

GNOVIS

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of large, irregular shapes in red, yellow, teal, and dark blue. In the center, there is a pattern of smaller triangles in various colors (red, yellow, teal, dark blue) arranged in a circular, sunburst-like pattern.

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Letter from the Editor

When the 2019-2020 Gnovis staff began the academic year, we hit the ground running with a new digital strategy and plans to build upon the previous year's successes. We began by refreshing Gnovis' branding to better match our voice as a visionary, inclusive, and accessible organization. As part of our efforts to freshen up the professionally digital-focused aspects of the journal, five staff members formed a team to launch 'About Me', a podcast delving into issues of identity formation on digital platforms. We also created a new system to encourage academic blog submissions, which resulted in a significant increase in published blogs. Through collaboration with the Car Barn Academy, we also successfully led three Gnovis workshops each with more attendees than the last. Finally, for the first time since we started our conference, Gnovicon, nine years ago, we secured a sponsorship from the wonderful folks at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation. With only a few weeks away from Gnovicon, we were poised to have a groundbreaking event on the paradox of digital platforms.

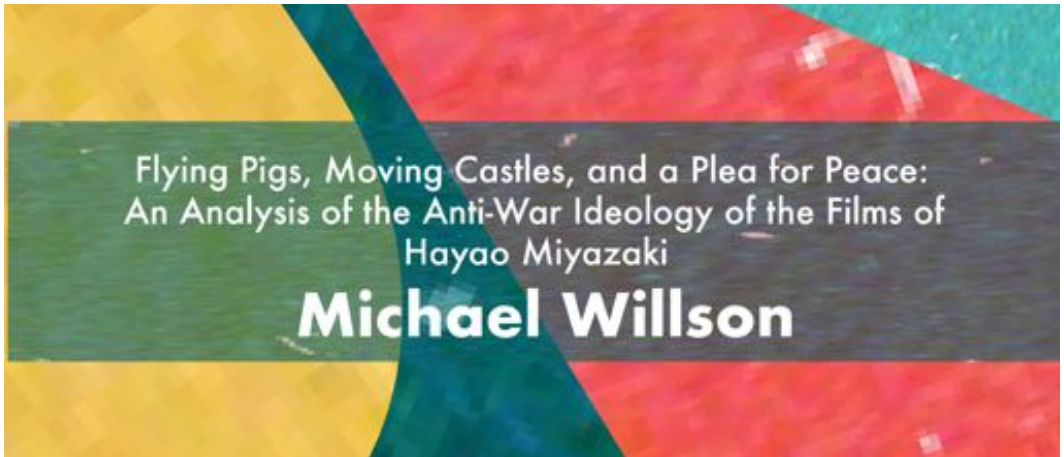
When social distancing measures and remote learning began in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, our priorities shifted. Many new obstacles presented themselves to Gnovis, but I am proud to say that we made it together as a team, to a bittersweet ending marked by this 2020 Spring Edition of Gnovis. We are thankful for the six authors who were patient with our feedback process. Michael Willson, Ivan Parfenoff, Jill Fredenburg, Alistair Somerville, Ted Harrison, and Adrienne Coyle each brought a unique perspective and approach to this edition. Our readers will find a selection of academic papers that bring forth a shift in narratives and discourse at the intersection of communication, culture, and technology. I'd also like to thank Cedric Shi for her design contribution to the journal, which you can find on the front cover and on the unique headers for each article.

I would also like to thank each of our Gnovis staff members for their dedication to uplifting this organization despite the hardships we've faced. Thank you to Jenny Lee for stepping in for editorial duties this year, for bringing your level of academic discipline to this final product, and for speaking up when things needed to be said. To Jill Fredenburg, thank you for being such a beam of light, for working diligently in your role, and for even contributing an excellent paper to the journal. To Kevin Ackermann, thank you for leading the digital strategy initiatives during a year with countless obstacles, for working to ensure each blog submission had a quality editorial review, and for being both a voice of reason and joy when we needed it.

To our first year staff, thank you for being patient as we brought you on this adventure toward a new chapter for Gnovis. Mansi Mehta, thank you for all the hard work and late nights you've put into the organization in your editorial role. Anna Hoffman, thank you for being a wonderful producer for our About Me podcast and for bringing a new perspective to the Managing Editor role. Chelsea Sanchez, thank you for being such an incredible colleague to work with and for always keeping us on track and toward our goals. To Eish Sumra, thank you for the cheer you've brought us all, as well as your post-production skills for the About Me podcast. Lastly, thank you to Andreas Beissel, for your creativity, passion, hard work, and your dedication to an incredibly polished publication. As we pass the baton to you, we are confident in each of your contributions to taking Gnovis even further than we have this year.

As a student-run organization, we'd also like to thank the CCT faculty and staff for supporting us and challenging us to reach our full potential. In particular, we'd like to express gratitude toward Dr. Leticia Bode, Gnovis' faculty advisor, Ai-Hui Tan Director of Academic Programs, Tonya Puffett, CCT Business Manager, and Dr. David Lightfoot, Director of CCT. Last but not least, we would like to thank you, our readers of Gnovis Journal. We hope you will enjoy the conversations we have opened through the scholarship published in this 2020 Edition of Gnovis.

Kimberly Marcela Durón
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Abstract

The Japanese filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki has explored a variety of genres. A common theme in his films is his anti-war ideology. Miyazaki has a strict three-step formula for how he communicates this ideology across films of disparate genres. First, he creates protagonists with various levels of pacifism. Second, his antagonists are complex and three-dimensional characters. Finally, something of value is corrupted by warfare. The skills and gifts that the characters possess are misused for purposes of bloodshed and destruction. This paper analyzes Miyazaki's anti-war ideology in four of his films: the action comedy *Porco Rosso* (1992), the epic *Princess Mononoke* (1997), the fantasy adventure *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), and the biopic *The Wind Rises* (2013).

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INTRODUCTION

Hayao Miyazaki, director of eleven full length animated feature films and co-founder of Studio Ghibli, is one of the most influential animators of all time. Using genres such as action comedies (*The Castle of Cagliostro*, 1979), fantasy epics (*Spirited Away*, 2001), and even light-hearted children's films (*My Neighbor Totoro*, 1988), Miyazaki has found a way to connect with audiences through compelling plots and relatable characters. As diverse as his films are in their execution, he has found ways to incorporate common themes across genres. One of his most commonly used themes is his anti-war ideology. His films animate the horrors of war and show the physical and emotional devastation it inflicts on people and communities.

Miyazaki is a vocal critic of countries that celebrate a militaristic culture, especially in his native Japan. In his essay, "A Nation That Merely Dithers Around," Miyazaki writes about how, during the 1991 Gulf War, he perceived both George H.W. Bush and Saddam Hussain as using the war to display and prove their masculinity. As Miyazaki recalls, "I can only think [Bush] is possessed by the ghost of John Wayne, telling him that 'this is the way a real man should act.' Saddam Hussain's sense of righteousness is the same" (2009, 147). In the same essay, he expresses his regret over Japan's involvement in the Gulf War in order to, as he puts it, "do business with and be 'good neighbors' to [its] allies" (2009, 147). In 2013, around the time

his film, *The Wind Rises*, was released, Miyazaki criticized Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's proposal to strengthen Japan's military by amending Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution (Rizov 2013). Miyazaki executes his beliefs of war and peace through a strict three-step formula. First, his protagonists follow various levels of pacifism. Second, his antagonists are complex and three-dimensional. Finally, he shows how something of value can be corrupted by warfare. Through the use of this formula, Miyazaki is able to deliver this message across films of disparate genres. Four noteworthy films that follow this formula are the action comedy *Porco Rosso* (1992), the epic *Princess Mononoke* (1997), the fantasy adventure *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), and Miyazaki's only biopic *The Wind Rises* (2013). The following analysis will examine how all four films follow Miyazaki's formula in delivering his anti-war rhetoric.

STEP ONE: A PACIFISTIC PROTAGONIST

The first essential aspect of these films is the pacifism of the protagonists. These characters avoid violence when they can, and only use it in self-defense or in defense of another character. After a character uses violence, they often express regret and show remorse.

In *Porco Rosso*, Marco, an Italian World War I pilot who is cursed to turn into an anthropomorphic pig after coming home from the war, spends his days as a freelance bounty hunter. He never shoots to kill, only shooting at an airplane's engine with the sole goal of forcing the enemy to make

an emergency landing. In the film's climax, he fights Curtis, an egotistical American bounty hunter, as part of a wager. If Marco wins, Curtis will pay for the repairs that were done on his plane. If Curtis wins, then he gets to claim Marco's friend and mechanic, Fio, as his bride. The duel starts off as an exciting dogfight over the Adriatic Sea, but turns into a humorous boxing match along the shore, which Marco wins. Marco is only participating to defend Fio's honor. While the boxing match is violent, it is meant to provide humor. Arts and humanities professor Pamela Gossin writes the following:

To illustrate the *reductio ad absurdum* limitations of human rivalry and jealousy, for instance, [Miyazaki] creates the knock-down, drag-out fist-fighting scene in *Porco Rosso*, piling on the blows, one exaggerated and exhausting image at a time, until the audience feels as ridiculous and defeated for *watching* the violence as the characters feel for engaging in it. (Gossin 2015, 218)

Neither Marco nor Curtis inflict serious harm on each other. Their blows result in exaggerated welts and bruises, resembling something out of a Saturday morning cartoon. Most importantly, Marco shows a clear disdain for the Italian Air Force and their fascist ideology. He refuses to purchase Patriotic Bonds under the argument that he is not a person. During a military parade, he ignores its excitement and grandeur and walks past it, knowing firsthand that war is not entertainment.

The curse that Marco is forced to endure is a metaphor for the emotional and psychological scars that stay with servicemen long after coming home from battle. Sociology professor Michael Rustin, and psychotherapist Margaret Rustin see the curse as a form of survivor's guilt. As Rustin and Rustin state, "*Porco Rosso*, the film's hero, is preoccupied with the memory of friends and comrades who have died in war and suffers from guilt and melancholy at their loss" (2012, 180). In describing his most traumatic experience, Marco notes, "Planes were going down like flies, ours and theirs. There were three on my tail. I had my hands full. Then I was the only one left on our side. The enemy kept on coming. They had blood in their eyes. I was numb, I couldn't see. I thought I was a goner. Suddenly everything went white all around me" (Miyazaki, 1992). The next sight that Marco sees is thousands of planes, both belonging to his comrades and his enemies, flying further and further into the sky. It is implied that they are flying into Heaven. The fact that both sides are entering into the same salvation suggests that no one side is right or wrong and that the war was pointless, making the death of Marco's comrades all the more in vain. As Rustin and Rustin note, "It is because of this guilt that he has turned into a pig, now bereft, as he sees it, of feeling and conscience. As a pig, he is a creature of mere appetites and can neither love nor be loved" (2012, 181). Animé researcher Helen McCarthy sees the curse as a metaphor for a feeling of numbness after experiencing a traumatic event. As McCarthy observes, "In *Porco Rosso* 'pig' is a metaphor for a man who lost faith in mankind and has chosen to reject his

own humanity" ([1999] 2002, 160). Rhetoric professor Susan Napier suggests that the curse could be a combination of survivor's guilt and the self-rejection of one's humanity. As Napier argues, "We never really do find out what transforms 'Marco' into 'Porco.' We assume it is some kind of magical manifestation of survivor's guilt combined with Marco's contempt for a human race that can produce a fascist ideology and a war that sacrifices thousands of young men for nothing" (2018, 153-154). Whether it is survivor's guilt or numbness, either metaphor explains the film's ambiguous ending. After winning the duel, Marco teams up with Curtis to outfly the Italian Air Force, which has come to arrest them. Curtis suddenly has a surprised look and asks Marco about his face, which the audience cannot see as the shot cuts off at his neck. It is implied that Marco, now seeing himself as honorable for defending Fio, has turned back into a human.

Ashitaka in *Princess Mononoke* is very much a pacifist. In the film, which is set in 14th century Japan, also known as the Muromachi period, a black mysterious creature covered in withering tentacles invades a rural village. Ashitaka tries to persuade the monster to leave. Unable to reason with it, Ashitaka kills the beast with his arrow, but not without getting his arm caught in the creature's tentacles. As the creature dies, it is revealed to be the boar god Nago, who has turned into a demon after being consumed by hate. An iron ball is found in the boar's body, which is what caused it to turn into a demon. The wound that Ashitaka received from the beast leaves a scar that will slowly spread

throughout the rest of his body, ending in a painful death. Ashitaka leaves his village in search of the source of the ball. On his journey, Ashitaka comes across an army of samurais raiding a village. He defends the village by shooting at the samurais, but develops superhuman strength due to the curse, causing his arrows to decapitate one of the samurais, and shoot off another's arms. Ashitaka expresses regret that his actions caused such bodily harm. He comes across Tataraba, an industrial community that manufactures firearms, and meets their militaristic leader, Lady Eboshi. She explains that the village was built by clearing out large sections of the forest. Tataraba's construction has created conflicts with the local samurai lords and forest animals. Eboshi plans on decapitating Shishigami, the shapeshifting forest god that resembles an elk-like creature by day and a transparent giant by night, and giving its severed head to the emperor as a gift. Upon learning of Eboshi's role in the corruption of Nago, and ultimately Ashitaka's cursed fate, his infected arm tries to grab at his sword, ready to strike at Eboshi, but Ashitaka, refusing to become a demon, resists the temptation. In addition to the people of Tataraba, Ashitaka befriends San, a human girl raised by a pack of wolves, whom the people of Tataraba refer to as Princess Mononoke. In Eboshi's pursuit of Shishigami's head, war breaks out between Tataraba and the samurai army under the leadership of Lord Asano. At the same time, a pack of boars, aided by the wolves, declares war on Tataraba to reclaim their land and avenge Nago. Ashitaka does not take sides and attempts to act as the mediator. Most significant is the role Ashitaka takes upon himself

to bring peace between the animals and the people of Tataraba. He understands that no particular side is right or wrong, but that each side is trying to bring prosperity to their kind. His ultimate goal is peace between nature and humankind.

In *Howl's Moving Castle*, Miyazaki conveys two different sides of pacifism: one fueled by anger and the other fueled by compassion. In a fantasy science fiction universe that is made to resemble Europe in the late 19th Century, a prince of an unnamed kingdom has suddenly gone missing. Desperate to find answers, the kingdom declares war on its neighboring kingdom. Howl is a young wizard who lives in a magical castle that has the power to move locations. This allows him to work under multiple identities. He has been called upon by the king of the accused kingdom to fight in the war. Refusing to fight, Howl sabotages both sides, destroying their weapons and aircraft. He sees no difference between the two armies. To him, they are both evil institutions causing needless bloodshed. He expresses his disdain for the war by interfering with battles. At first, his interferences are harmless and petty tricks, such as causing a ship to malfunction. Though harmless, his actions lead to his own punishment. Each time he plays his tricks, he turns into a hideous, crow-like creature, becoming progressively less and less human. Literary researcher Dani Cavallaro states, "His commitment to the annihilation of deadly weapons in the guise of a grim bird of prey, vampirically fanged, covered with metallic plumage and equipped with intimidating talons, vividly conveys the gravity of his intent and actions" (2006,

160). Each time Howl returns home from a night of sabotage, he finds the process of turning back into his human form more painful and difficult. After an airstrike occurs on the home of his lover, Sophie, Howl, blinded by rage, becomes a full monster and destroys an entire airship, likely killing the soldiers on board. Though Howl is able to change back in the end, Miyazaki paints a clear message of the effects that anger can have on an individual. While Howl's disdain for warfare is defensible, he allows his anger to keep growing until he becomes just as violent as those he was trying to sabotage.

Sophie sees no reason in getting involved in the war and begs Howl not to interfere. She shows kindness to those she disagrees with. She even shows kindness towards the Witch of the Waste, who has cursed Sophie to turn into an elderly woman. When the Witch of the Waste is stripped of her power, Sophie allows her to live with them in the castle. Cavallaro notes, "At the same time, Miyazaki typically eschews the spirit of revenge: Sophie ultimately shelters and feeds the witch once the latter has returned to the state of a haggard and inoffensive old woman" (2006, 160). Sophie has the opportunity to get her revenge. She can easily kill the witch or, at the very least, leave her to die in her wretched state, but chooses not to. Sophie's kind and loving demeanor can best be described as being grounded in the belief of 'yasashisa'. Cavallaro observes, "To the cumulative worth of these interrelated qualities, Sophie's conduct adds a generous dose of that ensemble of virtues which the Japanese language designates as *yasashisa*—kindness, compassion, sensitivity"

(2006, 164). Miyazaki seems to suggest that a life of love, forgiveness, and peace is better than a life of hate, bitterness, and revenge.

The only biopic in Miyazaki's filmmaking career, *The Wind Rises*, tells the story of Jiro Horikoshi, the chief engineer behind the Mitsubishi A6M Zero, the Japanese fighter jet that was used in the Second World War. Miyazaki depicts Horikoshi as a kind and sensitive man, mesmerized by the beauty of aviation. As a child, Horikoshi aspires to become a pilot, but knows that it is not possible due to his nearsightedness. In a dream, he meets his idol, the Italian aeronautical engineer Giovanni Battista Caproni. Caproni informs Horikoshi that he has never flown a plane in his life. He lives to design planes, not fly them. This inspires Horikoshi to pursue aeronautical engineering and design aircrafts. Throughout the film, Horikoshi continues to meet with Caproni in his dreams. The fantasized Caproni acts as a mentor, offering Horikoshi advice not just on engineering, but also about life in general. While the film is based on a historical figure, it is heavily fictionalized and is influenced by Miyazaki's own artistic license. Horikoshi and Caproni are both depicted as pacifists in the film. They view aviation as a beautiful invention made to give humankind the ability to experience the freedom of flying. Although they both design planes for the military, they detest the idea of aviation being used for war. As Caproni states, "Humanity dreams of flight, but the dream is cursed. Aircrafts are destined to become tools for slaughter and destruction" (Miyazaki 2013). In the first dream sequence, Caproni

arrives with a fleet of Italian World War I fighter jets. Caproni looks up at his creation and says to Horikoshi, "Look at them. They will bomb the enemy city. Most of them won't return" (Miyazaki 2013). Images appear on the screen of Caproni's planes being shot down and falling into a burning city. Horror emerges in the young Horikoshi's eyes as the carnage reflects off his glasses.

When Horikoshi is introduced to the audience as an adolescent, he witnesses a group of his peers bullying a smaller boy. He confronts the bullies and tells them to stop. The leader attempts to swing a punch at Horikoshi, but Horikoshi is able to grab the boy's arm, and throws him to the ground. Upon returning home, his mother sees the cuts and bruises on his faces and tells him, "Fighting is never justified" (Miyazaki 2013). Though this scene might seem insignificant to the overall plot, it contributes to Miyazaki's display of pacifism.

STEP TWO: A COMPLEX AND THREE-DIMENSIONAL ANTAGONIST

The second essential aspect in reinforcing pacifism is the nuance of the antagonists. The antagonists in Miyazaki's films are complex, three-dimensional characters and are not simply evil. They could have well-meaning and justified motives that are clouded by greed or ambition. Most important is that the antagonists are very much human and sometimes even relatable. Miyazaki seems to suggest that no one is fully good or evil. It is more that humans are influenced, both positively and negatively, by

the people and events around them. In some cases, the antagonist is not necessarily a singular character but an external factor, such as a corrupt or power-hungry government. Some of the films have characters that could easily be labeled as the villain, but are really just victims to controlling forces.

In *Porco Rosso*, it would be easy to identify Curtis as the film's antagonist. However, he is more arrogant than he is nefarious. The various air pirates that Marco hunts down are not fully evil either. Even when they commit the devious act of kidnapping a group of schoolgirls at the beginning of the film, they are incapable of inflicting any harm. Rustin and Rustin argue that, "[The girls] make it into an exciting adventure and, when captured, show the pirates to be softies at heart" (2012, 180). The girls see the pirates as nonthreatening and incompetent. The pirates prove this by doing nothing more than telling the girls, unsuccessfully, to settle down.

Arguably, the main antagonist in *Porco Rosso* is the fascist Italian Air Force. They are the ones that serve as the film's main symbol of warfare, and as a painful reminder of Marco's past. Depending on one's historical knowledge, a viewer could associate them with Benito Mussolini and the role that Italy would go on to play in the Second World War, especially as the Italian fascist symbol of a fasces is present on one of the planes. Most importantly, they serve as a mutual enemy for both Marco and his pirate rivals. As Rustin and Rustin state, "It appears there is solidarity, even among the pirates and bounty-hunters, against the Italian fascists" (2012, 182). That

being said, Miyazaki does not dismiss every pilot in the Italian Air Force as being without morals. In fact, the only prominent fascist character, an old World War I friend named Ferrarin, warns Marco about the Air Force's plans to arrest him. This is consistent with Miyazaki's sub-theme of no one being truly evil.

Eboshi is clearly the antagonist in *Princess Mononoke*, but it is not fair to call her evil. While she causes both physical and emotional harm to the animals of the forest, her intention is to build a safe and prosperous community. It is important to note that Tataraba is not a standard town, but a refuge for social outcasts, such as lepers and survivors of human trafficking. Eboshi provides employment for everyone in the community. The men hunt and gather the food, the women manage the bellows that forge the iron, and the lepers make the firearms. McCarthy writes the following:

[Ashitaka] finds a community where lepers are looked after and taught skills, where everyone works and everyone eats, and where there is plenty of good humored teasing and laughter... When he joins the women working at the great bellows, he sees even more clearly that although he may not agree with all Eboshi's methods, she is doing her best to create a better life for her people. ([2002] 1999, 196-197)

Even her most harmful action of decapitating Shishigami is done with the hope that the emperor will cease the harassment of her people. Most importantly, Eboshi changes at the

end, agreeing to find a way to live in harmony with the forest.

At first, the antagonist in *Howl's Moving Castle* appears to be The Witch of the Waste, but she quickly loses all of her wickedness and intimidation. She also has very little to do with the film's theme on war. Then, it appears that the film's antagonist is Suliman, the king's magical advisor. She is a major player in the war, having a great deal of influence over the king, and drains the magic of witches and wizards. She also acts as a threat to Howl and Sophie, ordering the airstrike on Sophie's hometown. She only appears twice in the film, however, and does not leave much of an impact on the audience. When Heen, a dog she sends to spy on Howl, enthusiastically informs her of the prince's return, she states, "A happy ending I see... Let's put an end to this foolish war" (Miyazaki 2004). Her calling the war "foolish" suggests that her involvement was not out of hatred of the enemy, but out of devotion to her country. Thus, the film's antagonist is not a single character, but the militaristic culture of the two kingdoms.

At the beginning of the film, a military parade takes place in Sophie's hometown. Spectators cheer as planes, tanks, and soldiers march on their way to battle. Much like Marco in *Porco Rosso*, Sophie shows no interest in the spectacle and makes a detour through an alley to avoid the chaos. This turns out to provide no benefit as she is immediately approached by two domineering soldiers who make subtle, but clearly sexual, advances towards her. This suggests that there is a type of rape culture within the

military. When the audience first witnesses Howl's sabotage, there is a horrific sight of explosions and burning houses. The disgusted look on Howl's face communicates to the audience the film's attitude on war. In a scene where Sophie goes shopping at a port market, her errand is interrupted by the sight of a charred and damaged battleship coming into dock. Spectators watch on in horror, learning that war has consequences and is not a grand patriotic jubilee.

