning, such an investment could pay off greatly not just in the long run. A modified form of the value-averaging strategy would perform well as a short-term asset.

Are Stocks a Viable Short-Term Investment When Short-Term Plans are Added to Conventional Strategies?

The results of the experiment show the risk associated with an unpredictable market, but they also show the profit that can come from strategically selecting stocks. With diverse portfolios, those heavily invested in Apple and other stocks that fell over the twelve-week-period did not suffer much loss. This shows that, with careful planning, stocks could be used as a short-term asset.

Using a modified form of the value-averaging strategy and any of the proven methods of selecting profitable stocks, a reasonable strategy can be created. This strategy would be more risky than other liquid assets, but would have the potential to have greater reward for the investor. It may be too risky for many people to try, but those with financial safety could create a stock portfolio and use the profits to feed a savings or money market account. If the plan is successful, the investor would be in greater financial security than with other, more conventional plans.

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The Melancholy of Sibling Incest in British Romanticism

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Abstract

This paper locates the Romantic trope of sibling incest in Percy Shelley's *Laon and Cythna* (his first and unrevised version of *The Revolt of Islam*), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Lord Byron's *Manfred, A Dramatic Poem* for the purpose of examining incest's relationship to the characteristically Romantic theme of melancholy. Drawing on critical research in the field of gender studies, it examines the intermingled relationship between the pleasures and pains of incest that link the trope to Romantic melancholy. Sibling incest has often been seen as an expression of the Romantics' collective reach for what Alan Richardson terms "total sympathetic fusion"; however, the attainment of this fusion often initiates its destruction. This essay argues that there is a complex and intermingled relationship between the pleasures and pains of sibling incest in British Romantic poetry that relates the trope to the more universal theme of Romantic melancholy; furthermore, that this relationship allows instances of sibling incest in Romantic poetry to be read as a particular expression of Romantic melancholy.

Although incest in Romantic literature is often passed over in classroom and private readings, many critics locate themes of sibling incest "at the heart of the Romantic movement" (*Dangers* 738). Led in part by Alan Richardson, discourse on the subject generally centers around the topic of erotic relationships between siblings in the Romantics' collective fascination with, and search for, an ideal, "sympathetic love" — one that is "more intense and complete than either sibling could feel for anyone else" (739). Sympathetic love becomes problematic, however, because the same incest which fosters it is commonly viewed as "an action that social taboo, religious interdiction, and literary convention [concur] in regarding with revulsion and horror" (Donovan 59).

In attempting to interpret and understand the prevalence of incest in Romantic literature, critics have often remarked upon the fates of those sibling pairs that achieve sympathetic love through the act of incest. In short, many incestuous couples in Romantic literature experience painful separation — and

often death—in a tragic ending. For these couples, it seems that the attainment of idealized, sympathetic love prompts pain and destruction. I posit that there is a complex and intermingled relationship between the pleasures and pains of sibling incest in British Romantic poetry that relates the trope to the more universal theme of Romantic melancholy; furthermore, this relationship allows instances of sibling incest in Romantic poetry to be read as particular expressions of Romantic melancholy.

Definitions of Incest

Erotic relationships between siblings are generally divided by critics into three categories, which I will locate in the following major works from the Romantic movement: Percy Shelley's *Laon and Cythna* (the first and unrevised version of his *Revolt of Islam*), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Lord Byron's *Manfred: A Dramatic Poem*. (For the purposes of this essay, references to the Romantic poets include Mary Shelley unless otherwise noted.) The first critically accepted category of incest is the "erotic relation between a foster-brother and sister, who have been raised as siblings [...] and sometimes led to believe they are so related;" the second is "that between brother and sister who are remarkably close, share a common fate, but do not become sexually involved;" the third is "that between a brother and sister who do become sexually involved" (*Dangers* 739 – 40). It is the first definition that describes Mary Shelley's Victor and Elizabeth; Manfred, his sister Astarte, and the title characters of *Laon and Cythna* are described by the third.

