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**BACK MATTER**

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Hello! It is my pleasure to present to you the thirteenth volume of *The Forum*. After a few kerfuffles and delays, this edition is arriving into the world approximately a month later than it has in previous years, although I wholeheartedly believe that the edition emerged from those ups and downs all the better for having endured them. Before I talk about volume thirteen, I would like to thank everyone involved in its publication: the authors for bravely submitted their work, the journal staff for editing these articles on top of their other academic commitments and during all the upheaval this year brought, our graphic designer for doing such a wonderful job, and the members of the Cal Poly History Department that supported us through publication, including our faculty advisor Dr. Lewis Call, the department administrative support coordinator Denna Zamarron, and previously Sherrie Miller.

This journal is comprised of historical papers written by students at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. While our liberal arts departments are often overshadowed by engineering, architecture, and other such fields, I have found my fellow students to be singularly engaged in researching and contributing to the existing historiography of their particular interests, and the professors to be not only wonderfully knowledgeable but also vitally invested in the success of their pupils. I am proud to present this collection of work produced by my skillful colleagues and thankful to our faculty for teaching us so well.

I hope you enjoy.

- Camille Sibel, Executive Editor
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Madison Grant is a fourth-year history major aspiring to work in museum archives after she graduates in the Spring of 2022. Her interests include musical and maritime history, which inspired her to pursue her study of sea shanties and maritime folk songs. Grant enjoys the often-forgotten details of history which allow historians and other scholars alike to understand how similar we are today to individuals long gone.
The Purpose of Shanties from the Time of Sailors to Musical Masters of the Twentieth Century

Madison Grant

Abstract: The folk songs of the high seas traveled across hundreds of ships, changed in sound and lyric, and ultimately became known today as maritime folk music. Although many historians choose to analyze maritime history through physical artifacts, one less-appreciated aspect of the sea is known as the sea shanty. With modern musicians paying homage to their older nautical counterparts, the revival of shanty tunes sprung forth an almost lost appreciation into the lives of both historians and musicians alike. Referenced in this essay is the James Madison Carpenter Collection, an array of recorded and inscribed sources of shanty tunes that ultimately proved to be an invaluable source for maritime historians. This essay outlines how shanties developed, types of shanties, their significance, and how the Carpenter Collection revived the public’s appreciation for maritime folk music. Shanties have become an integral part of music today, adapting to modernity in the same manner that they adapted to each ship on the sea.

An abundance of maritime history relies upon oral tradition, with no better representation of ship culture found than the elusive sea shanties from the British Isles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One of the most comprehensive assortments of sea shanties, or chanteys, lies in the James Madison Carpenter Collection, which boasts over seven hundred and fifty fragments, songs, and recordings
of shanties. From this collection, a physical record of oral tradition had been passed down directly from sailors to Carpenter. Preserving the records of an almost extinct oral history allows historians and scholars outside the realm of history to understand the complex interactive past of maritime work songs. The revival of a sung history assists modern peoples by teaching the musicians as well as the audience to value and participate in an art form almost lost to the seas.

The purpose of sea shanties had been widely disputed. The traditional sea shanty sung upon ships represented a form of work-centric unification, which lent itself to popular culture in the twentieth century and brought about a revolution of maritime music into modern day entertainment. Without the Carpenter Collection, the musical revolution of seamen work songs would be buried with the sailors who sung them. This paper defines the role of the shanty in maritime labor and explores the timeline of its use. Afterward, this paper argues that the integration of sea shanties in the twentieth century was momentous to the folk revival of maritime culture, in the sense that shanties morphed into entertainment pieces to fit the shifting paradigm of the aquatic world.