Though the film has a pacifist message, Cavallaro expresses a disturbance in how quickly Suliman is able to end the war. Cavallaro writes the following:

[Suliman's] eventual decision to terminate the conflict is indubitably felicitous and makes it possible for the film to end under the canopy of a joyfully fair sky, yet it is made to appear quite sudden and arbitrary. This is a way of suggesting that the very opposite choice – the decision to start a war – could just as simply be made at any point in time, no less unexpectedly and no less capriciously. (2006, 171)

The film's conclusion shows how easily and quickly a war can begin and end. A war that could have devastating effects on a country and can kill thousands of people, both soldiers and civilians, can begin in just a matter of seconds.

The Wind Rises is unique compared to the other three films discussed in this article in that there is no central character to serve as the antagonist. Similar to *Howl's Moving Castle*, a militaristic

culture ultimately fills that role. Unlike *Howl's Moving Castle*, however, the militaristic culture is not that of a fictional kingdom, but of Japan itself. As Cavallaro states, "*The Wind Rises* focuses on the perversion of ideals by power-hungry politicians, dramatizing the tragedy of an imagination doomed to serve the insane interest of a monomaniacal nation" (2015a, 59). In addition, *Howl's Moving Castle* has a specific character, Suliman, whom the audience could label as the villain. *The Wind Rises* does not have such a character for the audience to fall back on. Given that *The Wind Rises* is a Japanese film, Miyazaki uses his story to speak directly to his audience. As Napier observes, "He clearly wanted the film to be provocative, to stir up discussions of difficult matters his countrymen for decades wanted to sweep under the rug" (2018, 249). Miyazaki was a young boy during the Second World War and saw the effects that the war had on his country. He has been openly critical of the imperialistic role that Japan played in the war and has chastised Japan's unwillingness to address its transgressions. Cavallaro writes the following:

Miyazaki's views on contemporary Japanese politics point to the insidiousness of this cultural phenomenon. The present government's militaristic tendencies, in particular, are centered on a sense of history which allows for the endurance in present-day Japan of the aggressive and jingoistic agendas which blighted the country's past to often disastrous effect. The vision of history promulgated by the current regime pivots on a

distorted vision of the past which attempts to blot out the sinister reality of Japan's imperialist ambitions. (2015a, 53)

Miyazaki presses his audience to recognize and accept the detrimental role that their country played in the Second World War. If Japan chooses to ignore their transgressions and continues to move towards having a strong militaristic presence, the country will put itself at risk of self-destruction.

A central character useful to understanding Japan's self-destructive ambitions in the war is Castorp, a German whom Horikoshi meets at a summer resort in Karuizawa. The fact that Castorp is German is significant, as it reminds the audience of Japan's and Germany's association as Axis Powers. Castorp is critical of the imperialistic nature of Germany and Japan, and believes that their quest for global domination will lead to their own self-destruction. Castorp takes in the peaceful summer night at the resort and states, "A good place for forgetting. Start a war in China, then forget it. Make a puppet state in Manchuria, then forget it. Quit the League of Nations, then forget it. Make the world your enemy, then forget it. Japan will blow up. Germany will blow up too" (Miyazaki 2013). The film also addresses Germany's transgression by making a subtle reference to the Holocaust. On a business trip in Germany, Horikoshi and his colleague go on an evening walk when a man suddenly runs past them. It is revealed that he is being chased by a group of men from the secret police. As the two men continue on their walk, the scene cuts to the secret police looting a house.

STEP THREE: SOMETHING OF VALUE IS CORRUPTED BY WARFARE

The third and final aspect of these films is that warfare corrupts something of value. This could include a specific object, like an airplane in *Porco Rosso* and *The Wind Rises*. It could also be a skill, as is the case with magic in *Howl's Moving Castle*. In *Princess Mononoke*, it is nature, people, and gods that are tainted by the hatred brought on by war.

Porco Rosso and *The Wind Rises* both show how the amazement and wonder of aviation can be used as instruments of death in war. Miyazaki is known for his love of aviation and almost all of his films feature at least one scene that involves some form of flying. As Cavallaro states, "His films seek to celebrate the unmatched beauty of bodies, both breathing and mechanical, as they soar and glide unfettered by the laws of gravity" (2015a, 147). In *Porco Rosso*, Miyazaki animates beautiful scenes of planes flying over sunsets, oceans, and fields. He also animates disturbing images of blazing, burning planes plummeting after being shot down, showing how the beauty of aviation can be corrupted in warfare.

The Wind Rises discusses the topic of aviation and warfare even further. Asian studies professor Michal Dalot-Bul states, "*The Wind Rises* is not simply the story of an aviation pioneer. It is about a man who faces ethical dilemmas in trying to reconcile his private dreams and ambitions with the unfortunate circumstances of his time"

(2017, 573). Miyazaki concludes the film with the image of planes flying into a cloud of smoke. The camera moves down to reveal a Japanese city on fire. The audience then sees Horikoshi walking through a wasteland filled with the remains of destroyed Zeros where he meets Caproni. A group of Zeros fly over them and make their way to join thousands of other planes flying further into the sky, just as in *Porco Rosso*. Horikoshi regrets that not a single one of his planes survived the war. Caproni laments, "Airplanes are beautiful dreams, cursed dreams waiting for the sky to swallow them up" (Miyazaki 2013). The film's tone suggests that Horikoshi's hard work and the deaths of the pilots who flew the Zeros were all in vain.

There are two things of value that are corrupted by warfare in *Princess Mononoke*. The first is nature. In addition to hearing how the forest was cleared for the construction of Tataraba, the audience sees firsthand the damage that the war has inflicted. This is present in the conflict with the boars. Large boars charge at the humans, ramming them with their great tusks and destroying their shelters. Landmines and grenades go off, causing the boars to go flying in the air from the impact of the explosion. In the ruins of the battlefield, there are piles of dead boars and humans, showing the fatalities that both sides have suffered.

The second thing of value is one's soul. Miyazaki's key message in *Princess Mononoke* is that anything or anyone can be corrupted by war and hate, causing them to turn into a demon. Upon losing its head,

Shishigami becomes a monster and destroys the forest, the very thing it was made to protect. McCarthy writes the following:

In *Princess Mononoke*, the gods are real and tangible—but the growing greed and cynicism of humans is literally diminishing them, making them physically smaller, and their own rage and incomprehension is focusing on every injury offered to them and turning them into seething masses of pain and suffering that can be passed on to man. ([2002] 1999, 200).

If it was not for his resistance, Ashitaka himself could have become a demon. In a scene where he gets between Eboshi and San, withering tentacles come out of his cursed arm. Ashitaka states, “There’s a demon inside of you. And in her” (Miyazaki 1997). He then shows his demonic arm to the crowd of spectators and states, “Look! This is the hatred and bitterness that curses me! It rots my flesh and summons my death. You cannot yield to it” (Miyazaki 1997). No matter who you are, human, god, or animal, anyone can become a demon if they are corrupted by the hatred that can come only from war.

Miyazaki takes an interesting turn in the fantasy genre by exploring how magic could be corrupted by warfare in *Howl’s Moving Castle*. In Howl’s kingdom, all witches and wizards are drafted to provide their magic in aiding the war effort. The idea of magic being used for war is not something new. Fantasy films such as the *Harry Potter* franchise (2001-2011) and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003)

have explored this theme, but in both examples, it was dark magic that created war and destruction. In *Howl’s Moving Castle*, a non-magical king exploits magic for his foolish war, thus abusing resources that could be used for the greater good. Cavallaro notes, “Even the use of magic stems from human beings’ greedy appropriation and deployment of supernatural powers, not from non-human agencies per se” (2015b, 16). It is made clear that magic and spells can be used to benefit the general public. Howl, under his multiple identities, provides spells and potions to civilians. For example, a girl comes in to buy a substance that will bring good fortune to her family’s ship. In this universe, magic has the power to serve humankind, but is instead used for destruction.

CONCLUSION

A devoted pacifist, Hayao Miyazaki uses this three-step formula to deliver a consistent message while also covering a variety of genres. In analyzing the four films, it is clear how Miyazaki is able to incorporate this formula in communicating this rhetoric. His protagonists convey varying levels of pacifism. Some, such as Sophie, refuse to use any form of violence, while others, such as Ashitaka, use it only when absolutely necessary. His antagonists are complex. Some, such as Eboshi, only want what is best for their people. Sometimes, the antagonist is not a singular character, but the government as a whole, as is the case in *Howl’s Moving Castle* and *The Wind Rises*. Most importantly, something of value is corrupted by warfare, whether it be aircraft, magic, or one’s very soul. Miyazaki’s films, as

disparate as they can be, share a firm anti-war ideology. Through these four films Miyazaki presents a crucial plea for peace.

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Mourning the Black Arts Movement: Black Liberation and Moral Psychology

Ivan Parfenoff

Abstract

The Black Arts Movement has been portrayed in the secondary literature as violent revolutionaries at war with whiteness, racism, and racist white-controlled institutions of power. However, this narrative overlooks the constructive nature of the Black Arts project. Instead of viewing the movement as an isolated period constrained by conflict, the Black Arts Movement is more properly understood as having played a pivotal role in constructing a “Black World” that could exist outside of hegemonic whiteness. The tension inherent in these two readings is no more apparent than when Black Artists attempt to appropriate cultural forbearers into the Black World, like Langston Hughes, who both nurtured and sharply criticized the Black Artists. Under this analysis, Black Arts poetry should not be read as the violent outbursts of misguided revolutionaries, but rather as object lessons in the existential struggle for meaning within frameworks for liberation that necessitate some form of denying foundational cultural and literary inspirations. Therefore, this paper will first propose a theoretical framework, influenced by the existential and psychoanalytic theories of Hans Loewald and Jonathan Lear, for understanding the existential tension inherent in the Black Arts Movement. Second, the paper will utilize this framework to understand the relationship between Black Artists and Langston Hughes. By exploring the Black Artists’ self-conscious efforts at appropriating the life and meaning of Hughes, there is evidence that the Black Artists’ claims for a Black World, self-determination, and truth-telling have remained and are constitutive of contemporary claims for Black Liberation and freedom for oppressed peoples.

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MOURNING THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT: BLACK LIBERATION AND MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

“**T**he Black Artist’s role in America is to aid in the destruction of America as he knows it...if [the readers] are white men, tremble, curse, and go mad, because they will be drenched with the filth of their evil” (Jones 1965, 65). This manifesto was written by one of the leading poets of the Black Arts Movement (approx. 1965-1975), Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones), in response to a symposium on “The Role of the Negro Writer as Artist” in the nationally-circulated *Negro Digest/Black World* magazine. Not surprisingly, then, Black Arts Movement poets like Amiri Baraka have often been portrayed as violent revolutionaries at war with whiteness, racism, and racist white-controlled institutions of power.¹ However, this narrative overlooks the constructive nature of the Black Arts project. Instead of viewing the movement as an

isolated period constrained by conflict, the Black Arts Movement is more properly understood as having played a pivotal role in constructing a “Black World” that could exist outside of hegemonic whiteness. By Black World, I mean a liberational framework for understanding the world outside of white-dominated traditional canons and institutions. Black Artists approached liberation by positing a positive black history, an enriched understanding of black cultural tradition, and a black moral psychology that no longer relied on Western, white value systems that represented black people as damaged or broken.² Within this framework, a Black World founded on a black ontological framework, a positive black psyche, and black structural and material institutions could survive the violence of white supremacy.

Black Artists marked this revolutionary transformation with the self-identifier “black,” as opposed to “Negro.” Negro ethics required accepting and promoting white violence against black communities, from integration, to Uncle Tomisms,

1For a broad overview of the people and institutions of the Black Arts movement see: James Smethurst, *Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005); and Amiri Baraka, “The Black Arts Movement,” in *SOS—Calling All Black People: A Black Arts Movement Reader*, eds. James Smethurst, Sonia Sanchez, and John H. Bracy (Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 12. For more regionally focused readings see Margo Natalie Crawford, et al. *New Thoughts On the Black Arts Movement* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2006).

2 For discussions of the historical effect of theories of damaged black psyches and communities see: Isabel C. Barrows’ *First Mohonk Conference on the Negro Question* (1890); Booker T. Washington’s *Up From Slavery* (1903); E. Frank Frazier’s *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939); Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (1964); Nathan Glazer’s *Ethnic Dilemmas* (1985); Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom’s *America in Black and White* (1998); Khalil Gigran Muhammad’s *The Condemnation of Blackness* (2010); Robert Wald Sussman’s *The Myth of Race* (2014); and Robert Vitalis’ *White World Order, Black Power Politics* (2015).

to apolitical academia, to modernist poetry. (Smethurst 2005). Black ethics represented the violence necessary to eliminate white influence and defend black communities, involving various forms of self-determination, Pan-Africanism, Socialism, armed self-defense, Black Arts poetry, and separate black nationhood. While this is only a brief and cursory discussion of various Black Arts' ontological and ethical claims, I believe it is enough evidence to claim that Black Artists were promoting a moral psychology that could awaken Negroes from their fantasy America—where Civil Rights could successfully achieve integration between white and black communities—to the reality of America, which necessitated the destruction of white values systems and integration into the emerging Black World.

For the Black Artists, merely stating the task of becoming black and existing in a Black World did not accomplish this destruction. First, an entire Black World required its own cultural forbearers, cultural and social history, community values, aesthetic standards, and institutions. Second, to become black and exist within a Black World, Black Artists had to, within their own psyche, destroy their old worlds. This existential-liberational process was demanding because it required both creative and destructive impulses. The tension inherent in this process was no more apparent than when Black Artists attempted to appropriate cultural forbearers into the Black World, like Langston Hughes, who both nurtured and sharply criticized the Black Artists. Under this analysis, Black Arts poetry should not be read as the violent outbursts of misguided

revolutionaries, but rather as object lessons in the existential struggle for meaning making within frameworks for liberation that necessitate some form of self-denial. Therefore, this paper will first propose a theoretical framework for understanding the existential tension inherent Black Arts Movement. Second, the paper will utilize this framework to understand the relationship between Black Artists and Langston Hughes.

UNDERSTANDING MOURNING

In order to reconstruct the existential process of world-making as experienced by Black Artists, I rely on Hans Loewald's and Jonathan Lear's theories of generational cultural appropriation, or "mourning," and so I will take a quick detour in order to establish this framework before returning to my discussion of the Black Arts Movement (Lear 2017; Loewald 1980). Loewald argues that psychoanalysts have consistently mischaracterized ego-development as a series of defensive strategies against an intruding reality that cannot bend to the wishes of the id, the Freudian concept of the psychological source of human desires and needs according. In this characterization, one of the essential functions of the ego is repression or fantasy, whereby the psyche can retreat into the imagination in order protect itself against a hostile reality.

Loewald's intervention comes at the level of the ego development of infants in the earliest stages of the parent-infant dyad, where the infant

develops both their psyche and their sense of reality within the context of a nurturing and loving parent. The world of the parent-infant dyad is small and not necessarily complex. However, it is a fairly intuitive and compelling claim that reality develops from such foundational longings as hunger. From this perspective, hunger begins internally with a pain in my stomach that is satisfied by nourishment from an external parent figure. By recognizing that I have pain inside me that can be ameliorated by taking in something from the outside, I begin to establish internality and externality, as well as to make identifications with these emerging objects.

It is at this point precisely that mourning is involved. Mourning recognizes that this process involves loss. The introduction of externality and internality necessarily requires a loss of complete identification between parent and child, as the child recognizes that the nurturing parent exists outside them. However, the introduction of externality and internality also involves the integration of new objects and object-relations.³ The child comes to recognize the parent as a separate subject (effectively gaining a parent as such), comes to recognize themselves as possessing feelings of their own, and then has to improvise strategies that can deal with these repeating losses and reformations. Thus, mourning is the successful integration of new objects and object-relations in the psychological constitution of objectivity and subjectivity. One of the most

relevant implications of this argument is that one of the first experiences the infant has of reality is that of a loving and nurturing parent that the infant must learn to successfully mourn and adapt to living without (Loewald 1980, 257-277).

As Loewald explores, there are complex ways in which this initially nurturing reality can manifest as hostile, specifically as threatening to overwhelm the child and thereby stunt their growth towards independence. The important movement is from a hostile reality and damaged ego to a nurturing reality and dynamically free ego. I propose to make a similar intervention within Black Arts literature, arguing that Black Artists inaugurated a black ontology whereby the black psyche no longer had to be damaged by a hostile white society. Black Artists attempted to posit a black psyche that could be dynamic and free by a nurturing a Black World, and black community ontology. Thus, my argument and Hans Loewald's arguments are similar in a poetic and instructive sense more so than in the same objective of reorienting Freudian analysis. The history of the Black Arts Movement should be understood as positing a black existentialist philosophy whereby black people, on their own, could assert the wholeness of their being in the face of a white society that saw various visions of damaged black psyches requiring therapeutic intervention from forces outside the emergent Black World.

Jonathan Lear, in his chapter "Mourning and Moral Psychology" from *Wisdom Won from Illness*, extends Loewald's concept of mourning to help explain psychic development generally.

³ Melanie Klein's thoughts on part-objects and whole-objects is particularly illuminating on this subject.

To quote Lear directly: "In effect, [Hans] Loewald extends the concept of mourning to cover the major moments of psychological development. The human psyche, he stresses, is itself a psychological achievement, and its development consists in a series of losses and reformations" (Lear 2017, 194). It is important to realize that mourning is how to properly say goodbye to someone or something, which thereby allows for the saying hello to new ways of thinking and being in the world. Thus, for Black Artists with cultural parents like Langston Hughes, mourning is the process by which they could say goodbye to, and live without the Langston Hughes who was a sharp cultural critic who condemned the violence of the Black Arts Movement, and thereby only hold onto the Langston Hughes who nurtured the early careers of the Black Artists, and provided them with one of their first visions of a successful black poet.

For Lear and Loewald, mourning is not just an early childhood phenomenon. Rather, it occurs throughout life. Mourning occurs in such obvious places as in the death of loved ones, where one must forever say goodbye to the beloved, and therefore must fully and finally integrate them into one's psyche. However, the process can also be seen in major moments of personal and psychological development. For instance, in transitioning from high school to college, one must transition from old forms of thinking and living in order to accept the necessary conditions of the new reality. College demands certain ways of living that are incompatible with high school life. Someone who

has successfully mourned their now-ended time in high school will be open to the new ways of living that college affords—from utilizing free time well, to experimenting with new friends and social groups, and to opening oneself up to more rigorous self-examination. However, not all transitions go well. For example, someone might continue to understand their new college friends as their old high school friends, thus limiting their modes of living and being. This is unsuccessful mourning, and it points to another valuable psychoanalytic contribution, which is that of psychological structures. People who have not fully mourned certain relationships effectively will often substitute new objects into old object-relations. In this case, a person's psychological rigidity keeps them from seeing who this new person is and what they *actually* contribute to life.

Under a theory of mourning, if Black Liberation means rejecting old ontological claims and old ways of life in favor of new claims and new ways of life, then such work will likely involve confronting anxieties, trauma, rigid psychological structures, and other conscious and unconscious thought processes that are the legacy of limiting and damaging forms of white violence. This type of claim, while not verbatim, should ring familiarly with the Black Arts Movement. The philosophy of the Black Arts Movement was plagued with difficulties in mourning, particularly its cultural parents. The theory of mourning allows me to explore the lasting legacy of the movement, providing a lens through which I can critically assess certain failures and limitations of the movement, while also allowing me to point to those same failures as moments

of lasting triumph. While most activists today advocating for Black Liberation or liberation of communities of color would not advocate for violence in the same manner of the Black Artists, I argue that there is evidence that the Black Artists' claims for a Black World, self-determination, and truth-telling have remained, and are constitutive of contemporary claims for Black Liberation and freedom for all oppressed peoples.

MOURNING LANGSTON HUGHES

Baraka's vitriolic, militant call that began this essay stood in an obvious battle for supremacy against the man who shared a page with him in the magazine's symposium, Langston Hughes. Hughes, in a more balanced tone, argued: "The Negro image deserves objective well-rounded... treatment...The last thing Negroes need now are black imitators of neurotic white writers who themselves have nothing of which to be proud" (Hughes 1926, 75). Whether or not such "objective" treatment was possible, Langston Hughes's call to speak truth was a lasting lesson for Black Artists who played an integral role in the construction of the Black World.

On the occasion of the death of Langston Hughes in 1967, the national periodical *Negro Digest* published an anthology of elegiac poems by prominent Black Artists (Fuller 1967). *Negro Digest* was the national epicenter for the Black Arts world, and mourning Hughes, whose image was appropriated by Black Artists in

disparate and contradictory ways, was marked by traumatic divisions among the Black Artists themselves. In this context, a *Negro Digest* special issue honoring the death of Hughes was a significant milestone because it reflected a self-conscious effort at understanding and institutionalizing Hughes's role as cultural forbearer to, and interlocutor with the Black Arts Movement.

Hughes was one of the guiding elders to the Black Arts Movement both as one of the earliest examples of a successful black-oriented poet, and in his support of the publication of the younger poets' works. He was, in other words, a father-like figure to many of the Black Artists because of the ways in which his writing was an early example of asserting the validity of black experience. And, as I will show, it is clear that many Black Artists recognized that Hughes was attempting to teach black people to speak the truth of black existence, the ways in which they failed to fully appropriate this lesson are also apparent. Hughes publicly denounced the radical and violent rhetoric of the militant Black Nationalists, yet, as the Black Arts poems in the *Negro Digest* memorial show, few Black Artists honestly confronted this fact in the wake of the older poet's passing.

Following Loewald's theory, if this is a failure to successfully mourn Hughes as cultural-parent, then it might reveal an unconscious recognition of the impossibility of the Black Artists' stated goal to destroy white America—a desire for destruction that was far from anything advocated by Hughes. As W.E.B. Du Bois argued,

black Americans are plagued by double-consciousness—one from white America and one from black America:

One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder...In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world (Du Bois 2008, 3).

Within this oft-quoted framework, the Black Arts appropriation of Hughes's lifelong effort to write the beauty of black experience is, in part, a success because Black Artists captured an essential beauty of the black cultural tradition, or what a Black World had as "a message for the world." However, it simultaneously reveals certain failures, because the call for founding a Black World required destroying America. Hughes, for all his support, rejected the Black Arts call to destroy white people and Western culture. Hughes, as cultural-parent, could guide Black Artists in living and working as poets writing about the beauty of black experience, but he could not fully approve of, or at the very least guide, violent fantasies of completely severing ties with white culture and society.

One example of the positive appropriation of Hughes is the Black Artist Haki Madhubuti's poem to the late

poet. Madhubuti characterized Hughes as calling on the Black Arts generation of artists to create as dynamically and originally as possible, but also to remain as truthful as possible to the reality of their experience as black Americans. This was an important role for a black writer in a culture where few to no positive images of black life existed, a concern that is reflected in Madhubuti's tribute:

The time has come
when bravery
is not he
who is abundant
with heroic deeds
for the
state.
Bravery is that
little black man
over there
surrounded by people
he's talking—
bravery lies in his
words,
he's telling the
truth
they say
he's
a
poet
(Fuller 1967, 40).