Romantic Incest as Melancholy

One of the cornerstones of critical thought regarding Romantic incest is Richardson's previously mentioned concept of idyllic and "sympathetic love" between siblings. This love emphasizes "a shared childhood [...] experience that unites the couple through countless mutual associations built up during the most idyllic stages of life" (*Dangers* 739). It is a fraternal love "quickened by passion" that "approach[es] the Romantic ideal of perfect sympathy in love" (741). Familial bonds are strengthened by other, mutually shared experiences as the sibling pair matures to the point of sexual awakening. Furthermore, if the foundations of a shared childhood are built upon and allowed to evolve into erotic attachments, these bonds then—theoretically, at least—form what Richardson calls a "total sympathetic fusion" between the sibling pair (*Dangers* 744).

Works written by the Romantic poets often manifested this sympathetic bond. In Canto Sixth of *Laon and Cythna*, Laon describes the shared history with his sister/lover in erotically charged language:

—The youthful years
Which we together past, their hopes and fears,

The common blood which ran within our frames,
 That likeness of the features which endears
 The thoughts expressed by them, our very names,
 And all the winged hours which speechless memory claims,
 Had found a voice. (LC XXXI.274 – XXXII.280)

In this passage, Laon and Cythna's shared history is funneled into the "voice" that expresses their bond of common experience in sexual terms and results in "such close sympathies" between them (LC XXXIX.348). Immediately after their bridal night, Laon himself states "that those/Who grow together cannot choose but love" (LC XL.352 – 3).

Similarly, one does not need to look beyond the first chapter of Victor's narrative in *Frankenstein* for an account of Victor and Elizabeth's shared childhood, nor can one finish the novel without again noticing its significance: "Can any [...] woman [be to me] another Elizabeth?" Victor asks of Walton. "[T]he companions of our childhood always possess a certain power over our minds, which hardly any later friend can obtain" (F 147). Even Manfred, who admits that his spirit "walk'd not with the souls of men" (M 2: 51) and that he "had no sympathy with the breathing flesh" (M 2: 57) also finds perfect sympathy with the Lady Astarte, who is often recognized by critics as his sister (*Dangers* 740, Donovan 61) and who is also his most important childhood companion. Manfred shared his "joys, [his] griefs, [his] passions, and [his] powers" with Astarte (M 2: 55), admitting that the love they practiced "enlarged [his] thoughts with a new sense" (M 3:16).

However, sympathetic fusion comes at a price. This same fraternal and erotic fusion ultimately works *against* the incestuous couple by forbidding the couple's ultimate success. In almost all cases of Romantic literary incest, one or both of the pair dies shortly after the consummation of their love (*Dangers* 740). In other cases, consummation is prevented by death or separation. For example, Laon and Cythna are both killed during their revolution not long after their night of dizzying passion; Elizabeth is murdered by Frankenstein's monster between their marriage and their wedding night. Accordingly, Richardson remarks the way "literary violations of the incest taboo [...] broach the fundamental laws of human society" (*Rethinking* 553 – 4). By doing so, he states, literary incest "paradoxically" becomes "the ultimate fulfillment of sibling love" and simultaneously "demand[s] its disruption" (557). Therefore the invocation of this theme both "create[s] a potent and sympathetic love" and also "broach[es] the fundamental laws of human society" in a way that demands blood atonement (*Dangers* 740).