Before traditional sea shanties can be compared to their modern jovial counterparts, a closer look must be taken at their original intended purpose. The sea shanty was originally seen as a work song purely for inspiring the unification of crewmembers executing burdensome tasks upon a ship. Shanties sprung from the maritime endeavors of Scottish, Scandinavian, German, English, and African sailors and their labor

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songs. Although sea shanties were once thought to encompass all forms of music at sea, there was a distinct difference between music aboard ships for labor and music for pleasure, noted in one theory from Harold Whates. This theory examines the key differences between sea shanties and sea songs, explaining that “shanties were sung at work and... sea songs may be defined as everything sailors sang in hours of relaxation,” which creates a clear divide between the intent behind each song. From this theory, it can be noted that sea shanties were developed over time as an accompaniment to a certain task that a seamen was accomplishing with his crew.

One such example of a task driven vocal cue, later to be described as an early shanty, came from William Falconer, an eighteenth-century poet. Falconer describes his work with sailors at sea when completing tasks aboard the brig, stating that the sailors “give a sudden jerk at the same instant, in which movement they are regulated by a sort of song or howl pronounced by one of their number,” which represents an early song dictating tasks. One sailor would shout an order, and others would follow suit. In this sense, sea shanties became increasingly musical as time went on, with vocal stresses being placed

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upon certain orders to indicate when the crew was to pull ropes for the sails. Early sea shanties were a two-parted musical dance, where one sailor would call the action, and others would respond as if echoing the leader, performing their task as they sang.

In the Carpenter Collection, a distinction is made between capstan shanties and halyard shanties. Capstan shanties were used at the capstan, a rotating mechanism that wound ropes on a ship, and were more often sung to alleviate boredom during a time-consuming task. Capstan shanties were closer in style to what Whates speculates was a “sea song.” Halyard shanties were utilized at halyards, which are ropes used to hoist sails upon the mast. This action required a sudden bout of strength from several sailors, hence the development of a shanty that emphasized accented words in order to coordinate actions. Carpenter directly interviewed a sailor by the name of J. S. Scott, who had sung a halyard shanty aboard the Gilroy in 1887. The shanty is entitled “Hoist Her Up From Down Below” and features a solo lead and a chorus following the lead’s cues. Carpenter documented the halyard shanty between a leader and a crew as,

Solo: Rosa Lee she had promised me, oh,
Chorus: Down below, oh ho oh ho!
Solo: For to marry me when I come home from sea, yes
Chorus: Hoist her up from down below!

An emphasis is placed upon the italicized words to indicate when the sailors would hoist the halyard. The purpose of the chorus is to

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http://www.jstor.org/stable/4522611
synchronize the crew, therefore unifying them and creating a working environment that breeds kinship.

The rhythmic and steady set of cues allows the sailors to extend their shanty and add verses as needed. Carpenter’s documentation of the shanties aligns with songs written down by other scholars who recorded shanties. Although shanties typically had rhythmic, steady, and consistent lyrics, “improvisation was regarded as a hallmark of a good shantyman and was a ...necessity in work contexts where a given task could be done in varying lengths of time,” which relied heavily on the conditions of the sea, the ship, and the crew on the brig. Although improvisation was important to the sailor leading the shanty, the general lyrical structure of each shanty was preserved without the modifications. The reason that shanties could be so lyrically similar between varying sources is due in part to the fact that sailors who boarded other ships carried the oral traditions and songs from their previous ships with them. Each sailor would learn to associate a particular shanty with a task and teach the new crew the shanty as they performed said task. If every sailor worked on a new ship and brought their shanties with them, the unifying factor between hundreds of working ships at sea would be their knowledge of capstan and halyard shanties.

Sailors who taught each other their individual shanties for certain tasks were essentially spreading a common culture only found

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between maritime workers. Each worker would be able to recognize songs and sing them with accuracy if they were asked to recite them, as is the case of John Carpenter’s recordings of various sea shanties. From those recordings and fragments of songs, he compiled a list of common songs most recognized by the sailors he interviewed. Among those songs were “Blow the Man Down,” “Shenandoah,” and “Leave Her Johnny.” These songs contributed to the maritime culture at sea, which in turn created a mobile, fluid, and unified littoral society. A littoral society is a maritime society with common themes, cultural aspects, economies, workforces, and values not necessarily bound to a physical location. Sailors communicated and worked effectively through song, which unified them and allowed them to work as a team and accomplish a common goal. Although sailors were not bound to their ship for life, they shared common values with those upon the brig and worked together though their use of music.