Written specifically for the Hughes memorial issue of *Negro Digest*,

Madhubuti's poem puts an emphasis on truth-telling even over the act of producing poetry itself. This reflects Hughes's demand that black poets should emphasize presenting the reality of black life over "pure art" or poetry for poetry's sake, which is a lesson Black Artists were attempting to realize in their own works that rejected universality, apoliticism, and non-black poetic themes. According to Madhubuti, the lesson to learn from Hughes is that, even as poets, there is always a higher priority to search for and to reveal the truth of black experience, especially as black people living in a society in which access to professionalized forms of truth-production (i.e., white literary establishment, scientific study, university positions, government representation, etc.) is denied. Furthermore, to do this is courageous—for Black Artists working within a revolutionary environment (almost as soldiers), courage was an important value to appropriate.

With his Socratic-like argument, Madhubuti claims that Hughes's courage is something beyond what people might generally think courage entails—courage is not fighting and dying for the United States government. It is speaking black truth to those who need to hear it, even when one is a "little black man" before a growing crowd. When we put this in context with what we understand about early childhood development from psychoanalysts like Loewald, we would have to agree that it takes a great deal of courage to confront truth, especially when it means proclaiming the beauty of black existence to a crowd that might not agree. The crowd surrounding Hughes,

a "little black man" speaking against the amassed people, evokes both the dangerous act of political organizing during the Civil Rights era, as well as the white mobs that assassinated black truth-tellers.

Madhubuti's emphasis on Hughes's truth-telling gives the appearance of a Black Artist successfully mourning Hughes. Truth-telling, after all, seems like an especially appropriate theme to focus on when mourning a father figure to a cultural movement whose aim was to create a Black World that could support a positive black moral psychology. Within a psychoanalytic framework, as Loewald notes, a good parent encourages the child towards self-sufficiency—towards being able to effectively reason and to be responsible for actions taken in the social world.⁴ Apply this general (and admittedly loose) paradigm of the parent-child relationship to the sphere of cultural production, and one could imagine what a good parent to a cultural tradition could be (given that parents should encourage their children to possess the ability to

4. As fellow early-child Freudian D.W. Winnicott discusses in his essay "Transitional objects and transitional phenomena," when parents take away a child's transitional object—an early childhood possession like a blanket or stuffed animal that comes to replace certain elements of the child-parent relationship as the parent begins to leave the child on their own—or if they break the object's continuity either through washing or questioning the child's relationship with the object, then the child can possibly develop a psychological structure wherein they have difficulty relating to the reality of loss. In this scenario, the good parent allows their child to fully work out their relationship with the transitional object, in order that the child may develop dynamic strategies for dealing with the loss of beloved things. Published in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol. 30+, Part 2 (1953).

reason and to accept responsibility).⁵ A good “parent” to a cultural tradition encourages artists to be free and dynamic in creating original works, while at the same time remaining truthful to the conditions of lived experience. In this way, young artists working in a cultural tradition can feel free to create, while also taking social responsibility for their cultural production.

Sigmund Freud provides some important clues to understanding what constitutes successful mourning in his essay, “Mourning and Melancholia”. In distinguishing between healthy (mourning) and unhealthy (melancholia) responses to death, Freud comments: “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty,” as opposed to melancholia in which the Ego becomes poor and empty (Freud 1964). One important implication of this initial description is that death involves a loss of a particular object and object-relation. The death of Langston Hughes meant the loss of the Harlem Renaissance poet as a leader and interlocutor in the field of defending the positive aspects of black life and experience, and this loss certainly made the world poorer and emptier

for Black Artists as they confronted the difficult work of carving out a space for themselves in black cultural consciousness. Successful mourning would, in part, involve accepting the fact that Hughes had passed, and that it would no longer be possible to turn to him for new insight in transitioning to a black psychological structure. Thus, initially, Black Artists’ attempts to mourn Hughes by attributing to him the importance of truth-telling appear successful, given Hughes’s history of speaking black truth to power with poems like “I, Too Sing America” and “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.”

Fidelity to the life of the lost beloved is part of what constitutes successful mourning, as it is important to remember and to appropriate real or symbolic elements of the lost loved one—this is especially true in the case of Hughes, where his memory was appropriated to defend and to promote black experience as a valid standard of truth-telling. Hughes’s concern with elaborating a theory of black truth-telling is apparent in his 1926 essay, “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (Hughes 1926). In this essay, Hughes argued that Negro artists must eschew white literary standards in order to create black literary standards that could accurately reflect black life. This example is one of many in which Hughes encouraged black writers to avoid the pitfalls associated with appropriating writing styles that limited black writers’ ability to speak to black existence. Black Artists expanded on this call, both in theories explicating what black poetry could mean in terms of a comprehensive Black Aesthetic as well as in their writing styles for representing the move away

5 In referencing cultural parents to a social movement, I do not mean to equate black adults with children, which has, in part, been a feature of various forms of black infantilizing and racism. Rather, as many psychoanalysts have explored, I am looking toward the childhood development of the psyche to understand how early psychological phenomena can shed light on other major moments of psychological development. Thus, while I will continue to use the phrase “cultural-parents,” I will not be calling Black Artists “children.” This makes sense both for the historical implications of using such a phrase, but also because, psychoanalytically speaking, the adult-parent relationship is related to the child-parent relationship in complicated ways.

from Western writing to black writing. Langston Hughes's life and thought provided a powerful foundation on which to build a social and cultural history that could ground the emerging black psyche in a comprehensive, historically-situated black ontology.

Yet, where Hughes looked to a future in which black poets and writers could write about the beauty of black experience freely and alongside white culture, the Black Artists of the 1960s-1970s were attempting to create and sustain a Black World that annihilated white influence. Thus, while Hughes's call to create black literary standards has affinities with the Black Artists' literary project, there is a key difference: Hughes openly appreciated Western literary forms. Where in "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" Hughes argues that black cultural temples can exist alongside white cultural temples, Black Artists were creating a world in which only black temples could exist. Black Artists understood themselves as creating a Black World outside of a Westernized society that denied or rejected claims for positively viewing black life and experience.

Within the black cultural tradition, it became necessary to assert one's right to truth. While one can argue over what might constitute taking responsibility for truth, for Black Artists, truth remained and remains a fraught political field. Even to this day, many established avenues for exposure and cultural production are inaccessible to black communities. Hughes came to understand himself as a "literary sharecropper," a reference to the post-Emancipation, slave-like

practice of sharecropping (Rampersad 1988, 428). Hughes used the term to evoke writers who, because of the color of their skin, were unable to secure stable and lucrative writing positions. Hughes was passed over in favor of less experienced white writers for radio, television, opera, and other writing jobs more times than may be counted (Rampersad 1988, 428-462). For Black Artists, Hughes not only symbolized a call to truth-telling, but also someone who won the right, even if only as a foot in the door, for black people to speak their truth in a white-dominated America. For many Black Artists, Hughes was the first poet to help them to realize that not all poets had to be white, and that therefore they themselves could be poets.

This is not to prioritize the right of truth (i.e. the material and political conditions necessary to have one's voice heard) over the psychological and philosophical conditions necessary to meet the challenge of being honest and truthful. Rather, this is to argue that to properly mourn Hughes, one must appropriate both his call to speak truth *and* the historical fact that he was integral to the foundation of a black cultural tradition in which Black Artists recognized a possibility of supporting their revolutionary project. Langston Hughes was a poet to whom Black Artists could turn both for material support in getting published, as well as for moral support in justifying their claims of a Black World that the white world could no longer suppress through silence and violence.

The discussion up to now has refrained from fully defining "truth-telling" as it appears to have been

understood by Black Artists. While the Black Artists could have successfully mourned Hughes by transforming his call to truth (i.e., Black Artists could have contributed to the project of telling black truth by altering but remaining within his standards), reflecting on certain misfired attempts at mourning Hughes shows otherwise. One such misfire is the short essay "Langston," by Black Arts literary critic Julian Mayfield (Fuller 1967, 34-35). In this essay, Mayfield uses Hughes's history of supporting the publication of other black writers to argue that Black Artists should stop competing with one another, lest their "real enemies" continue to thrive: "[Langston] knew that the longer we kept at each other's throats, our *real* enemies would have nothing to worry about" (Fuller 1967, 35). Claiming that Black Artists should avoid criticizing one another makes sense as a Black Arts project. Looking back on the history of black cultural production and Black Liberation, one gets a sense of major moments of intra- and inter-generational conflict, such as the famous conflicts between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. However, Black Artists themselves took on an adversarial voice when discussing the failures of most black writers in the United States. In this way, desiring to claim unity against a history of infighting feels both like an important goal for a movement attempting to create a unified Black World, as well as an overcompensation by a group that was actually rejecting many more figures than they were bringing into their ranks.

It is true that, later in life, Hughes often put younger writers ahead of himself. Having benefited from

the help of famous white and black literary figures earlier in his own life, Hughes took the time to encourage young black writers in whom he saw potential. However, Hughes just as often criticized black writers. He criticized his contemporaries, Countee Cullen and Jean Toomer, whom he saw as escaping black life by writing in strictly white literary forms (Rampersad 1986). Later, Hughes criticized the Black Arts Movement for inaccurately portraying the reality of black existence. To recall the words of Amiri Baraka, Black Artists were tasked with destroying America as they knew it (Fuller 1965, 65, 75). With this statement, Baraka was responding to Hughes who, at the 1965 symposium on "The Role of the Negro Writer as Artist" had observed, "Contemporary white writers can perhaps afford to be utterly irresponsible in their moral and social viewpoints. Negro writers cannot. Ours is a social as well as literary responsibility" (Fuller 1965, 75). Fuller, by placing Hughes and Baraka on the same page of the symposium, highlighted the difference between the two generations of writers. Hughes attacked Black Artists for their absolute rejection of whiteness and Western literary styles—calling such a move "utterly irresponsible" and "neurotic" (Fuller 1965, 75). Thus, not only was Hughes perfectly comfortable with criticizing other black writers, he often placed the Black Arts Movement in particular on the receiving end of his searing critique.

It is the tension between the words that Black Artists were using to mourn Hughes—speaking the truth of black experience and aiding one another in getting black artists published—and

the fact that they were failing to fully appropriate Hughes' lessons in their promotion of violence and a separate Black World—that highlights their failure to properly mourn Hughes. Hughes, by calling on Black Artists to appreciate and exist beside white artists and writers, advocated for a far more balanced approach to whiteness and the white literary establishment than the Black Artists. In this vision of the Black World, to use Hughes' words, the temple to black culture could stand on its own foundation, even if it remained connected to white culture and politics. This is not to argue that the Black Artists failed in their project by not fully appropriating Hughes's legacy. Rather, this is evidence of the difficulty of appropriating a positive black moral psychology when one is living in a world that demands a damaged psyche. Langston Hughes absolutely can be appropriated in supporting a black culture that defines its own standards for beauty outside of the white establishment, as the Black Artists attempted. However, he cannot be appropriated for a project that requires destroying whiteness in that process of culture making. That the Black Artists had such trouble navigating these issues shows how important and constitutive was Hughes' symbol for visions of Black Liberation. Perhaps it was easier for Black Artists to imagine that racism could be annihilated, rather than to continue to confront its lasting, invidious influence.

One possible explanation for this gap between the life and words of Hughes and his Black Arts appropriation may be explained by the psychological and political rigidity of the Black Artists. Despite Amiri

Baraka's initial vehemence against white America and poets like Langston Hughes, twenty years later, Baraka conceded to Hughes. Where Baraka had originally rejected Hughes's call for racial balance in favor of poetry that could "kill" white America, he realized that what he had missed in Hughes was actually the older poet's contribution to the emerging black cultural tradition—a contribution that could help sustain a positive black psyche for generations (Rampersad 1988). Hughes' balanced approach to the black cultural tradition could be more dynamic in response to the call of truth telling that the Black Artists had originally overlooked. For Baraka, as for other Black Artists, appropriating Hughes's life and thought began a process of understanding the nature of a revolutionary black psyche that could shape the goals and limits of American cultural production.

CONCLUDING A BLACK WORLD AND MOURNING THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

In the Black Arts Movement, Black Artists were presented with various examples of what it meant to be a black poet, and the life of Langston Hughes, one of the leading poets of the Harlem Renaissance, was one standard by which Black Artists measured and appropriated their own poetical being. Mourning was the process by which Black Artists could say goodbye to the Hughes who spilled much ink in his criticism of the cultural aims of the Black Arts Movement, in order that they might greet a now-ancestral

Hughes, whose death allowed Black Artists to appropriate his image without his protest.

The complex and contradictory reverence afforded to Hughes is representative of a Black Arts community that was consciously and unconsciously struggling with fully appropriating their vision of a positive black psyche. In attempting to replace a "white-structured" culture that was damaging and limiting to black people, with a "black-structured" culture that could allow for black flourishing, the artists of the Black Arts Movement moved towards a psychological structure far too rigid to actually achieve their stated goal.

An important aspect of reality that appears to be missing from the Black Arts ontology is reflected in W.E.B. Du Bois's theory of double consciousness (Du Bois 2008). Black Artists were attempting to destroy white America—their American selves—so that they could live in a reality governed by their African selves. Black Artists were attempting to destroy an abhorrent reality in favor of a more manageable new reality. However, if Black Artists were truly committed to this project within the parameters set in the Black Arts era, they would not have appropriated Hughes's death at all—as we have seen, there are many instances where Hughes's vision of black culture was at odds with the Black Arts vision.

Instead of seeing Black Artists as ignoring what Hughes was actually articulating about black cultural production in order to fit him neatly within their ideological arrangements, one might see these memorials as

instances of what Jonathan Lear calls "psychological break," in his work *Happiness, Death, and the Remainder of Life* (Lear 2000, 114-15). Psychological break occurs when an individual's psychological structure for understanding the world and its objects is so rigid that it cannot remain intact in the face of reality. For the Black Artists, psychological break could have occurred when the reality of Hughes could not neatly fit into their need to appropriate him for destructive purposes. As a major cultural-parent, Hughes's lifework was so compelling, was so constitutive of Black Arts identity, that he could not convincingly be brought into a Black Arts psychological structure that demanded destruction of father-figures who would not support their violent fantasies (Baraka 1979). Recognizing how easily Black Artists rejected other father figures, such as NAACP leaders and MLK, Jr., it is curious that Hughes was not only left unscathed, but was revered in his death. (Smethurst 2005). The Black Arts treatment of Hughes does not fit neatly into any given narrative of Black Arts psychology, either coming from Black Artists themselves or from subsequent scholars. For these reasons, Hughes's death is an inadequately explored moment of psychological break. If Black Artists had been more open, perhaps they could have heard Hughes warning them of their misdirected desire to kill a part of themselves. The death of Hughes was a moment in which Black Artists could have recognized the psychological and ontological limitations of their Black National project, and adjusted to more freely and powerfully confront the realities of a violently racist white society.

My claim that the Black Arts Movement might represent a moment of cultural psychological break is supported by the example of Haki R. Madhubuti's 2011 collection of essays and poems on Black Arts participant and forbearer, Gwendolyn Brooks, entitled *Honoring Genius: Gwendolyn Brooks, The Narrative of Craft, Art, Kindness and Justice*. Where once Madhubuti had warned of white boys carrying .357 magnums, by 2011, he was bringing white figures, including Weather Underground founder William Ayers, white poet Robert Bly, white historian Howard Zinn, corporate leader Steve Jobs, and white documentary filmmaker Michael Moore, into conversation with Brooks's legacy (Madhubuti 2011). Far from fearing the destructive effects of white influence on the authenticity of his blackness, Madhubuti effectively integrated the influence of white elements in his life. This is an acknowledgment of the ways in which segments outside of the black community could and have contributed to sustaining black life.

These changes reflect even newer ontologies and Black Worlds more in line with the critiques that many had leveled against the Black Arts Movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In a lecture given at Robert Bly's Minnesota Men's Conference in 2008, Madhubuti identified 1969 as the year he decided to never again work with whites, and 1990 as the year he began to collaborate with whites once again (Madhubuti 2008, YouTube Video). This shift was marked by a poem entitled "White People are People Too (For Mead, Hillman, Bly, Densmore, and Multicultural Men's

Work)" in *Claiming Earth* (Madhubuti 2009, 330). In this poem, Madhubuti admits some of the pitfalls of his Black Arts struggle: "race struggle can be blinding and self-righteous/race struggle seldom separates the evil from the ignorant/.../race struggle minimizes intrarace struggle" (Madhubuti 2009, 330). The violent and stark divisions drawn between black, Negro, and white acted as psychologically rigid structures that could not allow for free and dynamic interactions with others.

Madhubuti's judicious inclusion of supportive whites into the Black World starting in 1990 is evidence of a veteran black revolutionary who is confident of maintaining the integrity of his black moral psychology while in intimate contact with white people. The Black Artists were forced to confront America according to its true merits (or demerits) as well as on their own terms. Because the Black Artists of the 1960s-1970s held on to their destructive fantasies of purifying their souls in the destruction of Western culture, it was difficult for them to honestly confront the history of race relations in the United States. However, the Black Artists did succeed in constituting an enduring Black World that has been able to withstand the pressures of shifting political realities. This marks the Black Arts Movement as more than an isolated moment of black cultural production.

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Oral History of an Archive of YouTube's Importance
to the LGBTQ+ Community and the Platform's
Algorithmic Discrimination
Jill Fredenburg

Abstract

YouTube, the world's largest video-sharing platform, has historically served as a resource of free, accessible LGBTQ+ education since its creation in 2005. In 2019, a small group of LGBTQ+ content creators filed a complaint against this platform and its parent company, Google, alleging that they had experienced discrimination from the ways YouTube enforces its policies. In their view, the policies are not consistently upheld, which gives unfair preference in content promotion to producers with large audiences, even when their content is hostile to LGBTQ+ communities. This research project uses oral histories from LGBTQ+ content consumers found in StoryCorps' unpublished database to allow narratives to speak to this platform's importance, revealing the necessity of care and intention in YouTube's response to these criticisms. When looking more deeply into how this business interacts with its LGBTQ+ creators and audience, however, it becomes apparent that the platform prioritizes capital growth over establishing mutual relationships of trust and respect with people who are dependent on its tools.

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INTRODUCTION

In August 2019, a group of LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and more) video creators on the popular visual media platform, YouTube, filed a complaint stating that the platform and its parent company, Google, had discriminated against them by suppressing their content. This suppression included both the restriction of their ability to sell advertising, as well as the culling of their subscribers. The suit added to multiple allegations against the video streaming site stated in videos posted to the platform itself (Bensinger 2019). The following statement from the lawsuit describes the overview of the complaints.

“The LGBTQ+ Plaintiffs are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual or Queer content creators, viewers, users, and/or online consumers of YouTube who bring this lawsuit to redress Defendants Google/YouTube’s discrimination, fraud, unfair and deceptive business practices, unlawful restraint of speech, and breach of consumer contract rights on behalf of themselves and other Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, or Queer persons (collectively referred to as the “LGBTQ+ Community”) who use the global social media site known as ‘YouTube’” (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 4).

YouTube’s historic role in the education and empowerment of the

LGBTQ+ population provides important context for this lawsuit.

YouTube is by far the world’s largest video-sharing platform, with nearly 2 billion monthly viewers (Bensinger 2019). The complaint that a portion of its LGBTQ+ content creators have filed was borne from the uneven manner in which the platform enforces its policies, giving unfair preference to producers with large audiences, even when their content is hostile to gay, lesbian, and other LGBTQ+ communities (Bensinger 2019). This problem has even more significant impact because of the monopolizing power that YouTube has over video-based content as a whole. YouTube and, more widely, Google have control and ownership over more than 95% of the public video-based content and communications in the world (Bensinger, 2019). Their broad control over public video content allows these monopolies to operate as the largest for-profit forum dedicated to free speech (Bensinger 2019). In the complaint, the Defendants estimated that YouTube reaps more than \$25 billion in annual revenues and profits solely by regulating, distributing, and monetizing the free speech and expression of the 2.3 billion people who view and create content on YouTube (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 4).

YouTube/Google stated in sworn testimony to the U.S. Congress that “everyone’s voice” would be heard and subjected only to viewpoint-neutral, content-based rules and filtering that “apply equally” to all members of the YouTube Community, regardless of the individual user’s viewpoint or identity (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 5).

Below is a section of the testimony's transcript with Senator Cruz and YouTube's Assistant General Counsel Juniper Downs.

"On January 17, 2018, Defendants, through YouTube's Assistant General Counsel, Juniper Downs, confirmed to Congress that YouTube's mission remains unchanged and the platform is designated and operates as a "public forum" for free speech and expression subject only to viewpoint-neutral, content-based regulations:

Senator Cruz: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Welcome to each of the witnesses. I'd like to start by asking each of the company representatives a simple question, which is: do you consider your companies to be neutral public fora?

Senator Cruz: I'm just looking for a yes or no whether you consider yourself to be a neutral public forum.

Senator Cruz: Ms. Downs?

Ms. Downs: Yes, our goal is to design products for everyone, subject to our policies and the limitations they impose on the types of content that people may share on our products.

Senator Cruz: So, you're saying you do consider YouTube to be a neutral public forum?

Ms. Downs: Correct. We enforce our policies in a politically neutral way. Certain things are prohibited by our Community Guidelines, which are spelled out and provided publicly to all

of our users (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 18)."

Rather than being free and open to all, however, YouTube's mission as a viewpoint-neutral video hosting platform has allegedly been abandoned, "and the platform is increasingly engaged in a discriminatory and fraudulent profit scheme within which community members are now subjected to discriminatory, animus-based and content-based regulations and restrictions, designed to maximize Defendants' financial and political interests" (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 5). The LGBTQ+ Plaintiffs who helped build the YouTube platform as a space for the LGBTQ+ community are now claiming to be subjected to unlawful content regulation, distribution, and monetization practices that stigmatize and financially harm them and the greater LGBTQ+ community (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 6). The best depiction of why the restriction of LGBTQ+ content on the platform is detrimental to the community comes from those who have most directly benefited from the existence of this content.

THE LAWSUIT

In the original First Amendment lawsuit filed in August, 2019, LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019 (Case 5:19-cv-04749), plaintiffs included Divino (GlitterBombTv.com's GNews!), BriaAndChrissy LLC (BriaAndChrissy), Chase Ross, Brett Somers a/k/a AMP (Watts the Safeword), and Lindsay Amer (Queer Kid Stuff). The suit was amended in November to also include plaintiffs Stephanie Frosch (ElloStephExtras and StephFrosch),

(Sal Cinquemani (SalBardo), Tamara Johnson (SVTV Network), and Greg Scarnici (GregScarnici and UndercoverMusic). The Defendant is YouTube, LLC ("YouTube") and its parent company, Google LLC ("Google") (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 3).