Here, I come to an important point. Significant to Richardson's argument is his statement that the Romantic poet is "drawn to mingle the two kinds of love [erotic and fraternal] by a fascination with the power of sympathy, but that power is broken by the unconscious horror of incest" (*Dangers* 744). Like-

wise, incest is “an act at the moral extreme of behavior [...] arising from those depths of our nature where good and bad are not readily separable” (Donovan 57). In the context of these statements, it seems reasonable to observe that a complex and intermingled relationship exists between the pleasures and pains of incest. One cannot achieve sympathetic love and enjoy its fulfillments—intense and unimpeded sympathy, understanding, and harmony with another individual of the opposite sex—without fostering the destruction of those fulfillments. Hence fulfillment and destruction seem to draw from each other in a way that creates the complete experience of sibling incest. Moreover, as Robert Cummings states, “the peculiar melancholy edge of intense experience is its uncommodotability, its being on the edge of what can be felt at all” (51 – 2). To put it slightly differently, incestuous characters that are driven to seek fulfillment in an action that lies on the fringes of human behavior will eventually find that they have initiated their own destruction, because their actions will not be sanctioned by society. The initiation of incestuous pleasure is the initiation of its painful demise, and therefore that pleasure is fleeting. Though intense, and perhaps idyllic, it is “uncommodatable.” Interestingly, this ephemeral quality of the pleasure of incest also seems to make it all the more desirable to those who strive for it.

It is Keats who “makes the point that contrary states of feeling may converge in a single sensation,” and also “describes the experience of melancholy in that of delight” (Cummings 51). Thus, according to Keats, there is no delight that is not mingled with pain. Cummings also acknowledges how “the extremity of delight is generated by a suffering at the center; and the profoundest exploration of delight returns us to its origin in grief” (52). In other words, delight and pain are not simply mingled together under the umbrella of melancholy. Indeed, the two sensations are so inseparable that each is a product of the other, and their circular, paradoxical relationship fosters melancholy itself. In order to fully experience delight, one must also embrace pain and accept the inevitable “return to grief” at delight’s origins.

I posit that it is exactly this return “to an origin in grief” which is expressed by the Romantics’ fusion of fraternal and erotic love. Literary incest, as it has been shown, constitutes the Romantics’ collective expression of “the profoundest exploration of delight,” but because of its relationship with pain and destruction, it is also strongly connected with grief. The paradoxical relationship of pleasurable fulfillments and painful desires that foster total sympathetic fusion parallels the paradoxical relationship of pleasure and pain that foster Romantic melancholy. Therefore, if it can be understood that incest in Romantic literature is comprised of an intermingling of pleasure and pain, and that the Romantic trope of melancholy is also an expression of the co-dependent parts of this same binary, then it becomes possible to read occurrences of incest in Romantic literature as an expression of Romantic melancholy.

Romantic writing is fraught with examples of this intermingling of pleasure and pain, and the treatment of incest is no different. In many cases, it is not only the characters' lives and deaths that express the melancholy of incest; to be sure, the characters themselves often lament the melancholy nature of their sympathetic loves. Laon's description of the love he feels for his sister Cythna excellently expresses the complexity: "Cythna's pure and radiant self was shown [and it was] so divine to me,/That if I loved before, new love was agony" (*L and C* 3.3.25 – 27). For Laon (and Shelley), the pleasure of love itself is "agony." Likewise, in his Dedication to *Laon and Cythna*, Percy Shelley writes "[a]las, that love should be a blight and snare/To those who would seek all sympathies in one" (Ingpen and Peck 252). In these lines, Shelley himself seems to link the melancholy nature of pleasure and pain with the precarious nature of the sympathetic ideal. Mary Shelly also notes the way incestuously joining with a sympathetic ideal anticipates suffering. In *Frankenstein* Victor says of Elizabeth, "Sometimes, indeed, I felt a wish for happiness; and thought, with melancholy delight, of my beloved cousin" (*F* 127). Victor's desire for pleasure through the love of his "beloved cousin" results in "melancholy delight," anticipating a suffering so intense that he contemplates suicide: "At these moments I often endeavoured to put an end to the existence I loathed; and it required unceasing attendance and vigilance to restrain me from committing some dreadful act of violence [upon myself]" (127). Here again we see the anticipated suffering that so firmly links the theme of incest to the Romantic trope of melancholy, and allows one to be seen as an expression of the other.