In the twentieth century, the usage of sea shanties began to die out with the rise of mechanized technology that replaced the need for manual labor. Due to the square-rigged sail ship being overturned in favor of a more modern design, the need for sailors in their traditional sense was futile. Sails no longer needed to be raised on brigs. Shanties were not used as frequently as before, and as a result, the “last shanty sung in this context was...sung aboard the Garthpool a few days before she was wrecked in October 1929,” by Stan Hugill, a noteworthy sailor

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and maritime expert. After Hugill sang what could be known as the last period appropriate sea shanty, all efforts to recreate the musical labor songs of the sea were no longer for work related endeavors. From the 1930’s onward, sea shanties were no longer in practical use.

Bordering on the brink of extinction, maritime historians and musicians alike rushed to preserve what remained of the fleeting oral history of the sea. Once the sailors who had sung shanties on ships began to die out, their knowledge of the craft began to die as well. The themes of unification between workers, human conflict with changing technology, and cultural consolidation between ships faced eradication when Hugill’s last song was sung. From this, the modern maritime world began to unfold an array of historical preservers in an attempt to encompass the folk art of labor songs. Although Carpenter’s Collection was released to the public in the 1970’s, and later digitized, others looked to revive the culture by recreating shanties with a musical troupe. The Northwest Musicians released an album in 1989 entitled “Victory Sings at Sea,” where several traditional shanties as well as their own are sung acapella in the exact style of their original tune. These shanties include “Blow the Man Down,” “Ranzo Ray,” and “Santy Anno,” which all appear on Carpenter’s list of most popular shanties among sailors. The mesh of modern and traditional songs on


11 Northwest Musicians, Victory Sings at Sea, Victory Music VMRCD-503. 1989, compact disc; Walser, Robert Young. "'Here We Come Home in a Leaky Ship!': The Shanty Collection of James Madison Carpenter." Folk
their album created a bond that sparked interest in the folk art and culture of sailor’s songs due to their crisp voices, ease of listening, and culturally accurate melodies. *The Northwest Musicians* brought to life an art that was almost entirely gone after the sailors aboard working ships from the British Isles passed away. By creating music that was easily accessible to the public, the average person could tune in to a part of history that had almost disappeared, perhaps without knowing that they were active participants in the musical revival. This revival is important to the musical culture of the modern era because a small piece of relatively unknown history had been brought back to life.

Even though the original purpose of a shanty was to provide guidance during the backbreaking tasks of shipwork, modern musicians were able to translate the original vocal cues as well as the cultural value of shanties. The rebirth of shanty music impressed upon historical listeners as well as a non-scholarly audience the rich traditions of a lost art. Participating in oral history keeps niches of history relevant, as the stories and livelihoods of sailors are celebrated long after their deaths. Carpenter’s own death in 1983 rendered him unable to witness the cultural revival of sea shanties, which was the original purpose of his Collection’s project.

As the entertainment industry rules over much of the modern world, sea shanties had found their place within many forms of media. Take, for example, the popular video game *Assassin’s Creed IV: Black Flag*, a game released by Ubisoft in 2013. The sailors of the British Isles would have never been able to predict that their songs would be kept alive and inspire a new generation to sing folk labor songs. *Assassin’s Creed IV: Black Flag* features an operable ship and a responsive crew.

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that sing halyard and capstan shanties as they complete their tasks. The game features a number of traditional shanties such as “Ranzo,” “Leave Her Johnny,” and “Whiskey Johnny,” which also appear on Carpenter’s list of most popular shanties. The inclusion of traditional shanties in a popular game made for a younger generation further exemplifies the reach that Carpenter’s Collection had on modern media and the entertainment business. By creating a playable example of a littoral society, Ubisoft brought to the attention of a younger audience the importance of an oral history. Surely, without Carpenter’s research, both The Northwest Musicians and Assassin’s Creed IV: Black Flag would not exist in the same capacity that they do today.