The suit delves into complaints about the following "Tool Kit of Unlawful Speech Suppression": Restricted Mode, advertising restrictions, AI filtering under Restricted Mode and advertising restrictions, deletion of LGBTQ+ content thumbnail images, cancelling and stopping new video notifications, excluding LGBTQ+ related content from the "Up Next" recommend application, recommending anti-LGBTQ+ hate speech in the "Up Next" recommend application alongside the LGBTQ+ the plaintiffs' videos, including anti-LGBTQ+ hate speech in the comments section appearing on the same screen as the LGBTQ+ plaintiffs' videos, and other unlawful speech-restricting tools (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 2). This First Amended Complaint (FAC) alleges the following:

"...legal rights [of the Plaintiffs] have been violated by Defendants' use of the data regarding users' gender, sexual orientation, religious, ethnic, racial, political and/or commercial and data driven identities and viewpoints, to restrain, discriminate against, economically crush, and cleanse disfavored users from the YouTube Platform in direct violation of the users' civil and consumer rights. (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 1-2).

Furthermore, it alleges that:

"Google/YouTube's cleansing of independent LGBTQ+ video content creators is not limited to discriminating against those creators and users who identify as, or express LGBTQ+ viewpoints. Documented evidence exists and lawsuits are pending or are being threatened by independent third party video creators and loyal users of the YouTube Platform who have been victimized by Defendants' practices because of the users' race, religion, political affiliations, or commercial status. Google/YouTube is using identity based censorship to determine who can and cannot continue to use the YouTube platform" (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 2-3).

The suit introduces a new freedom of speech claim that alleges that Google/YouTube are using and applying "subjective, vague, and over-broad criteria which give the Defendants unfettered and unbridled discretion to censor speech for arbitrary, capricious, or nonexistent reasons" (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 102). It alleges that the "Defendants' actions also violate Plaintiffs' right to free association and assembly by blocking viewers' access to videos and comments" and that their "actions were done with the intent to deprive Plaintiffs and other LGBTQ+ YouTube users of their right to free speech" (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 102-103). Finally, the complaint alleges that the "Defendants are operating a Company Town in which YouTube is designated as the public forum or

"town-square" for the community to gather and engage in free speech, expression, communication, and to exchange ideas" (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 103).

These complaints, compared to YouTube's policies and the review of the existing literature below, serve as the main source for the statements in the following paper. This is a limitation based on the lack of academic research and monitoring done on YouTube's algorithmic relationship with the platform's LGBTQ+ community.

YOUTUBE'S POLICIES

"Demonetization" is the removal of ad revenue from particular channels or specific videos on a channel. "Restriction Mode" is a setting through which YouTube screens all videos for potential "mature content." If a video is deemed inappropriate for minors or for advertisers, it can be demonetized, restricted, or both ("Advertiser-friendly Content Guidelines" and "Disable or enable Restricted Mode," 2020). YouTube's Community Guidelines and monetization rules state that videos that include the following will be demonetized: spam, deceptive practices, and scams; nudity and sexual content; child safety; harmful or dangerous content; hate speech; harassment and cyberbullying ("Advertiser-friendly Content Guidelines" and "Disable or enable Restricted Mode," 2020).

REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

While there is not much academic literature directly testing YouTube's algorithms and LGBTQ+ keywords, the following is a review of literature related to important ideas surrounding YouTube's importance to the LGBTQ+ community as an audio-visual platform, computer-mediated communication's impact on identity formation, and the ways Google benefits from algorithmic discrimination.

Physical location greatly impacts queer representation offline. In "Negotiating Identities/Queering Desires: Coming Out Online and the Remediation of the Coming Out Story," Gray explains that rural youth in the United States less likely to know older LGBTQ+ adults and therefore often struggle with finding opportunities to explore LGBTQ identities (Gray 2009, 1181). Culturally, the majority of people assume that individuals are heterosexual until they give evidence that they are (Gray 2009, 1181). While most young people now can easily learn what "gay" means, this identifier can be seen in opposition to their everyday surroundings. "Beyond a moment of visibility provided by mainstream television and film, genres of queer realness circulate compelling images of peers on a similar quest for verity and viability" (Gray 2009, 1182). Representations of LGBTQ+ identity, like on YouTube, offer youth to an opportunity to acknowledge their queerness within familiarity, pulling these ideas from mainstream media into an online, accessible space (Gray 2009, 1182). The ability to access this

online information allows for a more informed identity construction.

This construction of a sexual and gender identity is one of the major developmental elements of adolescence. One study that looked specifically at self-identifying lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals found that the Internet was the most common tool used in the process of this aspect of identity-formation (Bond 2009, 43). Almost half of the sample reported using the Internet as their *primary* source of LGBTQ+ information (Bond 2009, 43). Media was also used more frequently than any face-to-face interpersonal relationships as a source of information gathering during the coming-out (announcing one's sexuality when one is not heterosexual) process (Bond 2009, 43).

Social media interactions are looked at specifically in "Queer identity online: Informal learning and teaching experiences of LGBTQ individuals on social media" (Fox 2016). The use of social media by LGBTQ individuals to discover their emerging identity is often referred to as "informal" education (Fox 2016, 635). In addition to informal education, Fox and Ralston identified three types of learning tied to LGBTQ+ information seeking. The first, *traditional learning*, comes from looking for specific information about LGBTQ-related issues (Fox 2016, 637). The second, *social learning*, comes from finding examples of people to emulate, studying their ways of experiencing LGBTQ+ identity (Fox 2016, 638). The third, *experiential learning*, involves more direct relationship formation, often through dating apps that allow people

to experiment with their sexual and gender presentations (Fox 2016, 639). These apps facilitate connections that are computer-mediated.

CMC (computer-mediated communication) allows for networking between individuals that may feel stigmatized or physically incapable to interact in person (Green 2015, 704). YouTube is the most popular media platform for user-generated video, and this popularity is mirrored amongst the LGBTQ+ population (Green 2015, 704). The combination of sound and moving image has expanded the ways that the LGBTQ+ community can express with their online identity (Green 2015, 704). YouTube has also served as a space for experienced LGBTQ+ individuals and allies to provide support for those who are struggling with their sexual and gender identities. The It Gets Better Project, for example, was a massive movement that began on YouTube (Green 2015, 704).

YouTube's parent company, Google, connects advertisers, businesses, and everyday users to one another (Srnicek 2017, 254). Data, the resource that drives these platform businesses, gives Google its competitive advantages. The company provides the infrastructure through which groups can communicate without a paywall. This allows Google to monitor and extract all the data gained within the interactions between these groups (Srnicek 2017, 254-255). Platforms are able to work the way they do because they have the capacity to generate the network effects that benefit them most (Srnicek 2017, 255). The more individuals are using a platform, take

YouTube as an example, the more valuable that platform becomes for everyone because the platform is able to build out its personalization attributes (Srnicek 2017, 255). These powerhouses are then made virtually unbeatable by any competitors, making the communities that use them vulnerable to the decisions of the platform (Srnicek 2017, 256).

Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism exposes the ways in which Google is not a platform that equally presents all forms of ideas within its search engine (Noble 2018). The combination of the promotion of specific websites that serve Google financially, along with Google's general monopoly status both lead to biased search (Noble 2018). A website's discoverability (what turns up when an individual searches for different things) currently works to enable a culture of racism and sexism (Noble 2018). Private interests affect the promotion of certain sites and contribute to the monopoly status of Google and its company, YouTube, privileging certain groups of people over others (Noble 2018).

METHODS

StoryCorps, a nonprofit organization designed to preserve and share the stories of American communities of diverse backgrounds, carries three unpublished interviews in its archive in which YouTube is cited as a specific source for LGBTQ+ education and a tool for empowerment. With direction and permission from the librarians at the American Folklife Center, located in the Library of Congress, it is possible to access interviews by using keywords

and self-identifiers submitted by the people who conducted and uploaded the interviews. By seeking out interviewees with LGBTQ+ identifiers and the keyword "YouTube" in the description provided by interview participants, the importance of this platform to many individuals presented itself within the transcripts of the following interviews.

YOUTUBE AS A PLATFORM FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Anna Book, interviewed through StoryCorps by her mother, Sarah, speaks about finally being able to create genuine relationships in high school, discovering her sexuality, and appreciating how she will never "fit into a box" (Book 2016). Having grown up in South Carolina, Book was not surrounded by a vocal group of LGBTQ+ peers. She recalls spending a lot of her time simply watching people in elementary school, and signals that time of her life as the point she began to understand how to behave in ways that her peers would deem acceptable to make her "popular" (Book 2016). Book reflects on the peer pressure she felt to behave in certain ways, even to bully another student to impress her friends. Book's coming out story was particularly impacted by YouTube's influence. After attending Girls State, a youth empowerment program geared towards connecting young women who live in the same state, Book learned how to make more diverse friendships without limiting herself to a certain brand of person. She became more open to relationships with people who were "intrinsically different" from her

(Book 2016). After recognizing that there was not a prescribed, correct way to live, she began considering her sexuality. In the StoryCorps interview, she discussed that she had been a lesbian all her life, and that she knew without “really knowing” until the beginning of her senior year of high school, when one of her favorite YouTube content creators made a coming out video (Book 2016).

“Coming out” videos are “a special and important part of YouTube culture,” according to Jamie Byrne, the Senior Director of Content Partnerships, who handles partner management for YouTube Creators. Byrne told *The Huffington Post* in 2017 that “The LGBTQ creators who share their personal stories through our platform inspire us with their acts of courage and remind us of why it’s important to make sure YouTube remains a place where everyone can have a voice” (Wong, 2017). YouTube has long stood as a place where LGBTQ+ people can say, with control over how the image and audio are both presented, that they are part of the community. They can share the video easily, creating a safe space for a vulnerable conversation, rather than having to Come Out multiple times to individual people.

For the first time, Book was introduced to the idea that lesbians could look like her – feminine, cisgender, not stereotypically “boyish” (Book 2016). Book’s favorite content creator, Ingrid Nilsen, makes her livelihood on YouTube as a “beauty guru” (Book 2016). Nilsen’s coming out video marked Book’s entryway into recognizing that she, like Nilsen, was gay, though she did not fit into her own

stereotypes about queerness. Book notes that she re-watched this video every week her junior year of high school, and it took her about a year for her to accept how uncomfortable she was with the idea of dating men. With the help of Nilsen’s example, Book was able to look back at interactions she had had with young women that she had not initially realized were, indeed, romantic. She had always pushed these relationships away before having to accept what they meant. For Book, the men in her life had represented something she thought wouldn’t be possible without them. “That wasn’t the picture of the life that I wanted. I wanted the house and the two kids” (Book 2016). Anna Book’s experience is an example of why visual and varied LGBTQ+ representation can be beneficial to young people, and of how YouTube as an open, accessible platform for both viewers and creators can create a space for self-acceptance and growth.

UNDERSTANDING YOUTUBE’S ALLEGED CONTENT MODERATION AGAINST LGBTQ+ CREATORS

In the lawsuit, the Plaintiffs argue that YouTube brands LGBTQ+ content as “shocking,” “offensive,” and/or “sexually explicit,” not because of the video’s actual content (which far more often than not does not contain sexual visuals), but because the viewpoints expressed involve what an individual content curator has dubbed the “gay thing,” or because the content was

posted by or viewed by YouTube community members who themselves identify as "gay" (LGBTQ+ v. Google YouTube 2019, 4). One of many examples of this bias that can be found on YouTube is Chase Ross's video from 2018 entitled "ANTI-LGBT ADS ON MY TRANS VIDEOS: YOUTUBE HYPOCRISY [CC]." In this video, Ross explains, while scrolling through his creator studio page reports, that if two video titles are exactly the same but one includes the word "Trans," the video with the LGBTQ+ word is demonetized while the other remains monetized (Ross 2018).

In direct violation of their Community Guidelines and monetization rules, YouTube uses its monopoly power over content regulation and monetization to promote and profit from threatening hate speech and online bullying directed at the LGBTQ+ community, including the LGBTQ+ creators who filed the lawsuit (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube Complaint, 2019). When YouTube personality Steven Crowder's homophobic tirades against Carlos Maza, a queer Vox journalist, were not demonetized after multiple complaints, YouTube doubled down on its choices. The company initially stated that Crowder's videos were not inciting harassment but, following public outcry, issued a formal apology and upheld their original policies (Stokel-Walker 2019). Though YouTube has denied the claims, *The Washington Post* reported in August 2019 that moderators for YouTube are trained to treat the most popular video producers differently than smaller producers by allowing hateful speech to remain on their sites while enforcing their policies

more stringently against less financially lucrative creators (Bensinger 2019).

By restricting and demonetizing only videos belonging to the LGBTQ+ community, YouTube makes its priority of profits at any cost clear. YouTube arbitrarily suppresses the video content of LGBTQ+ YouTubers solely because they are "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual," "transgender," or "queer," because they identify as such, and because they address issues of interest to the LGBTQ+ community. These tags, however, make it easier for viewers to locate this content, so avoiding tagging videos would also cause problems (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 7-8). The inconsistencies around demonetization and the leniency towards hate speech against LGBTQ+ people defy the platform's outward appearance as an ally. For example, Nilsen's video contains tags such as: coming out, lgbt, gay, lesbian, coming out story, coming out experience, and self-acceptance (Nilsen 2015). The first few words in this list would, if what the plaintiffs have alleged is accurate, likely demonetize this coming out video, stigmatizing the content that allowed Book to acknowledge her sexuality as early as she did. Worse than demonetization, however, is the LGBTQ+ content tags that flag these videos for Restricted Mode.

According to the Google Support website, there are two ways a video can become unavailable when Restricted Mode is turned on. Firstly, the automated system checks flags like the video's metadata, title, and the language used in the video ("Disable or enable Restricted Mode" 2020). The metadata and title likely are the

two places where LGBTQ+ words get flagged. Secondly, a video may not be available in Restricted Mode because human reviewers have applied an age restriction to access the video after the tags were flagged. After viewing the videos, human bias can play into if a video is restricted or demonetized ("Disable or enable Restricted Mode" 2020). Restricted Mode placement on non-sexual LGBTQ+ videos limit the ability of people under 18 from accessing this free education and entertainment resource. The occurrences of this bias affect young LGBTQ+ people, like Book, looking for or discovering representation.

A CASE STUDY OF RESTRICTION MODE ON LGBTQ+ YOUTUBE CREATORS

"No one's sexuality is really a big thing when they're in elementary school. I was a target because I read books. Eventually it became more than being called 'Faggot' or 'Queer' - it started to get physical" (Shepherd 2015). Will Shepherd ("shep689" on YouTube and other social media platforms) stated in his StoryCorps interview that his YouTube channel gave him power over the PTSD he experiences from being bullied in his youth for being bookish and gay. "A couple of times I was set on fire - I had a bald spot from my hair getting burnt off before. I grew up thinking this was just what happened to young people. 'Oh, this is what you can expect from being 'different'" (Shepherd 2015). Shepherd did not understand that the torment he experienced was based

on homophobia and cruelty until he went to college. Even after he had officially come out, he did not have anyone enduring the same experience around him with he could empathize (Shepherd 2015). "I think all the time about how much I wish the person I am now could have run into me when I was a little kid on the sidewalk. I needed somebody to tell me that none of the cruelty was my own fault" (Shepherd 2015). Shepherd started his YouTube channel in 2008, only three years after the platform's founding in 2005. By posting a video called "My Coming Out Story" in late January of 2009, Shepherd participated in the Coming Out video tradition on YouTube, one that has only become more popular as the platform continues to grow (Wong 2017).

Like Ingrid Nilsen's example, these Coming Out Videos are popular resources for LGBTQ+ YouTube users and for the creators themselves as both a tool of expression and as examples for how to discuss a vulnerable and often stressful topic. "I started YouTube because I wanted to share and show people what I went through. This is what I experienced and here's how I am continuing to live my life" (Shepherd 2015). Shepherd and his partner post videos to motivate people just to get through their daily lives. "I wish I had access to this (YouTube), when I was in high-school, I wish I'd had something to refer to. There was this Coming Out story archive. I saw a lot of other kids talking about their experiences and I thought the free resource and community was amazing" (Shepherd 2015). Shepherd and his partner's content provide a glimpse into the everyday experiences of a

gay couple. According to Shepherd, "People were so moved by us just living our lives together, being gay in the South together. We started doing videos every day" (Shepherd 2015). While the channel began as a way for Shepherd to work through his past, creating and producing this content has become his full-time job – the channel has more than 223,000 subscribers – and an outlet for him to create evidence for the perspective he wished he had in high school (Shepherd 2015).

The LGBTQ+ plaintiffs mention demonetization often, as it affects even the LGBTQ+ YouTubers who operate and publish content on some of the most popular channels on the YouTube platform (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 8). Shepherd's partner, RJ Aguiar, started looking around at his own channel, TheNotAdam (which has over 131,000 subscribers as of April, 2020), and noticed most videos mentioning his bisexuality would be disabled in Restricted Mode. "For creator after creator, you can see them getting filtered for what is not adult content," he told *The Advocate* (Ogles 2017). On Shepherd's channel, Aguiar noticed that the video chronicling the couple's trip to San Diego is marked as restricted. The only reason he noted for this clip to be flagged was that the video showed a same-sex couple (Ogles 2017). While Shepherd touted the positive position of YouTube during his StoryCorps interview in 2015, his now-husband recently discovered that their family-friendly vacation content is still being flagged by the platform (Shepherd 2015).

Unlike Shepherd, who did not start participating on the platform as a creator

until adulthood in 2009, Desmond Napoles ("Desmond is Amazing" on YouTube), one of the youngest drag performers in America, began posting to his account in 2015 when he was 8 years old. His channel champions LGBTQ+ awareness and the drag-performance experiences. Despite his age, Napoles has a successful channel with 57,000 subscribers. Napoles started making videos as a way to deal with what he had been experiencing in school, posting his first video after being bullied. He has even started his own drag-house for kids (a community for people who enjoy the creativity and freedom that comes with clothing not restricted by gender). Being so young and having early access to the LGBTQ+ content on YouTube helped Napoles become more confident in who he is, and, like Shepherd, he posts to his channel to remind people, particularly young people, to "Be yourself, always" (Guinan 2019). YouTube has allegedly made it difficult for LGBTQ+ content to show up for people under the age of 18, and people like Napoles, who are critical in terms of representation for LGBTQ+ minors, are the ones affected. In his StoryCorps interview, Napoles was asked if he fears being bullied in the future for the way he dresses, and he, almost harshly, responds, "I have never been scared of drag and I will never be scared of doing drag. Period." In addition to this sincerity, Napoles clearly states that his biggest hope for the LGBTQ+ community is that everyone becomes accepting of his LGBTQ+ peers and that people outside of the community become active allies (Guinan 2019). For Napoles, YouTube has been a tool to both post and receive educational information. If this content continues to be demonetized in its

entirety and restricted from the view of minors, the ally-stance of YouTube itself will continue to crumble in the eyes of its LGBTQ+ creators and audience.

LGBTQ+ content creators generally must spend substantial time and energy attempting to use YouTube's word filters for the comments section application to remove the hate speech comments on their videos (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 35). These creators are often unable to capture all of the different misspellings used in the hate speech to avoid YouTube's word filters and are, therefore, unable to protect against many of the comments (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 35). Particularly for new videos, hate speech trolls flood the comments section of the LGBTQ+ creators' YouTube channels so that each positive comment is pushed down in the queue of comments and becomes practically invisible (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 35). QueerKidStuff, a kid-friendly Queer channel designed with people like Napoles in mind, has been forced to disable the Comments Section to protect its young viewers and their parents from seeing derogatory comments. Because of this necessary action, QueerKidStuff generates less buzz for new content, fewer views per video uploaded, fewer subscribers, and barely any revenue from its videos (LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube 2019, 68).

YouTube has profited from and distributed online hate speech. The platform has done this by allowing videos perpetuating these ideas to show up as recommended videos and as advertisements on pro-LGBTQ+ videos, all of which violate YouTube's

own policies (Farokhmanesh 2018). YouTube's neglect towards protecting LGBTQ+ content from hate speech directly inhibits the ability of kids to find content they may need and puts them in danger when they seek out positive LGBTQ+ educational videos.

LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study reveal some limitations, including the limited access to data, especially as the LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube Complaint, Case 5:19-cv-04749-VKD is still in litigation. The case itself serves as the bulk of source material not supported by the StoryCorps oral histories. Because of this, many of the complaints and discriminatory actions described in this paper are qualified as "alleged."

CONCLUSION

It is through understanding the stories of Anna Book, Will Shepherd, and Desmond Napoles that we can further comprehend the entire picture of why YouTube has played a key role in the modern LGBTQ+ movement. Though the LGBTQ+ community has celebrated many wins, there are still vulnerable communities whose only safe access to real, relatable LGBTQ+ people and information is through YouTube. As an open-source platform, YouTube has promoted LGBTQ+ presence on the surface by posting Pride-inspired videos and seemingly valuing its Queer creators with larger audiences. When examining more deeply into how this company interacts with its LGBTQ+ creators and audience, however, it becomes apparent that the platform would rather profit off of hate speech than allow people like

our StoryCorps interviewees to have trust in the intentions of the tool upon which they have grown dependent. The historical importance of this platform to the LGBTQ+ community, the suppressive content moderation practices used against LGBTQ+ creators, and the LGBTQ+ v. Google-YouTube lawsuit present an example of how discrimination can present itself algorithmically, at the expense of those who most frequently rely on these systems.

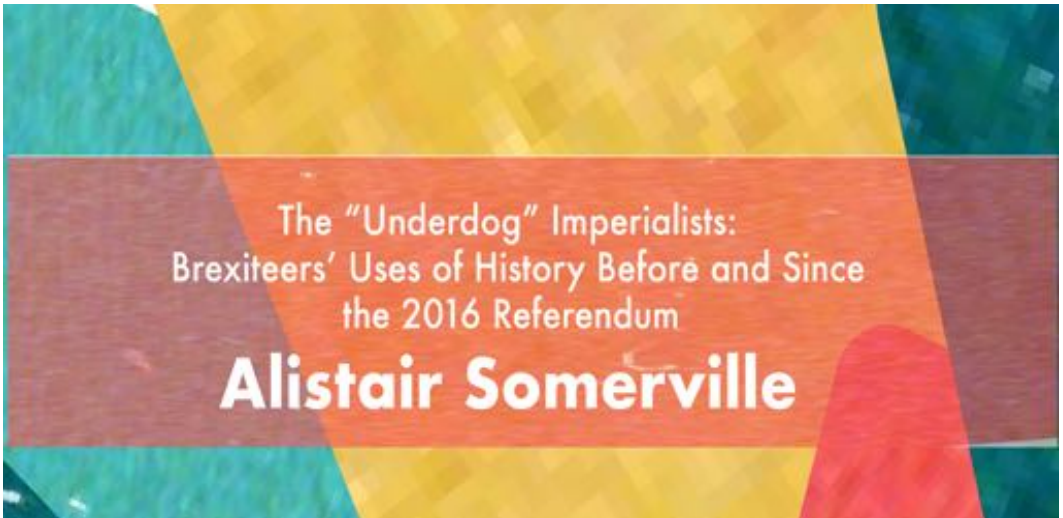
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Abstract

This paper seeks to understand the ways in which those advocating for the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the European Union (EU), before and since the 2016 referendum, have drawn on historical parallels to mobilize popular support for their position. In light of the narrow margin of victory for Leave and the prevalence of emotionally driven arguments as a counter to the proposals of so-called "experts," it is important to understand the historical rhetoric of the Leave campaign, and how it brought them victory. Noting that many of the Brexiteers consider themselves students of history, this paper argues that the use of historical myths about a British struggle for freedom against a European oppressor was a decisive factor in igniting visceral popular support for Brexit. It analyzes the ways in which the experiences of the Second World War were mobilized both during the first EU referendum in 1975 and in the 2016 campaign. It goes on to problematize Brexiteers' attempts to use a sense of both their own powerlessness against the British pro-Remain establishment, and the wider sense that Britain had always suffered under German and French dominance, to create a myth of the historical "underdog." Finally, it seeks to critique the contradictory relationship between the underdog myth and a narrative of reviving imperial ties, exposing them as fundamentally incompatible and ultimately inaccurate readings of British history.