Manfred similarly expresses the interdependent, melancholy nature of his incestuous relationship with his sister Astarte:

When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this [blood] was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven
Where thou art not—and I shall never be (*M* 2.2.26 – 30).

Quite clearly, Manfred seems to locate the source of his pain in the love he shared with Astarte. He speaks in this passage of bloodshed, referencing Astarte's death, as a result of loving her as he "should not love," yet still expresses desire for that love of which he can no longer partake. Still his blood "rises up," he laments, and it is this continued desire that drives him to seek Astarte among the spirits of the earth. However, his desire is not abated by the impossibility of oblivion at her hand. Instead, it returns him to his original desire for Astarte—that desire which is the "origin [of his] grief."

Conclusion

It seems clear that the complex and intermingled relationship between the pleasures and pains of incest relate it to the characteristically Romantic theme of melancholy. As a further thought, it also seems possible that in-depth examinations of incest could relate the trope to other universal Romantic themes, such as the Keatsian notion of *negative capability*. Certainly the use of incest transcends heteronormative expectations of intimacy between individuals and could also work to elevate its “shock value” from base vulgarity to the notion of *negative capability*, defined by Keats as the instance “when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, [and] doubts, without any reaching after fact & reason” (qtd. in Greenblatt 942 – 3). Percy Shelley accordingly elaborates on his use of incest in his Preface to *Laon and Cythna*:

In the personal conduct of my Hero and Heroine, there is one circumstance which was intended to startle the reader from the trance of ordinary life. It was my object to break through the crust of those outworn opinions on which established institutions depend. I have appealed therefore to the most universal of all feelings, and have endeavoured to strengthen the moral sense, by forbidding it to waste its energies in seeking to avoid actions which are only crimes of convention. (qtd. in Ingpen and Peck 247)

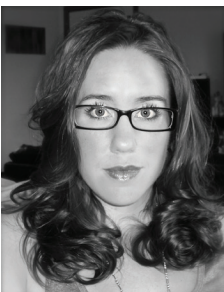
Shelley’s treatment of literary incest (the “one circumstance” alluded to above) directly challenges a heteronormative power structure by expanding the minds of those who are able to see beyond the “startling” nature of its vehicle, albeit in a way that is much more specific than the general challenge of *negative capability* indicates. Furthermore, it is done in a way that exhibits “an exceptional combination of daring and delicacy,” which results in “an imaginative and [...] moral influence for good” (Donovan 59). This blending of exceptional circumstance and profound, albeit gentle morality nicely rounds out Keats’ theory of *negative capability* by inviting readers to get lost in the aporia created by the complexities of incest in literature “without any irritable reaching after fact & reason” (Greenblatt 942). In fact, literature that represents incest in this way lends the trope some of the “momentous depth of speculation” required by Keats “in which to bury its repulsiveness.” Literary incest then compels readers to overlook convention and fearlessly revel in the wisdom that can be gained by doing so; it asserts “the freedom from fear which precedes right action and which results from the mind’s clear gaze at the contraries of nature without and within” (Donovan 90). This also seems to mirror Keats’ implicit request in his writings on *negative capability*.

Moreover, as it has been said of friendship in nineteenth-century literature, the relational space created by an incestuous relationship between characters becomes a place in which “different forms of [relationship], each themselves ambiguous, can meet and combine into ever-new possibilities” (Deresiewicz

126). In other words, the use of literary incest is subversive. Surely Laon and Cythna's relationship is "one whose imaginative piquancy is matched by its aptness to raise difficult ethical issues" (Donovan 57). In the cases of *Manfred*, *Frankenstein*, and *Laon and Cythna*, it is incest's "poetic potential" that allows it to function subversively within the work. Essentially, incest provides a vehicle in the nineteenth century for readers to think outside of the prescribed relational box. It calls into question which relationships are "allowed," asking why one type of intimate connection is privileged over another within a normative structure and enriching the text in which it appears with social and moral resonance.

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