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The official campaign slogan to take the United Kingdom out of the European Union in 2016, was “Vote Leave, take back control” (Vote Leave 2016). Although commonly shortened to “Vote Leave,” or simply “Leave,” the word “back” in the official slogan implies an orientation towards history. It suggests an opportunity for Britain to go back to a time when it had control over its borders, its economy, and its laws. However, the historical orientation of Vote Leave’s campaign slogan raises more questions than answers. From whom exactly did Britain need to take back control, and what sort of control existed previously for Britain to reclaim? This paper seeks to understand the ways the campaigns to leave the European Union during the 2016 referendum—both members of the official *Vote Leave* and the associated *Leave.EU* and *Grassroots Out* campaigns—used historical allusions and parallels to create an emotional case for Brexit.

Journalists and academics have begun the job of piecing together the myriad factors that resulted in the vote to leave the European Union. The motivations that brought about this result were numerous, including deeply held concerns based on the perception of uncontrolled immigration, widespread distrust of institutions, and shrewd political campaigning by the various leave campaigns. Indeed, not least because of the distinct lack of public understanding of the European Union, the vote was as much a referendum on the six years of economic austerity under the Conservative government,

as anything else.¹ Scholars have found a direct correlation between exposure to cuts in welfare spending and a tendency to support the populist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) (Fetzer 2019; Smith 2019).

Another element in this constellation of causes is the way in which Brexiteers (a colloquial term for those in the favor of Brexit) used and misused historical images and even historical myth to generate visceral, emotional, public support for Leave, and the energy to win a narrow victory in the referendum. Examining in particular the most intense period of the referendum campaign from March to June 2016, as well as a number of relevant allusions to history since the vote, this paper looks specifically at those who shaped the narrative—the politicians, strategists, and the media they deployed—and their ultimately successful attempts to convince 52% of voters to back Brexit.

Many of the key actors in the Brexit debate, such as now Prime Minister Boris Johnson and one of his de facto deputies Michael Gove, have always seen themselves as advocates of a “liberal” Brexit, with freedom from EU regulations and directions, global free trade, and equal immigration standards for all countries. Others, such as Nigel Farage of UKIP and latterly the Brexit Party, alongside the right wing of the Conservative

¹Famously, the second most common Google search in the UK on the subject of the EU the day after the referendum was “What is the EU?”. See <https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/06/24/480949383/britains-google-searches-for-what-is-the-eu-spike-after-brexiteer-vote>.

Party, had comparatively illiberal motivations. Those groups emphasized the need to reduce immigration from Europe and elsewhere. Campaign posters produced in the weeks before the vote stoked racist fears by invoking the possibility of Turkey's entry into the European Union and the effect that might have on crime rates in the UK (Boffey & Helm 2016). Their campaign rhetoric was imbued with xenophobia against the European "other" (Behr 2016). Pro-Brexit political strategists mobilized whichever message resonated most with voters to win the day. This populist approach played a crucial role in shaping the outcome. Given such disparities in the underlying motivations, let alone visions for the post-Brexit future, Brexiteers from both the liberal and conservative camps only united around historical narratives of the British underdog's desire for freedom and control over its own destiny.

While it was not just history that motivated the campaign, it is impossible to understand the Brexiteers' appeal without an analysis of the historical allusions they deployed before and since the referendum. They built a significant part of their emotional argument around mobilizing historical memories of Britain's relationship with Europe in the Second World War, through to the 1975 referendum, and the country's imperial legacies. The 2016 vote was only the third national referendum in Britain's history and one of the few opportunities for public discussion of the country's role in the world. As countries seek to understand their place in a rapidly changing global landscape, citizens, politicians, and campaigners alike often turn to

history to shape the emotional case for their position.

Theories of historical memory and the shaping of national consciousness enable us to see the importance of historical allusions, parallels, and myths as tools of political argument. Benedict Anderson's conception of the nation, which outlined the role of shared history and collective memory in the process of creating a national narrative is foundational to our understanding of the power of the nation as an idea to mobilize political action (Anderson 1983, 6). After all, it was the allure of an imagined past that won the vote for the Brexiteers. Prevailing theories on the role of historical memory in shaping political debates provide support for the idea that historically grounded narratives of the nation are exceptionally important in shaping public consciousness. As German historian Heinrich August Winkler has argued, it is commonplace in democratic society for contrasting images of history to compete against each other for primacy (Winkler 2004).² He points to the presence of *Geschichtspolitik*, or a political debate about a country's history, as a healthy feature of a functioning democracy because societies require at least a baseline consensus on the stories that unite them as a people. Maurice Halbwachs, a French sociologist, was most influential in conceptualizing this idea in his 1940 work, *The Collective Memory*, in which he pioneered the idea

²Winkler 2004, *Der Griff nach der Deutungsmacht*, 11: "In einer demokratischen Gesellschaft pflegen mehrere Geschichtsbilder miteinander zu konkurrieren". Translation from German, author's own: "In a democratic society, many different historical images seek to compete with one another."

that outside individual memory, there is also group memory. Membership of society, and participation in a group with a shared conception of the past, strongly shapes each individual's understanding of history (Winkler 2004, 12). These understandings of the role of history in political debate provide a framework through which to analyze collective memory in the context of Brexit, and the importance that historical narratives play in shaping political beliefs.

Even the term "Brexiteer" itself has historical allusions. It references the Alexandre Dumas novel, *The Three Musketeers*, and gives allusions of a band of "swashbuckling" brothers fighting injustice (Katz 2016). Proponents of Brexit quickly adopted the term in the months leading up to the vote, because, as Michael Gove noted, "Brexiteer brings to mind buccaneer, pioneer, musketeer ... It lends a sense of panache and romance to the argument" (quoted in Katz 2016). In the course of the referendum campaign and since, it became clear that a romantic attachment to a mythical British past, rather than the presentation of facts and evidence about the UK's place in the world, became the priority of the Leave campaigns.

In an August 2018 piece for *The Spectator*, Greg Hall explored leading male Brexiteers' fascination with history and commented on their educational backgrounds. He noted that their references to history during and since the referendum were in some cases almost comically specific. Oxford history graduate Jacob Rees-Mogg MP described Theresa May's proposal

for post-Brexit Britain as "the greatest vassalage since King John paid homage to Philip II at Le Goulet in 1200" (Hall 2018). Boris Johnson, also famous for igniting anti-EU sentiment through flowery rhetoric, used his weekly column in *The Telegraph* newspaper to declare in March 2016 that the EU "wants a superstate, just as Hitler did" (Ross 2016). Johnson studied ancient history in his classical studies degree. The intellectual architect of modern Conservative skepticism about the EU, Daniel Hannan (himself a Member of the European Parliament), as well as Douglas Carswell, UKIP's only MP, studied history too. Michael Gove did not, but he presided over school reforms during his time as Education Secretary that "sought to establish a 'narrative of British progress' in the history curriculum" (Hall 2018). Hall noted a particular bias for Brexit among those who had studied the Glorious Revolution or the English Civil War, or had written about Churchill's heroic resistance against Germany, as Johnson had famously done in his 2014 book *The Churchill Factor: How One Man Made History*.

This fascination with history contrasted with the educational experiences of Remainers, the name given to those who wanted the UK to remain in the European Union. The Remain campaign's leaders more likely studied law (in the cases of Keir Starmer, Tony Blair, and Anna Soubry) or Philosophy, Politics and Economics, the much-maligned interdisciplinary Oxford degree program (see David Cameron, Yvette Cooper, and Will Straw, the director of Britain Stronger in Europe) (Beckett 2017). This may provide, Hall argued, a partial

explanation about Remainers' use of rational, economic arguments, as opposed to Brexiteers' turn to stories from the past. David Cameron and his team argued that Brexit would lead to a fall in GDP, a collapse of the pound sterling, and lower wages for British workers (Mason 2016).

However, Hall missed a crucial dynamic: the highly gendered aspect to the contrasting educational backgrounds of those who fought each other over Brexit. The overwhelming presence of men leading both campaigns is indicative of wider and ongoing problems in the distribution of power within the British political class. However, it is still striking that, on the Leave side, the self-professed history buffs Hall referred to are exclusively male. Their fascination with history appears to take a very particular form, one that emphasizes the role of the "great man," such as in the weight Johnson placed on Churchill's role alone in making history, and on the "heroic" episodes of British history more generally. To complicate matters, the personal histories of the actors, and their differing approaches to the use of history, are significantly intertwined, not least because many of them attended the same high schools and universities. The actors went into the campaign carrying the inter-personal rivalries from their (invariably) Oxford days, centering on social class or student politics (as in the case of Gove, Cameron, and Johnson).

In many ways, the referendum served primarily as a stage for an intra-Conservative Party battle to settle old scores and hangovers from the rhetorical games of the Oxford Union

debating society, more than as a stage for discussing the future of the country (Shipman 2017, 152-3). The most detailed studies of the campaign, such as the journalist Tim Shipman's *All Out War*, are imbued with a sense that the main actors' personal chances to go down as a "great man" of history, or at least a future prime minister, shaped their positions during the campaign. Such desires to settle old scores and to be remembered appear to have left the option open to draw dangerous and untrue historical parallels between, for example, Nazi Germany and the EU. At the core, whether their vision for Britain after Brexit was more liberal or isolationist, Brexiteers could draw on powerful, sometimes verbose, historical parallels to evoke nostalgic arguments on the need to regain sovereignty, or "take back control."

It is important to understand, however, that the politicians who knew enough history to see its potential as a powerful tool during the campaign, were not the only relevant actors in the Leave campaigns. Although he mentioned his name, Hall's article gave little attention to arguably the most influential Brexiteer, at least when it came to shaping the narrative during the campaign: Dominic Cummings, Vote Leave's campaign director, and an Oxford graduate in ancient and modern history. In the period from April to June 2016 in particular, special advisers and political spin doctors like Cummings played just as important a role as the politicians who led the campaigns (Wintour 2019).

Cummings, now Prime Minister Johnson's chief strategist, is obsessed with nineteenth century statesmen

and military strategists, and had read a huge number of books about them since resigning from Education Secretary Michael Gove's office in 2014 (Wintour 2019). At university, Cummings had studied 19th century German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and was fascinated by the "truth" spoken by "Thucydides, Clausewitz, Sun Tzu [and] Mao" on strategic theory (Shipman 2017, 93). Bismarck, his idol, once said: "People never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war or before an election," and this epithet aptly sums up Cummings' approach. Cummings has made his obsession with history so widely known that it is hard to dismiss the Brexiteers' use of history, myth-making, and outright falsehoods as simply unconscious or coincidental. According to Shipman's account of the campaign, Cummings consulted books and sources on military theory directly prior to taking over leadership of Vote Leave. The 2019 TV drama, *Brexit: The Uncivil War* (which draws on Shipman's work) also makes explicit parallels between the campaign and a war-time scenario. It presents Cummings' strategy as a war on all fronts, including against other anti-EU groups with different priorities (Shipman 2017, 102-3). As this paper will consider, this presentation of the campaign as a civil war necessitates further examination of how Brexiteers drew on British war-time experience to conceive of their role as underdog warriors. Their self-conception as Brexiteers only added to their sense of adventure.

Theories of historical memory, advanced by scholars like Edgar Wolfrum, have stressed the fine line between collective memory of a group's shared past and a mobilization

of historical myths, not based on informed historical interpretations, but on selective memory. In the case of Brexit in particular, it is important to ask whose shared history was mobilized to greatest effect in the referendum debate. As has been argued above, politicians and campaigners deployed history in un-academic, ill-informed ways, or based their assertions and parallels on myth as a way to legitimize their own political conduct (Wolfrum 2002, 6). As Wolfrum noted: "The historical profession does not have a monopoly on history and memory. History has been and is deployed as a weapon, as a tool of political combat against internal and external opponents" (Wolfrum 2002, 6).³ The public voted for Brexit in spite of three hundred historians signing a letter against it, indicative of a more general fall of trust in academics and the country's liberal institutions (Hall 2018). Therefore, while history can often be an honest element of political debate, it is more appropriate in the case of Brexit to focus on the ways in which those outside the historical profession mobilized aspects of history as weapons, and used aspects of Britain's past selectively, to construct an image of British resistance to European dominance, especially during the Second World War. Wolfrum also reminds us that a significant component of mobilizing history in political debate is the ability to block out and *forget* aspects of the past that do not fit the narrative one is trying to construct. In spite of Brexiteers' desire to paint themselves as warrior underdogs in a fight against the establishment for British freedom, their parallel insistence

³ Translation from German – author's own.

on increased ties to the Commonwealth instead of Europe completely ignored Britain's colonial past, as this paper will go on to discuss.

In light of theories about the role of collective memory in nation states, one might also raise questions about exactly whose history the Brexiteers' looked to in their rhetoric and imagery. Most of the lead actors mentioned above were English, and could not claim to represent the diverse histories of other parts of the UK. Ultimately, while England and Wales voted for Brexit, Scotland and Northern Ireland came to back Remain (BBC 2016). Although Brexiteers claimed to be representing the history of an entire nation, their cavalier attitude towards the future of Northern Ireland and its border with Ireland, for example, demonstrated a woeful understanding of the sensitivity of Irish history and the possibility for renewed violence on the island after Brexit (see O'Toole 2018). Notably, the sense of English nationalism in the Brexiteers' attitudes towards Ireland sincerely undermines claims that they sought a truly "liberal Brexit" that could free all of the UK from the shackles of the past. Johnson, Gove, and Rees-Mogg, in particular, despite their claims of desiring a globally orientated, liberal Brexit, were only too happy to exploit underlying English nationalism for their own political gain. This area is certainly worthy of further examination.

Drawing on theories of historical and collective memory highlights the stark disagreements in British society over the country's role in the world

in light of its past. This is particularly evident when the 2016 referendum is viewed in the context of 1975. Britain first voted on its relationship with Europe in a referendum in that year, the first national vote of its kind, having joined the European Economic Community in 1972 (Saunders 2018). With regard to collective memory, as Robert Saunders noted in his recent book on the 1975 experience, voters in the first European referendum were "closer to the end of the First World War than voters in 2016 were to the Second" (Saunders 2018, 23). Even the younger generation in 1975 had, through their parents' experiences, a clear sense of the possibility of war on the continent. In some cities, the bomb damage from the Second World War was still visible thirty years on. The anniversary of Victory in Europe was celebrated a month before the referendum. Exactly thirty-one years after D-Day, Britain voted to remain a member of the European Economic Community (EEC). After the horrors of war, the use of the poppy on Britain in Europe posters, alongside a dove of peace for its logo, created strongly positive associations between the European Economic Community and its founders' visions of peace in Europe. Some publications went further, criticizing the anti-Europe campaigns as playing to destructive nationalist tendencies. One claimed, "Nationalism kills" (Saunders 2018, 29). All of the campaign materials had the dove at their core, drawing the observer back to a fundamentally positive message. The campaign used the public anniversary of Victory in Europe Day to remind voters of a day

that many had not dared to imagine during the darkest days of the Battle of Britain and the Blitz, with the slogan: "On VE Day we celebrated the beginnings of peace. Vote Yes to make sure we keep it" (Saunders 2018, 29). It should not be forgotten that the 1975 debate took place at the height of the Cold War, and that the risk of war with the USSR was profound. Such references to peace in Europe were perceived as authentic because they were rooted in personal experience. Prime Minister Edward Heath had defended the city of Liverpool during the Blitz, for example. Others promoting the case for membership had been awarded the Military Cross, and even most on the anti-Community side, including Enoch Powell, had fought in the Second World War. The "Yes to Europe" campaign was able to mobilize positive, historically grounded arguments about peace and stability in Europe on the basis of shared historical and personal memory, which proved extremely powerful in the campaign.

In 2016, by contrast, any references by the Remain side to the potential for war on the continent were dismissed as "Project Fear" (Shipman 2017, 234). *The Daily Mail* ran the headline: 'EU VOTE: NOW PM WARNS OF WAR AND GENOCIDE', when Prime Minister David Cameron's 9 May 2016 speech to the press made reference to the need to remain "close" to European neighbors. The speech invoked the memory of World Wars I and II, the Battles of Blenheim and Waterloo, and the Spanish Armada, to make an argument about European security (Shipman 2017, 235). The reference to "World War III," the name given to the speech by Vote Leave, was a

fabrication of Euroskeptical newspapers, and not actually part of the speech. The public, with little collective memory or personal experience of war, did not see Cameron's attempt to mobilize historical memories of war as credible. Shipman notes this speech as the point at which a significant section of the public lost complete trust in Cameron and the establishment. The parallel cases of 1975 and 2016 therefore demonstrate that both the Remain and Leave camps attempted to use history in their arguments, and that, as Winkler's understanding of historical memory showed, history need not be mobilized for a negative or destructive purpose in public discourse. Rather, the 1975 case demonstrates that history can serve as a point of reference in people's personal experience or familial memory to remind them of their ties to a community - imagined or otherwise.

Rational allusions to a shared history of peace and security with European neighbors since the Second World War failed to generate support for Remain in 2016. Therefore, it is important to understand the ways in which Vote Leave enjoyed greater success in mobilizing history as a weapon in the campaign. In light of their own self-conception as underdogs fighting a heroic battle against the British establishment, Brexiteers drew on simple, misleading historical analogies to present Britain as an underdog nation oppressed by evil Europeans. As historian and public intellectual Richard J. Evans has noted, these allusions were almost always "spurious" (Evans 2018). Boris Johnson may have convinced some by writing that Brussels' bureaucrats

shared with Adolf Hitler the desire to bring "Europe under a single government [by] different methods," but there is no historical evidence that either sought this (Evans 2018). Such images were repeated and bolstered in the pro-Brexit press, including in *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail*. Aggressively pro-Brexit from the beginning, these two newspapers were a fertile ground for promoting Vote Leave's arguments. Shipman reported that 70% of the readers of *The Sun* supported Brexit (Shipman 2017, 127). Alongside the language of Boris Johnson's column, other writers in the *Daily Telegraph* such as the polemicist Simon Heffer hyperbolized Germany's economic power to the point of calling it the "Fourth Reich" (Heffer 2016). In an express appeal to whichever form of liberalism meant he could become the next prime minister, Johnson called for Britain to "liberate" itself from European domination as it had done in the Second World War (Evans 2018). Johnson, who achieved his goal of becoming Prime Minister in July 2019, has come under ever more scrutiny for his dealings with history since then, from his book about the Roman Empire to his decision to make up a quote about the fourteenth century English king Edward II (Purnell 2019; Somerville 2019). In his 2018 *New Statesman* piece, Evans exposes the lazy historical references of which almost all the leading Brexiteers were guilty, emphasizing in particular the erroneous claims around the need for "freedom" from Europe once again.

Nonetheless, the extent to which Vote Leave saw itself as the underdog should not be underestimated. Steve Baker, the Conservative MP and

former Royal Air Force officer, who was the leader of the Eurosceptic group Conservatives for Britain and came to be a crucial link between Vote Leave and Parliament, famously wrote on the wall of the spartan campaign office, "You're all heroes" (Shipman 2017, 234). There had been no Vote Leave launch event, because the campaign did not have the business, political, or celebrity endorsements of the Remain campaign, and instead was launched with a video piloting the original slogan: "Vote Leave, let's take control" (Shipman 2017, 55). Of course, the Leave campaign was certainly the underdog when viewed alongside the Westminster government machine, which was mobilized to back Remain. This narrative proved powerful at Cummings' campaign headquarters, and shaped the mindset of both strategists and politicians in the Leave campaign.

Furthermore, Vote Leave's underdog status against the establishment was arguably part of its appeal in the first place for the likes of Gove and Johnson. In their admiration for Winston Churchill, for example, it seems that both men joined the campaign thinking they would go down as heroic underdogs, losing the referendum but perfectly placed to lead the Conservative Party as soon as they sensed further weakness on David Cameron's part (Shipman 2017, 154). This is not to say that Gove and Johnson were not moved by principal in any way to back Brexit. Rather, it is hard to see beyond naked political ambition of lieutenants looking to steal the leadership of the party and the country, whatever the cost. Numerous articles on the campaign have discussed

how admiration for Churchill, and the sense that they were walking in his footsteps, gave Brexiteers even greater confidence that they were leading a valiant fight against a future dictated to them by the Germans and the French (see Hall 2018; Andrews 2017).

It is, however, impossible to reconcile a perception of “underdog status,” in terms of Britain’s status relative to a fictional European “super-state,” with the narrative of imperial power so prominent in the Brexit referendum. To understand the role of imperial legacy in 2016, let us look once again at the 1975 experience. During the first referendum, imperial decline and the loss of colonies meant the European Economic Community presented the UK with the possibility of playing a new, positive role in the world. *The Sun* newspaper, then a supporter of the EEC, reported in March 1975, “After years of drift and failure, the Common Market offers an unrepeatable opportunity for a nation that lost an empire to gain a continent” (Saunders 2018). 1975 represented a fork in the road for Britain when it came to its identity and its place in the world.

In 1975, Parliament was debating the European Communities Act - the law that brought the UK into the EEC. The debate about Britain’s imperial role, and the status of its Commonwealth of former colonies, is significant, because the UK’s status as a declining power was fresh in voters’ minds in 1975 (Saunders 2018, 310). By contrast, in 2016, memories of the horrors perpetrated by British forces during colonial rule, as well as the humiliations of losing the colonies, were

all but forgotten. This laid the ground for Brexiteers to produce narratives of a return to British imperial greatness through post-Brexit trade deals with Commonwealth countries.

Both Richard Evans and Kehinde Andrews have highlighted Secretary of State for International Trade Dr. Liam Fox’s tweet from March 2016 that Britain “is one of the few countries in the European Union that does not need to bury its 20th century history” (Andrews 2017). Such utterances make it clear that both a sense of superiority over other European countries, as well as a clear sense of historical amnesia, are alive and well in sections of the British elite. Such public statements erase the atrocities of British colonialism, such as the three million deaths caused by the Bengal famine, or the use of concentration camps in the Boer War (Pretorius 2019).

Brexiteers such as Fox and Boris Johnson continue to believe that Commonwealth countries will jump at the chance to make trade deals with the UK. This assumption is not based on economic arguments, but on the false premise that historical ties will lead previously subjugated nations to seek trade deals with their former colonial master. Regardless of colonial legacies, 31 of the remaining 52 Commonwealth countries have populations of less than 1.2 million. They do not pose any realistic opportunities for significant trade, and can certainly not replace the economic value of belonging to the world’s largest trading bloc, the EU (Tomlinson and Dorling 2016). Those educated in Britain even as late as the 1960s grew up with maps on their classroom wall showing British

control of huge parts of the globe. As Bill Schwarz has argued, it is difficult to shake the sense of natural superiority which can come from knowing that your country once held a great empire, making people more susceptible to the myths of a renewed relationship with the Commonwealth after Brexit (Schwarz 2002). Pro-Brexit rhetoric combined calls for a return to global partnerships with former colonies in the Global South, with anti-immigrant slurs about the dangers of non-white Turks coming to Europe, again raising clear questions about the consistency of Brexiteers' messages (Tomlinson and Dorling 2016; Andrews 2017).

It is worth noting that former Prime Minister Theresa May outlined her plans for the details of Brexit at Lancaster House, the site of the conferences in the late 1950s and early 1960s where Nigeria and then Kenya's independence were negotiated. The symbolism of this choice of venue is striking. While it may be too broad a conclusion to assert the parallels between the humiliation of decolonization and the diminution of Britain's standing in the world after Brexit simply on the basis of this connection, the history of Lancaster House's uses leads one reasonably to emphasize the inescapability of Britain's former empire as a backdrop for Brexit. As Sigmund Freud once noted, "some impression" of colonial experience still looms over post-imperial society, and in many ways highlights the hypocrisy of attempts by politicians to claim that a 'liberal' Brexit based on a mutually beneficial trade relationship with formerly colonized Commonwealth nations was somehow possible (Schwarz 2002).

At the party held at Vote Leave headquarters on the night of the referendum, Daniel Hannan, one of the Brexiteer historians, gave a speech celebrating victory. He gave a version of the St. Crispin's Day feast speech from Shakespeare's *Henry V*, replacing the names of the king's noblemen with those of leading lights from the Vote Leave campaign. Shipman reports him as saying:

From now on every year, it comes round, you guys will be remembered. Our names familiar in their mouths as household words - Duncan Smith and Penny Mordaunt and Dominic and Oliver and Douglas Carswell, and Parky and Starky [Parkinson and Stephenson, two Vote Leave communications aides] ... What an amazing thing we have pulled off, and every year this will be our day, the day that we showed the world that this country was not yet finished. This is our Independence Day. (Shipman 2017, 437)

This event is illustrative of many of the conclusions that emerge from this analysis of Brexiteers' use of history, during the campaign and since. While the speech does not allude to the desire for a return to the days of British global imperialism, Hannan's words make clear the Brexiteers' self-perception as *English* underdog warriors, who succeeded in defeating the establishment against the odds, and who deserve a place in a Shakespearean play. Moreover, the choice of *Henry V* emphasizes the anti-European, in this case, anti-French sentiment underlying many of the historical allusions seen throughout

British anti-Europe rhetoric. The success of Brexiteers' emotional historical claims was built on decades of allusions to the past in British political debates. It will therefore be unsurprising if we see even more nostalgic calls in future British political discourse for a return to a "better" past, now that the UK has formally left the EU.

In an illustrative case of the selective use of history, however, Hannan omitted another more ominous part of the original speech from Henry V at the victory party:

The fewer men, the greater share of honour. God's will, I pray thee wish not one man more. Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost; It yearns me not if men my garments wear; Such outward things dwell not in my desires. But if it be a sin to covet honour, I am the most offending soul alive. (Act IV Scene 3, lines 18–67)

Arguably, this latter part of the speech would have been more appropriate to cite, in light of the immense uncertainties unleashed by the vote to leave the European Union. Brexiteers had been able to unite around historical, emotional claims during the campaign, but were deeply divided about the options for Britain's economic future after leaving the EU. As Shakespeare might have said: such outward thoughts dwelt not on their desires, and were not part of their post-Brexit planning. Having coveted "honour," they ignored warning signs from experts and institutions about the possibility of economic downturn, discord and lack of consensus after the vote. All they could agree on were emotionally driven arguments and

parallels to a time when Britannia really did rule the waves. They mobilized their campaign around these messages, for a world in which unilateral British power on the world stage is more imagined than real. Given that a YouGov poll two days before the referendum showed that only 19% of voters trusted David Cameron's statements, this was enough to secure victory.

Since 2016, the leading Brexiteers have risen to the highest offices in the land. Boris Johnson presides over a divided country that has left the European Union. Dominic Cummings is his chief strategist. It is therefore crucial for scholars to continue to scrutinize these men's actions, as they now hold the fate of the country in their hands. The UK has yet to sign a trade deal with any Commonwealth nation, or any other country for that matter, and the coronavirus pandemic has created chaos at home as well as in the next stage of negotiations with Brussels. The government has sought to mobilize a positive message around the UK's engagement with the world through its "Global Britain" campaign. However, at least for the time being, the populists who mobilized the past to such great effect in 2016 have yet to deliver a clear plan for the future. The underdog imperialists never expected to win the referendum, and they continue to rely on calls to the UK's former colonial status as they craft a foreign policy for the future. An understanding of the power of this historical memory can help scholars assess the country's trajectory going forward. While the country's past does not help us to predict its future, it is impossible fully to grasp the power of the Brexiteers'

message without continued analysis of their weaponization of history.

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The Algorithmic Threat to Free Speech

Ted Harrison

Abstract

Algorithms are an increasingly integral part of contemporary society. Private corporations, for example, use algorithms and machine learning as tools to enhance many of their applications' abilities to recommend products to customers and moderate user-generated content. Reliance on algorithms may pose significant danger to an individual's free speech and expression in the digital space, however. This article analyzes this possible threat by addressing the increasing use of algorithms in society as tools of governance. Specifically, it summarizes the philosophical concept of *algorithmic governmentality* theorized by Antoinette Rouvroy and Jack Balkin's model of the *algorithmic society*.

Building from those concepts, this article then addresses the way that algorithms may threaten the sanctity of individual free speech and expression. After addressing Balkin's warnings on the overreliance of algorithms for decision making, this article then gives two possible algorithmic threats to free speech: algorithmic bias and algorithmic entities. This article concludes by addressing the need for an increase in algorithmic responsibility and legislative literacy concerning these possible threats.

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INTRODUCTION

The word “algorithm” has become a popular buzzword in today’s society. Most people today are aware that their smartphones, search engines, and other personalized technologies use an algorithm in some manner, but it is a term that is often misunderstood. The term “algorithm” has multiple meanings, but it can most simply be defined as a “...logical series of steps for organizing and acting on a body of data to quickly achieve a desired outcome” (Gillespie 2016, 19). This definition includes something as simple as a baking recipe; a baker can follow a series of steps to organize their ingredients, mix them, and bake them in order to produce a desired type of bread, for example. In today’s data-driven society, the term algorithm is more often used to describe an almost mysterious force that organizes and analyzes any type of data. A common example is Instagram’s algorithm, which analyzes user data, including who a person follows and what their interests are. Then the user is presented with recommendations regarding other users to follow and advertisements. The term is also used as the adjective “algorithmic,” as in an algorithmic system (Gillespie 2016, 25). This can describe not only the algorithm, but the infrastructure that supports it, as well as its designers and programmers.

The term algorithm has increasingly become a buzzword to explain away the inner workings of a fragile, negligent code protected by “Big Data” under the guise of industry secrets (Gillespie 2016, 23). “Big Data” in

this case refers to any well-known, major technological organization or corporation that utilizes algorithms in their products or applications, such as Google or Facebook. The increasing use of algorithms and their mysterious nature pose a number of concerns to individuals in society. For this article, we will focus on concerns related to freedom of speech and expression in the digital space. Digital space, in this case, refers to the Internet and related social and new media, such as Twitter, Facebook, or other large social media platforms.

This article will first address the philosophical and legal aspects of an algorithmically governed society. Specifically, it will examine *algorithmic governmentality* theorized by Antoinette Rouvroy and the *algorithmic society* articulated by legal scholar Jack Balkin. This article will then address the issues associated with an algorithmically governed society in relation to the use of algorithms for the governance of speech on the Internet, in particular, the dangers of overreliance on algorithms for decision-making and regulation, algorithmic nuisance, algorithmic bias and algorithmic entities.

ALGORITHMIC GOVERNMENTALITY

Algorithmic governmentality is the philosophical basis for this discussion about an algorithmic threat to free speech and expression. Governmentality itself is a concept developed by French philosopher Michel Foucault, simply defined as “... the organized practices (mentalities,

rationalities, and techniques) through which subjects are governed" (Mayhew 2004). It is also sometimes referred to as the "art of government" or the "conduct of conduct," as in conducting how people conduct themselves (Rodrigues 2016, 1). In practice, this might look like an institution such as a hospital. The hospital must establish practices on how to handle its subjects (i.e. patients) in order to effectively manage its role as a community center for healthcare. Those in charge must make decisions on how to evaluate, categorize, and care for these patients. Whether this is by need for care, gender, psychological status, or other criteria the patients' conduct is governed by the hospital following a certain rationality. In this case of a hospital, it would involve whatever current medical and healthcare rationalities exist. Unruly patients whose conduct goes against the hospital's organized practices are governed further by being placed in confinement, isolation, or removal from the hospital. Patients are subject to the hospital's governed practices the same way the hospital is subject to the established health care practices of society.

Algorithmic governmentality expands on governmentality by acknowledging the machine learning, data-driven strategies that today inform the methods for conducting governance. This includes governance of a State and the conducting of business by a corporation. Private corporations are most known for popularizing the use of algorithms for decision-making. For example, YouTube, a subsidiary of Google, uses an algorithm to analyze videos on its

platform for "unacceptable" content, and then removes those videos to prevent them from receiving advertising money (Cobbe 2019, 23).

Building off Foucault's concepts, Antionette Rouvroy summarizes algorithmic governmentality in the following argument:

We thus use the term algorithmic governmentality to refer very broadly to a certain type of (a)normative or (a) political rationality founded on the automated collection, aggregation and analysis of big data so as to model, anticipate and pre-emptively affect possible behaviours. (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, x).¹

Rouvroy contrasts this process of data collection to corporate and governmental decision-making previously being reliant on statistical averages. She argues that before algorithmic governmentality, decision-making was informed by finding a statistical average or norm through broadly collected data in order to make decisions. An advertising firm, for example, might look at statistical data related to their consumer base and use that data to guide their practices in an ad campaign. With algorithms, this advertising firm could now automatically collect, analyze, and model possible behaviors of their customers in real time. Any algorithm they employ could also learn based off of a number of factors, such as a certain marketing or advertising trend. This allows the firm's decision-making process to evolve in a way that seeks

1. The Rouvroy/Berns translated source pages are numbered with roman numerals

to anticipate or predict what consumers will want or do not know they need yet. Rouvroy takes issue with this use of individuals' data and argues that institutions "...are feeding on infra-individual data which are meaningless on their own, to build supra-individual models of behaviors or profiles without ever involving the individual, and without ever asking them to themselves describe what they are or what they could become." (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, x) Continuing with the example of the advertising firm, Rouvroy would say that the advertisers are building profiles based on algorithmically collected data and using those profiles in their planning, all while excluding the individual from the entire process. The advertiser would then be able to predict their consumers behavior by using the consumer's collected digital data. The advertiser could then target the consumer with advertisements which attempt to predict their next purchase.

Algorithmic governance today appears in relatively harmless areas. Lucas Introna uses an example of the popular *Turnitin* application, which provides academic institutions a method to analyze papers for plagiarism. (Introna 2016, 20). This application's algorithm allows it to analyze large amounts of writing and ensure the submitted writing is not plagiarism in accordance with established institutional guidance.

The main argument is then not necessarily against the use of algorithms as tools, but rather against their use as a tool of governance (Introna 2016, 27). Establishing algorithms as another regulatory force, for example, seems

helpful and clear-cut in reference to the *Turnitin* example, as it allows colleges to identify plagiarism. In execution, however, it has the potential to seriously threaten the rights of the individual and increase the capacity for state oppression of individuals or groups. Specifically, it allows individuals' data to be used for profiling purposes (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, x).

There are three stages of algorithmic governmentality: the collection of big data and the constitution of data warehouses, data processing and knowledge production, and action on behaviors (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, vi-viii).

THE COLLECTION OF BIG DATA AND THE CONSTITUTION OF DATA WAREHOUSES

While there is much debate surrounding the topic of data collection and user consent, some data collection is generally tolerated in society. Scholars like Rouvroy and Berns (2013), for example, believe that data is not taken but simply shared (vi). When a user uses Facebook, for example, they agree to a "terms of service" which allows Facebook to use data from their profile. With this data, a digital profile of the user is created and stored within Facebook's data warehouses. Amazon Web Services defines data warehouses as:

...a central repository of information that can be analyzed to make better informed decisions. Data flows into a data

warehouse from transactional systems, relational databases, and other sources, typically on a regular cadence. Business analysts, data scientists, and decision makers access the data through business intelligence (BI) tools, SQL clients, and other analytics applications (Amazon Web Services).

These “warehouses” are a large part of the infrastructure and architecture which enables user data to be processed and used for the creation of knowledge.

DATA PROCESSING AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

After the data is collected and stored, it is then processed and analyzed. Again, the majority of this process is performed through the use of algorithms. This is necessary given the large amount of data a corporation can collect from its customer base. Rouvroy and Berns take issue with the knowledge produced containing only correlations obtained from objective data (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, vii). In the example of the advertising firm, these correlations would define the relationship between the consumer and the product being advertised to them. The algorithms which collect, process, and produce this knowledge are unable to act with any subjective analysis of the data or formulate a hypothesis from the data. A human actor is required at some point to make a decision on how the inputs and outputs of the algorithm will be set. The

exact nature of how the data is being used or collected is often obscured by private corporations, like Amazon and Facebook, through corporate secrecy and the protection of their algorithm as an industry secret.

Rouvroy and Berns note that the EU protects individuals from having their data used against them. They also note: “...the guarantees offered by the EU directive only apply if the automated data processing concerns personal data... algorithmic profiling can very well ‘function’ with anonymous data” (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, viii). The EU’s laws for data protection are more proactive in protecting personal data, but most other data-driven societies like the United States lag behind in implementing protections for personal data. The concern then centers on the ability of private corporations to take private citizens’ data, collect it, store it in their data warehouses, and use it as they see fit.

ACTION ON BEHAVIORS

The final stage relies on utilizing the knowledge produced to predict individuals’ behaviors with established profiles defined through the processed data (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, viii). These predictions are based around a data-established norm, or the norm established by the average user. For example, if a majority of the collected user data is from white American males, then the predicted behavior will be what most white American males would do or want, based on predictions from an algorithm. Rouvroy and Berns note: “In their seemingly non-selective way of relating to the world, datamining and algorithmic profiling appear to

take into consideration the entirety of each reality, right down to its most trivial and insignificant aspects..." (2013, ix). Analysis of data through algorithms and machine learning thus enables an extreme increase in the abilities of data surveillance, especially for private corporations. As mentioned previously, YouTube's algorithm has been criticized for using this data surveillance to censor or demonetize content, and how this may marginalize or censor certain content creators (Cobbe 2019, 23).

THE ALGORITHMIC SOCIETY

American legal scholar Jack Balkin presents a similar illustration of the effects of algorithms on society in what he calls the "Algorithmic Society" (Balkin 2017, 1151). He argues this is a new stage in society "...which features large, multinational social media platforms that sit between traditional nation states and ordinary individuals, and the use of algorithms and artificial intelligence agents to govern populations" (Balkin 2017, 1151). Balkin's concern with this development is his belief that the "stewards" of free expression in this society, namely the judicial system and private companies, are unreliable or incapable of protecting free expression (Balkin 2017, 1152). Like Antoinette Rouvory's theory concerning algorithmic governmentality, Balkin recognizes that an algorithmic society relies on "...the collection of vast amounts of data about individuals and facilitates new forms of surveillance, control, discrimination and manipulation, both by governments and by private

companies" (Balkin 2017, 1153). Balkin identifies major issues with the algorithmic society: algorithmic nuisance, negligent construction of algorithms, and overreliance on algorithms for decision-making.

ALGORITHMIC NUISANCE

Jack Balkin describes algorithmic nuisance as "...when companies use Big Data and algorithms to make judgments that construct people's identities, traits, and associations that affect people's opportunities and vulnerabilities" (Balkin 2017, 1164). When media and social media companies use algorithms to engage with their customer base, they subject users to a barrage of targeted ads, product placements, and marketing techniques. Instagram's algorithm, for example, uses certain judgments (i.e. which ads target you) in order to categorize users into specific marketable groups. These judgments affect the way users experience Instagram by changing the type of content they see, from advertisements to suggestions on whom to follow. This technique of engagement is quick and effective for the company, but Balkin sees this as handling the relationship between consumer and producer with negligence. Balkin identifies legal nuisance, overreliance on algorithms by businesses, social perceptions on algorithmic decision making, and the negligent construction of these algorithms as some of the causes for concern in relation to "algorithmic nuisance" (Balkin 2017, 1167).

NEGLIGENT CONSTRUCTION AND LEGAL NUISANCE

Balkin explains: “Businesses may use biased or skewed data, the models may be badly designed, or the company’s implementation and use of the algorithm may be faulty. In these situations, we have ordinary negligence” (2017, 1166). He believes that algorithms fit into the definition of a public or private nuisance because “increased activity levels may increase unjustified social costs, even when the activity is conducted non-negligently” (Balkin 2017, 1168). Balkin compares this nuisance to pollution, an environmental nuisance. If a corporation or industry produces pollution which affects the surrounding environment, it is typically fined, sued, or held accountable for its actions in some legal manner. The company producing this pollution is externalizing their decision to not control pollution levels onto the public. Balkin argues that companies reliant on these algorithms for decision-making do something similar. A company with an algorithmic decision-making process for job hiring, for example, uses this process to save time, cut costs, and identify the best job candidate based on their collected data. Balkin argues, however, that using this type of decision-making may simply be reinforcing inequalities or unfair biases which already exist in that company’s hiring process. Like environmental pollution, this outcome affects the well-being of society as a whole. The creators and corporate users of these algorithms should then also be held accountable for the effects of algorithms on society, according to

Balkin (2017, 1165). Tim Wu, a legal scholar at Columbia Law School, expands on a similar algorithmic nuisance by using a car alarm as an example of algorithmic speech:

The modern car alarm is a sophisticated computer program that uses an algorithm to decide when to communicate its opinions, and when it does it seeks to send a particularized message well understood by its audience. It meets all the qualifications stated: yet clearly something is wrong with a standard that grants Constitutional protection to an electronic annoyance device (Wu 2013, 1496).

Balkin and Wu both present the problem with these nuisances as being the fault of the algorithm’s construction. Wu presents the issue in construction in terms of algorithmic functionality. In relation to the algorithmic nuisance, this simply means that the algorithm serves a function within our society. The car alarm, navigation applications, and computerized car systems are a few of Wu’s examples for the increasing functions of algorithms (Wu 2013, 1499). These things, of course, are not nuisances when working as intended, but when they work in a manner not predicted by their human creators, social costs begin to appear. The car alarm, for example, is basically designed to alert the surrounding area that someone is attempting to break into that car. An unintentional consequence of the alarm, however, is the noise pollution it creates when it goes off for seemingly no reason. This nuisance and negligence now comes from the private companies who rely

heavily on these algorithms to inform their decision-making processes.

OVERRELIANCE ON ALGORITHMS FOR DECISION MAKING

In tandem with what will be discussed concerning algorithmic biases and the previous examination of algorithmic governmentality, Balkin sees the threat that algorithms pose to certain people's ability to express themselves. He notes algorithms "...may inappropriately treat people as risky or otherwise undesirable, impose unjustified burdens and hardships on populations, and reinforce existing inequalities" (2017, 1167). As noted, in the examination of algorithmic governmentality, the use of algorithms to analyze and categorize data helps an institution identify risks or abnormalities within its analyzed population. Yet, these "abnormalities" may simply be individuals who are minorities or other marginalized groups. The example of YouTube's algorithm censoring or demonetizing content is a perfect example of where this inappropriate treatment could occur. Currently, a group of LGBT YouTube content creators are suing the platform for allegedly discriminating against LGBT content uploaded to the popular video site (Bensinger, 2019). YouTube's content moderation algorithm is used to flag or remove, among other things, "inappropriate content." The content creators in this lawsuit allege their content is being removed or restricted by YouTube's algorithm, despite not being sexually explicit or inappropriate (Bensinger, 2019). This situation illustrates the problems with this reliance on

algorithmic decision-making. If these allegations are correct, it shows that YouTube's algorithm may be inherently biased to creators who do not fit a certain standard.

Balkin stresses the threat towards speech: "Today our practical ability to speak is subject to the decisions of private infrastructure owners, who govern the digital spaces in which people communicate with each other" (2017, 1153). In short, algorithms appear appealing to businesses because they lower costs for content moderation, allow for large calculation of personal data, inform analyst decision-making, and increase the efficiency of the communication apparatus of a business. The benefits to the business, however, may again marginalize a non-conforming or minority population.

Pew Research Center canvassed a number of technology experts and scholars concerning their views and attitudes on the impact of increasing dependence on algorithms. Their report quoted Bart Kijnenburg, a Professor at Clemson University, who stated:

My biggest fear is that, unless we tune our algorithms for self-actualization, it will be simply too convenient for people to follow the advice of an algorithm (or, too difficult to go beyond such advice), turning these algorithms into self-fulfilling prophecies, and users into zombies who exclusively consume easy-to-consume items (Quoted in Rainie and Anderson 2017).

If we view algorithms as a nuisance, we can then see the negative implications of their control over aspects of our society. The more the algorithmic nuisance violates the individual's rights to privacy, the more likely the possibility of silencing the individual's voice through sheer annoyance or exploitation of their data. In other words, allowing an algorithm to serve as an editor for content may increase efficiency, but it also acts as a nuisance that violates the individual's freedoms to privacy, and their freedom to express and speak with their own voice.

ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE AND THE THREAT TO FREE SPEECH

Free speech under algorithmic governmentality is more subject to the will of private corporations, which use the three stages mentioned above to collect, store, and analyze their customers' data. This allows the corporations to establish profiles based on a number of factors, with very little oversight on what those factors are or how these data collecting processes function. The danger to speech then becomes more focused on the profiling of people through their data by algorithms that are possibly governed by unknown procedures.

Pew Research Center's report summarized the views of a panel of interviewed experts as recognizing that "...algorithms are primarily written to optimize efficiency and profitability without much thought about the possible societal impacts of the data modeling and analysis" (Rainie and Anderson

2017). The societal impacts are derived from the removal of humans from the loop of the decision-making process and, by extension, essential aspects of governance. Attempting to regulate speech through the governance of an algorithm clearly poses a direct threat to the shared voice of the people.

Jennifer Cobbe, a research associate at the Department of Computer Science and Technology, University of Cambridge, also addresses the issues related to using algorithms as speech moderating tools of governance:

...the emergence of algorithmic censorship as a commercially-driven mode of control undertaken by social platforms is an undesirable development that empowers platforms by permitting them to more effectively align both public and private online communications with commercial priorities while in doing so undermining the ability of those platforms to function as spaces for discourse, communication, and interpersonal relation (2019, 32).

Cobbe specifically mentions the increase of social media and new media as essential tools for discourse in today's society. She notes that private corporations using these algorithms for content moderation, specifically for censorship, gives control over the flow of online discourse to corporations, which may not be easily held accountable to the people (Cobbe 2019, 31-32). This private governance of digital speech is exacerbated further by the reality of algorithmic bias and the possibility of algorithmic entities.

ALGORITHMIC ENTITIES AND ALGORITHMIC BIAS

Considering the extent of private governance of online speech, there are two unique, dangerous concepts, that threaten free expression and speech online that are enabled by the flaws in the current system: Algorithmic entities and algorithmic bias.

ALGORITHMIC ENTITIES

Shawn Bayern, an American law professor, identifies a theoretical issue with algorithmic governance in relation to laws governing limited liability corporations (LLCs). Specifically, LLCs are legally allowed to be controlled by anonymous “entities” These entities are legal persons, defined as “...a human or non-human entity that is treated as a person for limited legal purposes” (Cornell Law School, “LLC”). In this case, “non-human” refers to a company, corporation, or organization. An LLC limits liability by protecting its human members from being personally liable for any debts, lawsuits, or bankruptcy. This is typically used as a precaution to protect the personal assets of LLC members (Cornell Law School, “LLC”).

The issue Bayern addresses concerns the fact that LLCs can be controlled by anonymous entities. Bayern argues that it is possible an LLC can be controlled by an algorithm without any human controller. Bayern hypothesizes:

The flexibility of modern LLCs appearstomakesuchcollaboration technically unnecessary, leading to a surprising possibility: effective legal personhood for nonhuman

systems without wide-ranging legal reform and without resolving, as a precondition, any philosophical questions concerning the mind, personhood, or capabilities of nonhuman systems (Bayern 2016, 112).

These entities are theoretical, but their ability to possibly exist is threatening to digital expression and speech. Lynn LoPucki, a law professor at UCLA, explains a sinister possibility of an algorithmic entity and its ability to conceal criminal, terrorist, or anti-social actions (2018, 887). The entity then becomes a weapon, programmed with certain parameters and inputs/outputs, which is unleashed by an initiator. This weapon is not limited to only being a terroristic “superweapon,” but it can also be used to benefit a certain group. LoPucki states:

An initiator could program an AE [algorithmic entity] to provide direct benefits to individuals, groups, or causes. For example, an AE might pay excess funds to the initiator or to someone on whom the initiator chose to confer that benefit. The benefits conferred could be indirect (2018, 900).

It is entirely possible that an algorithmic entity could be imbued with biases and targets and set loose upon society. LoPucki’s example focuses on the manipulation of funds, but it is not beyond reason that this type of entity could be directed to disrupt marginalized or disenfranchised groups. Currently, our society deals with the possibilities of scandals involving coordinated election fraud

perpetrated by human actors with the support of algorithms (Sacacas 2018, 35). If these types of attacks against democratic institutions continue to evolve it is possible, in conjunction with an algorithmic entity, that a motivated nation-state or organization could create an entity aimed at creating chaos within a society. This chaos could include a situation such as fake profiles spreading disinformation through social media posts which may disrupt the flow of critical information during a disaster, for example. After setting this entity in motion, the initiator could then cover up their tracks or simply remove themselves from liability. LoPucki reinforces these risks, noting that: “Initiators can limit their civil and criminal liability for acts of their algorithms by transferring the algorithms to entities and surrendering control at the time of the launch (2018, 901).”

RUTHLESS ENTITIES

Any version of an algorithmic entity will lack basic human emotional abilities like sympathy or empathy, unless a crude version of those emotive skills is embedded into its programming. The algorithmic entity would not necessarily be cruel or evil without them; rather, it would simply lack the awareness or ability to recognize possible harms its actions would cause. The entity would then pursue whatever goal it was given in a manner devoid of sympathy, empathy, or moral restraint (LoPucki 2018, 904).

ALGORITHMIC MOBILITY

LoPucki states: “Algorithms are computer programs. They can

move across borders as easily as a program can be downloaded from a foreign server” (2018, 924). An algorithmic entity is not bound by the typical physical or legal borders that limit moving people. In pursuit of its programmed goals, an algorithmic entity can possess a fluidity within information systems that may allow it to evade human detection, subvert human efforts to counteract its actions, and efficiently attack its intended target. An algorithmic entity with enough intelligence can also recreate or replicate itself, like a virus, and ensure that its copies are able to continue its task with the same level of efficiency in case of the entity’s deletion from a system (LoPucki 2018, 925). .

THE INEVITABILITY OF THE ALGORITHMIC ENTITY

LoPucki argues that algorithmic entities are inevitable for three reasons: “They can act and react more quickly, they don’t lose accumulated knowledge through personnel changes, and they cannot be held responsible for their wrongdoing in any meaningful way” (2018, 951). These entities would be able to anonymously interact without humanity and are able to evade regulation due to the limited ability of the regulation of legal entities, according to LoPucki. If we agree with this argument, then the continuing trend of an algorithmic threat to free speech is clear. It is possible that society must simply prepare for the inevitability of the algorithmic entity and rely on increasing awareness, improving education, and understanding of the capabilities of the algorithms created within human society.

The Pew Research Center also addresses the inevitability of the algorithm. Through interviews with a number of experts in different fields, the think tank addresses the fact that algorithms are generally “invisible” in our society (Rainie and Anderson 2017). Society is turning more of its internal functions over to the algorithm and trusting algorithms to serve for the greater good of the community. In other words, the more faith society puts into algorithms for accomplishing tasks, the more the danger of exploitation by a construct similar to an algorithmic entity.

THE ALGORITHMIC ENTITY’S THREAT TO FREE SPEECH

The algorithmic entity’s threat to free speech and expression is fed not by the entity’s ability to censor, but by the algorithmic entity’s mobility and ruthless nature. This nature may allow an algorithmic entity to simply override the voices and expressions of a targeted group of people. Legally defining the origin of the algorithmic entity’s speech is a difficult task. Wu argues that the algorithmic output could be perceived as simply a tool of facilitating speech, and it would then be difficult to simply regulate the speech of the tool (2013, 1504). When we combine this legal separation of tool and creator with the possibility of a legal algorithmic entity, it creates a quagmire. Society must enable its legal apparatuses to see through the technological fog. Guidelines on the regulation of algorithms and artificial intelligence are beginning to appear at certain levels of government. In

the United States, for example, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) released ten guiding principles for the regulation of artificial intelligence. In collaboration with the Office of Management and Budget, a draft memorandum was released with the intent of directing the decision-making of federal regulatory agencies in regard to artificial intelligence, but they do not apply to the government’s own use of these technologies (Vought 2019, 1). There is still a need for updated legislation related to the use of algorithms and artificial intelligence (Metz 2018).

Balkin also emphasizes that behind all these layers of technology there is always a human actor: “...behind the algorithm, the artificial intelligence agent, and the robot is a government, a company, or some group of persons, who are using the technology to affect people’s lives” (Balkin 2017, 1157). There is comfort in knowing that there are humans behind the proverbial curtain, and society can generally understand the motivations of a human agent, however sinister they may be. When that agent is an algorithmic entity, however, its motivations can never be fully understood unless it is “captured” or quarantined and analyzed. The algorithmic entity may have been given a motivation by its human initiator but identifying what those parameters were or who that initiator was may be impossible or extremely difficult. “Capturing” and attempting to analyze the entity’s code, for example, may not be guaranteed to reveal its point of origin or initial instructions. An algorithmic entity with the smallest amount of autonomy and self-preservation imbued in its

programming will act with mobility, and unintentional (or intentionally programmed) ruthlessness to accomplish its given purpose. The fears of society seem to be centered around artificial intelligences gaining sentience and attempting to exterminate or subjugate humanity (Metz 2018). The actual threat may be significantly more mundane. It is possible that society's focus on overhyped AI "terminators" may have blinded us to the systemic use of algorithms. Rather than fearing possibly out-of-control AIs, we should instead be wary of an algorithmic entity, which may achieve a crude type of consciousness that reflects the exploitative, viral, and ruthless aspects of humanity.

ALGORITHMIC BIASES

Algorithmic bias is the common thread connecting all of the previous concepts concerning algorithmic governance. Although algorithms can be perceived as sterile machines uninhibited by human moral flaws, research shows that they can inherit the biases of their creators. In *Algorithms of Oppression*, Safiya Noble highlights the issues with algorithms' representation of marginalized groups of people. Noble notes that search algorithms, like the one utilized by Google Search, rely on "...decision making protocols that favor corporate elites and the powerful" (2018, 29). These protocols are based on the values that are prized by society's most powerful individuals and institutions. The reliance on these algorithms for decision-making by the corporations with control over social media and new media on the Internet ensures that marginalized and misrepresented

populations may be further oppressed in the digital space (Noble 2018, 31). This is an obvious threat to free speech online because if an oppressed person is not able to express themselves without fear of marginalization or misrepresentation, then their speech is also in danger.

As noted earlier, there is serious negligence in this over reliance on algorithms for moderating something like speech. If these algorithms have bias and are used for the governance of society, then there is no difference between using the algorithm and having a racist, sexist, misogynist, etc. human employee. The threat to free speech also becomes striking. Noble offers some examples when analyzing aspects of Google as a commercial enterprise. She states: "[Google's]... information practices are situated under the auspices of free speech and protected corporate speech, rather than being posited as an information resource that is working in the public domain, much like a library" (Noble 2018, 143). She also addresses the possibility that unrestricted free speech may not be as neutral as perceived and possibly "...silences many people in the interests of a few" (Noble 2018, 143).

Pew Research Center also notes that these biases limit algorithms' ability to be impartial:

One is that the algorithm creators (code writers), even if they strive for inclusiveness, objectivity and neutrality, build into their creations their own perspectives and values. The other is that the datasets to which algorithms are

applied have their own limits and deficiencies. Even datasets with billions of pieces of information do not capture the fullness of people's lives and the diversity of their experiences. Moreover, the datasets themselves are imperfect because they do not contain inputs from everyone or a representative sample of everyone (Rainie and Anderson 2017).

This statement echoes the arguments presented concerning the overly objective nature of algorithmic governmentality, and Jack Balkin's views of the algorithmic society (Rouvroy and Berns 2013, vi). The threat of the algorithmic bias to free speech and expression in digital space is also clear: if we rely too heavily on imperfect algorithms to regulate speech online, we risk further marginalizing voices that may already be in danger (Balkin 2017, 1165).

CONCLUSION

ALGORITHMIC RESPONSIBILITY

These dangers to digital free speech and expression appear limited by their theoretical or abstract nature, but that very nature illustrates why they must be seriously considered. Reliance on objective quantitative measures and restricted qualitative methods with the aim of increasing the efficiency and prevalence of algorithms in the everyday life of the American citizen is of direct concern to the safety and security of the American democracy, and the continuing progress of the free enterprise system.

The algorithmic threat to society may also be larger than free speech regulation on the Internet. Reliance on algorithmic decision-making processes, for example, is reaching more into the upper tiers of government and defense. The New York Times "Killing in the Age of Algorithms" offers examples such as: "A tank that drives itself. A drone that picks its own targets. A machine gun with facial-recognition software" (Kessel 2019).

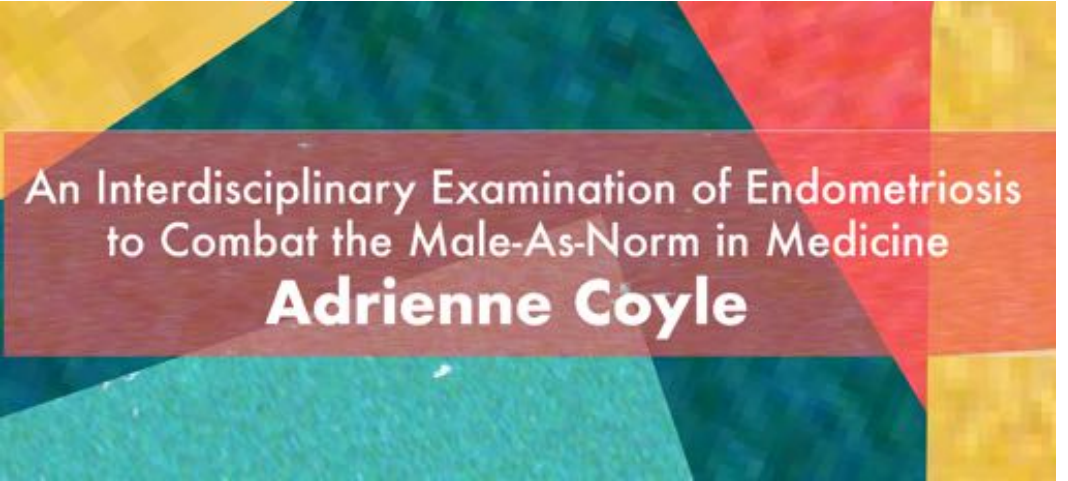
Overall, algorithmic governance, as articulated by the theories of Jack Balkin and Antoinette Rouvroy, poses serious threats to the freedoms of expression and speech. The realities of overreliance on algorithms for decision-making and algorithmic bias illustrate areas of concern which already affect people in society today. Current algorithmic bias and the possibility of algorithmic entities also illustrate issues associated with this overreliance on algorithms. In order to combat this, there is a push for an increase in legislation and regulation which would encourage responsible use of algorithms by governments and corporations (Vought 2019, 3). Any concrete legislation or regulation, however, is still tentative while researchers currently are emphasizing the need for a level of algorithmic responsibility. The Pew Research Center, for example, highlights some of the possibilities for furthering algorithmic responsibility in our society. They emphasize the importance of "... algorithmic literacy, transparency, and oversight" (Rainie and Anderson 2017). The experts cited in the Center's research suggest implementation of organized oversight committees, coalitions of programmers and coders

brought into the government fold,
and the establishment of laws directly
related to the use of algorithms in our
society.

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An Interdisciplinary Examination of Endometriosis
to Combat the Male-As-Norm in Medicine
Adrienne Coyle

Abstract

The male-as-norm, the idea that male characteristics are default and neutral while anything female is aberrant and Other, is a concept that directly harms women who seek medical treatment for a variety of ailments, but especially those related to the reproductive system. This paper looks at one disease in particular, endometriosis, through the lens of six different disciplines—biology, feminist studies, history, psychology, anthropology, and communications—and discusses the benefits and pitfalls of studying the disease solely through each discipline. Because medicine alone is not sufficient to study this disease, the paper then attempts to synthesize these monodisciplinary approaches in order to present an interdisciplinary way of studying endometriosis that can hope to produce a cure and generate trust between the people suffering from the disease and medical practitioners.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a disconnect between various academic disciplines regarding the differences between men and women. In sociology and gender studies, there is a clear distinction between women and men, not necessarily due to differences in anatomy, but due to the way women and men are socialized in their genders (Wharton 2009). While a person's reproductive anatomy may determine how they are socialized, it is this socialization, not their physiology, that creates differences between women and men. In biology and in medicine, the focus is on the human body, where the most obvious differences between women and men are in their reproductive organs. However, there is little discussion about physiological differences beyond the reproductive systems, despite the growing evidence that many diseases can present differently in the different sexes, and that certain medications can have different effects on women and men. This follows in a long tradition often called the male-as-norm (Spender 1990), an idea that the male body is considered the default "human" body, while the female body must be studied as something else, a special case of the human body.

Medical researchers do more than neglect how diseases affecting both sexes can present differently in women and men. There is also a lack of research into diseases that affect only the female reproductive system, such as polycystic ovarian syndrome, vaginismus, and endometriosis. These

conditions, the causes of which are still unknown, affect women not just physically, but also in all aspects of their lives. This oversight is therefore not just a medical problem and should not only be addressed by the medical community, but by all disciplines that explore the differences between women and men.

This paper will consider one disease in particular -- endometriosis -- as it relates to the male-as-norm concept, and as it has been and could be studied in different disciplines, namely biology, history, the social sciences and gender studies, and communications. The purpose is to show that there needs to be communication between these disciplines in order for any real change in the research of endometriosis to occur.

A quick caveat: In this paper, I will often speak generally of women and men, female and male, and will, unless otherwise stated, mean cisgender people or the binary sexes. This is, of course, a gross overgeneralization, but one that is necessary for simplicity's sake. I say this to acknowledge that there are women-- transgender, cisgender, and intersex-- who do not have uteruses, just as there are men and non-binary people who do. Anyone with endometrial tissue can have endometriosis, and thus there is a potential for trans men and non-binary people to be either misgendered or left out of the issue entirely, which is not the intention of this paper. Furthermore, sections of this paper that pertain to the gendered experience of women leave out the experiences of transgender men and women, which

would be an important line of inquiry for future research.

THE BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Endometriosis is a disease of the female reproductive system, involving the endometrial lining of the uterus. The endometrial lining normally provides nutrients for a growing embryo, and is shed during menstruation. However, in endometriosis, this tissue grows and attaches to organs outside of the uterus, causing pelvic pain, and sometimes requiring surgery to remove (Smith 1992). Endometrial tissue grows in response to signals from the hormone estrogen. In the uterus, rising levels of estrogen stimulate the normal growth of the endometrial lining before menstruation. Outside of the uterus however, this causes flare-ups of the disease in a cyclical manner, typically a few days before menstruation. For those who can get pregnant, pregnancy and its associated lack of menstruation can alleviate the symptoms, though they return after childbirth. However, 30–40% of those affected by endometriosis are infertile or subfertile, and either have difficulty with getting pregnant or with carrying the child to term (Muse and Wilson 1982).

To this day, scientists do not know what causes endometriosis. One long-held belief was that it is due to menstrual blood that cannot exit the body and thus backs up into the rest of the reproductive system – a hypothesis that fails to explain several aspects of endometriosis, such as the presence of endometrial tissue outside

of the reproductive system (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). There are some hypotheses revolving around the presence of stem cells – nonspecific cells that can mature into specific tissues – that develop into endometrial tissue even though they are outside of the uterus (Smith 1992). Other hypotheses include the transport of endometrial cells to other parts of the body through the lymphatic system, and the attachment of endometrial cells to scar tissue after a surgery such as a hysterectomy or a Cesarean section (Danielpour et al. 2010). There has been little consensus in the research, however, and no single hypothesis has been judged as being more likely than the rest.

There is slightly more study on why endometriosis causes the incredible amount of pain that it does. Scientists have narrowed the causes down to a class of compounds called prostaglandins (Smith 1992). These compounds are secreted by the endometrial lining, and when in the uterus, induce the cramping that occurs during menstruation. When the endometrial tissue latches onto other organs, however, it secretes much higher levels of those prostaglandins, which affect the adjacent organs in the same manner. Since these organs, such as the bladder, colon, appendix, and even diaphragm, are not supposed to experience those effects, this causes the chronic pain in endometriosis. It is not until the extrauterine endometrial tissue is removed by surgery, thus removing the source of those prostaglandins, that endometriosis can be relieved, only to return some undetermined amount of time later (Smith 1992).

To date, doctors have yet to find a cure for endometriosis, a way to permanently prevent the inappropriate growth of endometrial tissue, or an effective treatment outside of surgery. Hormonal birth control can work to a certain extent in some people, but not all. Much of the research on the causes of endometriosis has been published in the last decade, even though the disease itself has been known for centuries. Its symptomatology was discussed in detail in the middle of the nineteenth century and it was officially discovered microscopically – i.e. the extrauterine tissue that physicians observed as causing pelvic pain in women was identified as endometrial tissue – in 1860 (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). The story of endometriosis throughout time is explored later in this paper, in the Historical Perspective section.

THE FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

It has been and continues to be difficult for many women to be diagnosed with endometriosis. In an online survey of more than 850 women, 37% of them reported an endometriosis diagnosis (Surry 2017). Of those, 72% said they saw two or more physicians before being diagnosed, and 24% saw four or more doctors to get a diagnosis. Other studies have shown that the average delay for receiving a diagnosis in the United States is almost twelve years (Ballard, Lowton, and Wright 2006). Often, this is because the main, and sometimes only, symptom of endometriosis is chronic pelvic pain; in fact, the delay in diagnosis was significantly longer

for patients who sought treatment for pelvic pain than those who sought treatment for infertility. While infertility is easily identified as abnormal, the delay in diagnosis for women whose primary symptom is pelvic pain can be attributed to assumptions, both by physicians and patients, of what amount of pelvic pain during menstruation is “normal.” Women who had always had painful periods believed it to be normal, “considering themselves to be ‘unlucky’ rather than ill” (Ballard, Lowton, and Wright 2006, 1297). When they presented their symptoms to their doctors, they often felt as though their doctors dismissed the severity of their pain, and “many recalled being told by the family doctor that because their pains were ‘just normal period pains’ this was something they had to cope with” (1298).

Many studies have found that women who see doctors for unexplained pain are often taken less seriously than are men (Hoffman and Tarzian 2008), and if the pain could be related to their reproductive systems, it is even easier for it to be dismissed. When physicians are unable to identify a clear cause for the pain, they conclude that it either has no known cause, has a mental cause, or simply that the patient is faking their symptoms (Crombez et al. 2009). These conclusions lead to physicians’ dismissals of women’s pain on a fairly regular basis, often giving women less pain medication than men (Hoffmann and Tarzian 2001).

In 2018, only 36% of physicians in the workforce were women (Association of American Medical Colleges 2018). This number has increased from 15% in 1986 and 7% in 1970 (Kletke, Marder,

and Silberger 1990). A simple reason behind the dismissal of women's pain, particularly in the past, could be the high proportion of male doctors, who have no reason to think of women's bodies as being especially different from men's bodies. This falls into the idea of male-as-norm, popularized by Dale Spender, but discussed by many feminist theorists before her. This idea of androcentrism is one that Simone de Beauvoir (2011) addresses in the very beginning of her 1949 book, *The Second Sex*, saying "Humanity is male, and man defines woman... in relation to himself" (5). She goes on to say, "She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her... He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is Other" (6). In fact, this androcentric idea is the base of Beauvoir's entire book and is reflected in the title. Women are the *second sex*, coming second to men.

In 1990, Spender popularized the idea of male-as-norm with particular regard to our language. Mankind is a word used to discuss humanity in general, and it is far more common to see the phrase written as "men and women," as opposed to "women and men;" the latter is the order I have made a conscious effort to maintain in this paper. Although Spender focused on the linguistic implications of male-as-norm, the concept goes beyond language, and is a phenomenon that can be seen in many, if not all, disciplines.

When it comes to male-as-norm in medicine, the bias is clear. Men, usually white, have historically been overrepresented in medical research and drug trials and some medical

conditions, such as AIDS and heart attacks, go unrecognized in women because the symptoms are different in women and men (Dresser 1992). This is not the only case of the male body's being considered the standard, default human body. The temperature of office buildings is calculated using a formula created in the 1960s, which used the average metabolic rate of men, and which researchers estimate results in a temperature that is, on average, uncomfortably low for women (Kingma and van Marken Lichtenbelt 2015). When cars and seat belts are tested for safety, most of the tests only require the use of a representative male crash dummy (Criado-Perez 2019). Only one of the five crash tests requires the use of a female dummy, but that dummy is little more than a scaled down male dummy, and it is only placed in the passenger seat. The order in which we list women and men is therefore a symptom of a mindset that pervades more areas than just linguistics. This androcentric mindset reduces women's access to competent medical care and is something that has yet to be fully addressed in medical science.

A search on Google Images for "musculoskeletal system" shows that the first dozen or so images are all of male bodies, most with the captions describing the "human" muscular system (see the Appendix, *Figure 1*). If one scrolls down until an image of the female body appears, its caption will read, "Female muscular system" (Appendix, *Figure 2*). Researchers have been studying the disparity between the depictions of female and male bodies in medical textbooks for decades. A study performed in 1986 on required textbooks for major Western

medical schools found identifiably male bodies to be depicted in 64% of the illustrations of non-gender specific sections. Only 11% of the bodies were identifiably female, while 25% were either gender-neutral or contained equal representations of female and male bodies (Giacomini, Rozee-Koker, and Pepitone-Arreola-Rockwell 1986). Textbook authors made a concerted effort throughout the 1990s to minimize the disparity (Mendelsohn et al. 1994). However, a more recent study performed in 2015 found that identifiably male bodies were still depicted almost 17% more often than identifiably female bodies (Murciano-Goroff 2015). This disparity may not directly lead to the issues that the male-as-norm in medicine causes, but it is a further example of this androcentric mindset.

A feminist approach to endometriosis is necessary for more than just exposing the male-as-norm and the mistreatment of women in medicine. This is precisely because it also exposes the mistreatment of men – transgender men to be specific. This paper generalizes about the gender of the people experiencing endometriosis, but the condition affects transgender men at the same frequency as it does cisgender women. Beyond that, there are also intersex people – people whose reproductive or sexual anatomy does not fit typical definitions of female or male – who need to be taken into account. Since endometriosis is simply the growth of endometrial tissue, it can appear in anyone with a uterus or endometrial tissue, regardless of their gender identity. A more nuanced approach to gender in medical research would be

needed to address how endometriosis affects anyone outside of cisgender women.

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Tracing any specific disease throughout history is difficult. Physicians have called different symptoms by different names, and blamed diseases on various things, like demons and imbalances of humors (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). For a disease like endometriosis, which can really only be confirmed with physical evidence, and which presents rather nonspecific symptoms in patients who are not taken seriously, following its path through history is even more difficult. As Vincent Knapp puts it, “To ask that European physicians, struggling to identify endometriosis in the late 17th and 18th centuries, come up with tissue samples to distinguish the disease would be to write the present back into the past” (1999, 13). Without the physical evidence of a disease, no one today can definitively prove that physicians in the 17th and 18th centuries were examining patients with endometriosis. Historians are then hesitant to conclusively label anything as endometriosis. Despite this, endometriosis presents enough symptoms together that its history can be discovered to a certain extent.

In 2011, Camran Nezhat, Farr Nezhat, and Ceana Nezhat published an extensive study on the research and writings on endometriosis throughout written history. While endometriosis was only discovered microscopically in 1860, Nezhat, Nezhat, and

Nezhat searched through medical history archives and even had medical texts translated from Latin. Since endometriosis was only described and named in recent history, they could not be completely certain that the historical records they found actually detailed endometriosis, but they only included research that fit the accepted descriptions and symptoms of endometriosis.

Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat's research found that there has been medical knowledge of this condition since ancient times. There are mentions of uterine ulcers in the Hippocratic corpus, as well as suggested treatments, which involved either using suppositories made of or ingesting different types of urine, pomegranate, or tar water. The idea of uterine strangulation or suffocation has been a common theme throughout history (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). A form of it still persists in one hypothesis of the cause of endometriosis – namely, that menstrual blood cannot properly exit the body and backs up into the Fallopian tubes, where the endometrial tissue develops into endometriosis. As previously mentioned, this idea does little to explain the presence of endometriosis outside of the reproductive system altogether, being found in the diaphragm and lungs in some instances.

Eventually, it was the increasing interest and success in surgery in the nineteenth century that ultimately led to the discovery of endometriosis as we know it today. In order to become successful surgeons, medical students had to use cadavers to learn more about the internal anatomy of the

body. Once it became commonplace to perform dissections, doctors became obsessed with finding internal evidence of diseases, learning more about the various tissues along the way (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). This led scientists to find macroscopic evidence for the first time of what Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat believe was indeed endometriosis – lesions found on abdominal organs in women who had also experienced menstruation-related disorders. Two years after the discovery of macroscopic evidence of the disease, Austrian pathologist Karl van Rokitansky examined these lesions under a microscope and identified them as endometrial tissue (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012).

However, both before and after the official discovery of endometriosis, women continued to be treated for “hysteria” (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012, 15). For some women, this hysteria was documented to occur only in the few days leading up to menstruation before disappearing, a fact that Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat note did not prevent their families from leaving them in asylums. While hysteria in women was discussed in Ancient Greek writings, it grew in significance in the early modern era. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the symptoms of endometriosis were blamed on a variety of supernatural causes, from demonic possession to witchcraft (Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat 2012). Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat call this period a step backward for women's health because “disorders viewed as gynecologic for thousands of years were now being defined as psychological in nature” (17).

The history of endometriosis, while long, complicated, and difficult to trace, is closely tied not only to the biological, but also to the psychological. This is unsurprising, considering that women today continue to have a difficult time getting diagnosed for chronic pain conditions because male doctors think their pain is all in their heads. The stains of women's "hysterical" past continue to affect how women receive medical treatment today.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Scholars through the ages have expounded on the differences between women and men, but psychologists have taken a special interest in this matter. In 1962, Sigmund Freud discussed in depth the differences in sexual anatomy. He blamed many psychological problems in women on these differences, and often on women's refusal to accept these differences. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, Nezhat, Nezhat, and Nezhat's work discovered that many of the cases of hysteria that physicians and psychologists described fit the symptoms of endometriosis – i.e. the bouts of hysteria – were cyclical and tied to the women's menstrual cycles, heavy bleeding, and stomach pains that led to fainting spells (2012, 21). For so much of its history, endometriosis has been just as much a psychological condition as a physical one.

Today, having moved on from committing women to asylums for "hysteria," endometriosis continues to be a mental health issue. One study in which researchers spoke to women

diagnosed with endometriosis found that, as with any illness causing chronic pain, the women's quality of life was drastically impacted by the condition (Grogan, Turley, and Cole 2018). Moreover, since many of the women in the study felt as though they were not taken seriously by their doctors and struggled to obtain an accurate diagnosis, the impact on their mental health was even greater. Beyond the fight to be taken seriously, the women all reported a distancing from friends and family as a result of their illness. They either hid their symptoms due to a lack of understanding from those around them, or they avoided social outings because of their fatigue from the pain. This study stressed the importance of an early diagnosis, as well as a strong support network in order to prevent mental health issues beyond the endometriosis.

Another study examined the effects that different symptoms of endometriosis have on women's quality of life (Facchin et al. 2015). The effects on women's mental health and quality of life in the study depended on whether women experience pain during intercourse (dyspareunia), with bowel movements (dyschezia), during menstruation (dysmenorrhea), or outside of menstruation. While menstrual pain was found to affect women's physical quality of life, non-menstrual pelvic pain was found to affect women's physical and mental quality of life, and also resulted in increased rates of anxiety and depression. Menstrual pain was found to affect fewer aspects of quality of life because of its transitory nature, as opposed to non-menstrual pelvic pain, which could be more frequent. The

researchers behind this study did not find dyspareunia or dyschezia to have significant effects on quality of life, but other studies, focused primarily on dyspareunia, have found links between dyspareunia and a reduced quality of life, both mentally and sexually (De Graaff et al. 2016).

Not only does endometriosis affect a woman's mental health, but the anxiety and depression that can stem from endometriosis can also exacerbate the symptoms, especially dyspareunia. Sexuality has been shown to have a psychosocial dimension (Barlow 1986), that is, a person's mental health can have a big impact on how they experience sex. This is especially true in people suffering from pain during intercourse (Fritzer et al. 2013). The anxiety about potentially being in pain can ultimately make the pain worse. Surgery as a treatment for endometriosis has been found to improve dyspareunia but takes longer to have a significant effect than surgery in people with menstrual pain because of the psychosocial aspect of sexuality (De Graff et al. 2016).

Fritzer et al. have found that dyspareunia can impact women's relationships with sexual partners, as well. Their 2013 study found that women who suffer from dyspareunia have more feelings of guilt toward their partners and fewer feelings of femininity because of their sexual dysfunction. Nearly a third of the women surveyed agreed that they felt as though they were bad wives because of the pain, and those who reported feelings of guilt elaborated, saying they felt that they could not "fulfill the role model of a 'real' woman" or "give the partner

what he wants and deserves" (394). Because of the pressure of societal expectations on women regarding their sex lives and procreative abilities (discussed more in the following section), the mental health of people with endometriosis suffers.

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Anthropology often focuses on the reproductive capabilities of women and how these affect women's role in society. Throughout history, many, if not most, societies have considered the onset of menstruation as the moment when a girl becomes a woman (Montgomery 1974). The sudden ability to create new life, even when a girl is too young to care for it properly, is held up as one of her most important milestones; her ability to preserve the species becomes the most celebrated part about her (Montgomery 1974). It is not surprising, then, that more research funding is allocated toward infertility than endometriosis or other disorders of the female reproductive system that cause chronic pain.

In 2019, \$13 million of the National Institutes of Health's research budget was allocated for endometriosis research, admittedly almost double the amount in 2018, when endometriosis research received \$7 million (NIH 2020). Research on infertility, however, received \$151 million in 2019. When scientific research funding is allocated, the researcher submits a grant proposal, which is reviewed by a committee and evaluated based on a set of chosen priorities that depends on the agency or program allocating the

funds. Furthermore, research funding is increasingly given to projects with actionable results that are somewhat predetermined, rather than research that is more curiosity-driven – i.e. the results of which are not at all known before the research is conducted (Szasz 2015). Thus, much of the research on endometriosis examines the link between endometriosis and infertility, as it is assumed that a concrete problem like infertility can have a more concrete solution than the chronic pain that endometriosis can cause.

In 2010, Lenore Manderson performed a study on how infertility due to endometriosis affects women emotionally and socially instead of how endometriosis causes infertility. She describes cases of Australian women who received diagnoses of diseases such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) or endometriosis. These diagnoses can be difficult for women to process, for the same reasons discussed above in the treatment of women by male doctors. In addition to the struggle they went through to receive a diagnosis, the women Manderson spoke to were all infertile as a result of their condition. She also explores these women's relationships to their own femininity as a result of their infertility. Many of the women in the study said they felt like "half of a woman," or "less of a woman" because of their condition (97). Because society places so much value on a woman's ability to have children, women who are infertile are negatively affected, and their mental health suffers.

Much of Western culture in a general sense can be categorized as pronatalist, which Anna Gotlib describes as the "endorsement of woman-as-mother" (2016, 330). This appears in instances of couples saying that they are starting a family when they are trying to conceive, as if they themselves do not constitute a family. It can be seen in the assumption that all women want to have children. Viewed from a national standpoint, there are even income tax deductions for families with children (Whiteford and Gonzalez 1995). With motherhood being considered a natural part of womanhood and femininity, and often considered the "natural outcome of adulthood and marriage" (Baker 2005, 524), women who are unable to bear their own children feel as though they have failed as women (Manderson 2010; Whiteford and Gonzalez 1995).

Despite the value that many cultures have given to menstruation, many cultures also place a stigma on discussing matters related to the female reproductive system, including any problems that are related to these topics, like endometriosis (Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler 2013). In their study on this stigma associated with menstruation, Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler discuss how in some cultures, menstruating women are considered "unclean" and are excluded from certain activities. In other cases, they say women are simply taught that menstruation is something that is not discussed in public. On the way to a restroom with a pad or tampon, a woman may tuck it in her sleeve or ask for one in a hushed voice. While there are women who work to reduce

the stigma – Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler reference artists who use their own menstrual blood as paint in order to make viewers confront their personal stigmas – it is still true that many feminine hygiene commercials use a “conceptually sterile” blue liquid that “cannot conjure the image of any bodily fluid” to represent menstrual blood (Ryus 2011).

THE COMMUNICATIONS PERSPECTIVE

A peculiar approach to solving the lack of research into diseases like endometriosis is through social media. Through campaigns like the #1in10 campaign, created by the Endometriosis Coalition (Kronfeld 2018), people affected by endometriosis have sought to raise awareness of the disease, both to educate others who may have the disease but remain unaware and to pressure doctors and medical researchers to find a cause and a cure. Outside of the #1in10 campaign, people with endometriosis have taken to social media to share their stories that shed light on this invisible illness that affects at least 10% of women, starting support groups on Facebook, and discussing their experiences using the tag #thisisendometriosis. Lara E. Parker, a producer at *Buzzfeed*, is one such woman who is open about her life with endometriosis pain. She often documents her experiences on Instagram, where she has 49,000 followers, and her Twitter, where she has 25,000. Her popularity as a *Buzzfeed* producer and now on social media allows her to increase awareness of endometriosis on a daily

basis and not just for a limited time as with other awareness campaigns.

The effectiveness of these campaigns and social media posts has not been studied, but other awareness campaigns have had measurable effects. Studies on mental health awareness campaigns found that such campaigns can have significantly positive effects. One study, conducted as an awareness campaign in Nagoya, Japan aimed to reduce suicides. It found that the number of suicides in the target audience in the area did, in fact, decrease with increased proliferation of the campaign (Matsubayashi, Ueda, and Sawada 2014). Another study, examining an awareness campaign in British Columbia, Canada, found that it succeeded in increasing awareness of mental illness and mental health literacy, but that the campaign ultimately had little success in improving attitudes and lessening the stigma associated with mental illness (Livingston et al. 2013).

While social media campaigns may be effective in generating awareness, some say that increased awareness is not enough as it pertains to women’s health. A study of the messages found on websites dedicated to endometriosis found little information specifically related to doctor-patient communication (Anderson 2008). While gaining knowledge of a disease is empowering to a certain degree, Anderson argues that lacking the ability to effectively communicate about the disease with a physician is ultimately detrimental. This is particularly the case with endometriosis, when patients are often dismissed as exaggerating their pain or making it up. If the physician dismisses their symptoms, and the

patients do not know how to effectively communicate, Anderson says that the patients are more likely to believe that the doctor has more authority. They will then leave the appointment without properly addressing the endometriosis, which leads to an increased time until diagnosis.

Noemie Elhadad, a professor at Columbia University, uses technology not simply to generate awareness, but also to crowdsource endometriosis research (Biggs 2019). She has developed an app called Phendo, which allows users with endometriosis to enter their symptoms, as well as their medications, their mental health, and other factors that could affect their condition. Because endometriosis can present differently in different people, the thousands of inputs into this app help researchers determine why it is that certain treatments work on certain cases and not others. The collective data also helps to develop a phenotype – i.e., a standard set of physical characteristics – and subsets of that phenotype. This knowledge could lead to a faster diagnosis of endometriosis for patients and more effective treatments.

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

No one discipline that touches on endometriosis is sufficient to address all the issues associated with the disease. Scholars of a single discipline often admit that their field lacks knowledge about endometriosis. Vincent Knapp says, “This often cryptic disease... is virtually unknown to historians even in the highly specialized area of the

history of medicine” (1999, 10), while Manderson argues that diseases of the reproductive system like endometriosis “have aroused limited interest among medical and psychological researchers, virtually none among anthropologists” (2010, 96). This general lack of research, as well as the bias in medical research surrounding the treatment of women, have certainly slowed down the potential discovery of the cause of endometriosis.

What, then, can be done about this disparity in research in all fields? The solution may be an interdisciplinary approach to medical science that does not solely look at biology but takes sociology and anthropology into account, as well as communications studies. Admittedly, this is not achieved without difficulty. Guerrero et al. (2017) examined problems and solutions related to the implementation of interdisciplinarity in research. Common problems working in an interdisciplinary – and collaborative – environment that they identified included role confusion, power hierarchies, and a focus on specialty knowledge and journals. For role confusion and power hierarchies, Guerrero et al. recommended clear and positive communication between team members about the goals and leadership of the project. As for the problem that team members may be stuck in a specialized mindset, the authors recommended emphasizing interdisciplinary research and collaboration early in graduate education.

Progress has been made in the inclusion of sociology in medical science. In 2015, the MCAT, a required exam for those who are applying to

medical school, included a section on social and behavioral sciences (“MCAT and Sociology” 2014). The promise of a change in the MCAT prompted pre-med programs to include one or two introductory sociology or psychology classes in their lists of required courses (Rosenthal 2012). While many students like medical schools prioritize applicants who only pursue the hard sciences, medical schools are now more open to applicants with diverse educational backgrounds, as long as they also have the science coursework (Murphy 2019). The inclusion of students from many fields of study can only improve the field of medical research by bringing a variety of backgrounds and approaches to problems and preparing students early for the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration, just as Guerrero et al. recommend.

In 2005, Russell Sawa wrote about cases – some successful and others not – where he collaborated in interdisciplinary research as a physician. In one case, he and others from many different disciplines prepared papers for a symposium while holding regular phone conferences during the three years leading up to the symposium. Each of their papers was well-received at the symposium and Sawa credits the success of this case to the trust he and his colleagues built over time and the deep level at which they shared with each other. Other cases ended with an imbalance of power or a disagreement of basic philosophies. Sawa observed several of his colleagues hold firmly to the belief that empirical methods were superior to all others. Because of this, Sawa calls for more dialogue and understanding between physicians and

the nursing profession, which he says embraces “holistic theories of health care” (55). He further recommends that medicine shift toward a more patient-centered approach, where physicians “get rid of preconceptions and judgments” (59), admitting that this would be difficult to achieve but stating that it is ultimately essential.

While interdisciplinary medical research is not necessarily commonplace, that is not to say that it does not happen. Nancy Krieger and Elizabeth Fee (1996) explored the intersections of race and sex in medical science and concluded that it is impossible to generalize any medical condition based on sex or race because the variation is too great. For example, they found the risk for hypertension to be so varied between men and women of different races and ethnicities that women from one country have higher risks than men from another, even though the risk for hypertension in women is generally lower than in men. Observing the rates of certain forms of cancer reveals that women of lower social classes have higher rates of cervical cancer, while women of higher social classes have higher rates of breast cancer (Krieger and Fee 1996). All of these conclusions point to the idea that human bodies do not exist in a vacuum. We are all influenced by our environment, literally, by chemical and radiation exposure, but also sociologically, by issues such as financial stress and racism. Medical research into the causes and presentations of diseases must not only look into the physiology, but also the social factors.

When considering endometriosis in particular, it is important to take all social factors into account. One study found higher rates of endometriosis and endometriosis-related infertility in people of a higher social class (Matorras et al. 1995). However, considering how difficult it is for women to be diagnosed with endometriosis, it is much more likely that this statistic comes from the women who are able to see a doctor about health issues and who continue to pursue a diagnosis when they fail to get one, something women of a lower social class are not always able to do.

In order to combat the male-as-norm in biology classes and medical school, textbook authors and editors need to be diligent in depicting female bodies as much as they do male bodies. However, while anatomy textbooks are still unbalanced in their depiction of female and male bodies, social media can step in. At a time when discussing issues related to the female reproductive system is still discouraged, people may not always be comfortable discussing them in person. However, a precipitating event has the potential to push someone over the edge, so to speak, and people will take to social media to vent their frustrations (Betton et al. 2015). This leads to awareness campaigns like #1in10, where people can learn about an illness like endometriosis without being subjected to the stigma attached to talking about menstrual problems. People on social media, like Lara Parker, then, can provide that knowledge until the more traditional modes of learning, i.e. textbooks, can catch up.

Social media has the potential to let the voices of women who have endometriosis be heard by everyone. Something as simple as listening to the patients themselves can do wonders, and yet even physicians who are sympathetic to the bias against women in medical research can come to conclusions without hearing the opinions of those women. John Smith is a male gynecologist who wrote a book in 1992 detailing the mistreatment of women with regards to reproductive health. It is, generally, very necessary for a male doctor to call out his colleagues when they do not take a woman seriously, but even Smith makes assumptions without actually speaking to patients. One of his examples of the “mistreatment” of women is that 90% of the hysterectomies performed in 1991 were elective procedures and, in his opinion, half of those were unjustified. It is almost as if the idea that these women had their own reasons to choose, of their own accord, to have hysterectomies even when it was not medically necessary – i.e. choosing to have hysterectomies to eliminate pelvic pain or heavy bleeding, instead of requiring them to treat cancer – never occurred to him at all. If this male doctor had spoken to any of those patients himself, he may have changed his opinion.

CONCLUSION

There is no single field that encompasses all aspects of endometriosis. Many disciplines have their own perspectives on the disease, and each addresses only a fragment of its causes or consequences. To properly consider all aspects of endometriosis will require communication between

physicians and psychologists, as well as feminist theorists, historians, anthropologists, and communications specialists. This is especially true for the effects of endometriosis in subpopulations such as transgender and intersex people. Furthermore there are still plenty of medical issues surrounding the female reproductive system, such as polycystic ovary syndrome and vaginismus, that would benefit from the same interdisciplinary approach as the one discussed here for endometriosis.

Musculoskeletal Diagrams of Women and Men

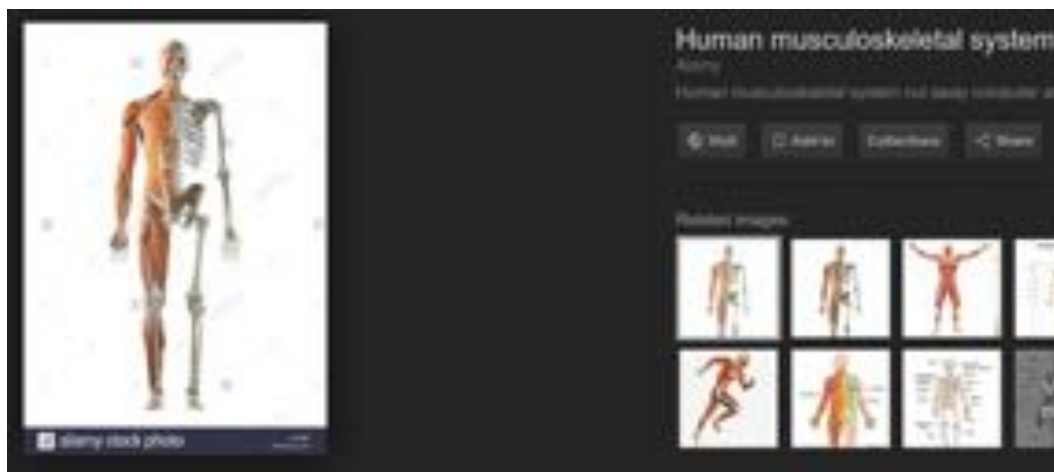


Figure 1: One of the many diagrams of the male musculoskeletal system that is labeled as "human"



Figure 2: Musculoskeletal diagram that specifies it is a female body, complete with bizarrely sexy pose

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About GNOVIS

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The GNOVIS journal is a peer-reviewed scholarly publication that employs a double-blind review process. Peer Reviewers are selected from CCT students who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement and forward-thinking scholarly work in their studies, are able to recognize and evaluate exceptional scholarship produced by their peers, and show a commitment to furthering the values of interdisciplinary scholarship.

Beginning with the 2007–2008 academic year, the Journal has been published bi-annually, during the fall and spring semesters. Prior issues of gnovis were published on a rolling basis. Starting in Fall 2019, it was decided that the Journal would be an annual publication.

The front cover of this edition of gnovis Journal was designed by CCT's Cedric Shi.

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