Understanding the complex history of maritime workers allows for modern day societies to appreciate smaller parts of history that oftentimes go unnoticed. This appreciation of detail in history applies to the lives of both historical scholars and musicians alike by creating a bond between what the world understands as cultural art and modern entertainment. Creating an awareness surrounding maritime history can better educate the world to appreciate music not only as a historical tool, but also as a cultural tool for understanding the struggles and labors of an entire unrepresented workforce. The significance of these shanties had changed from a tune of necessity in the past to a song of entertainment in modernity. This shift in significance brings about a greater importance of traditions almost lost to time. The maritime world

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may have been much more poorly understood by scholars without the multitude of shanties discovered and remembered in the Carpenter Collection.

The revival of traditional sea shanties brought to light a growing importance placed upon oral history and the role that music plays within said history. The unification of sailors through music allowed for a kinship to grow not only on their ship, but to other ships as each crew disbanded and spread their songs. The cultural consolidation between ships created a littoral society that united all sailors by their experiences on board a maritime vessel. Once modern ships overtook the market, sailors were no longer required to operate in the same ways that they previously had, as machinery accomplished tasks without the need for vocal cues. James Madison Carpenter’s Collection is the foundation for the revival of maritime folk music and oral history. With modern interpretations of shanty music being released across various media, a revival of maritime culture resurfaced from the depths of the sea to the lives of millions of historians and musicians alike.
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Northwest Musicians, Victory Sings at Sea, Victory Music VMRCD-503. 1989, compact disc


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Zia Simpson is a history major at Cal Poly. This paper was written for HIST 303: Research and Writing Seminar in History with Dr. Molly Loberg.
Medieval Infertility: Treatments, Cures, and Consequences

Zia Simpson

Abstract: Since the first civilizations emerged, reproductive ability has been one of the most prominent elements in assessing a woman’s value to society. Other characteristics such as beauty, intelligence, and wealth may have been granted comparable consequence, but those are arbitrary and improvable. Fertility is genetic, and for centuries it was beyond human control. Among the medieval European nobility, fertility held even greater power. The absence of an heir could, either directly or indirectly, bring about war, economic depression, and social disorder. Catholicism provided a refuge by allowing barren women to retain their hopes, while simultaneously enriching Rome’s coffers. Other women attempted various means of encouraging conception, such as early herbal treatments and remedies. Infertility was a dangerous game: not only were the treatments rudimentary and often detrimental to the patient’s health, but venturing too far into the realm of cures could earn a woman accusations of witchcraft or heresy. During an era in which dynastic extinction meant political instability, the religious and physical means through which noblewomen attempted to conceive, while deeply personal, were also matters of state. And while women were encouraged to conceive at any personal cost, certain lines could not be crossed, and navigating that maze was an imperious task. Through analysis of letters, memoirs, and exchequer receipts, I explore the ways in which medieval noblewomen in Europe attempted to “cure” infertility, and how their successes and failures were perceived by the public.
According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, infertility is defined as an inability "to get pregnant (conceive) after one year (or longer) of unprotected sex" for women under 35, with a period of six months for attempted conception in women older than 35. If a couple today struggles to get pregnant, there are dozens of steps they could take to increase their chances of conceiving, the first of which is often to consult a doctor. Modern medical practices can then pinpoint exactly which step in the reproductive process is failing for the couple, and attempt to fix the problem from there. A couple may use medications, surgeries, and treatments to first conceive and later aid in a successful pregnancy and eventually produce a healthy child.

However, all of these practices are new and have only become reliable in recent decades. During the Middle Ages, a rumor of infertility or sterility could damage an entire family and bring social and financial ruin. Undisclosed infertility was one of the few grounds for annulment in the Catholic Church in an age when divorce did not exist. In most Western European countries at this time, single women had few, if any, legal or property rights, so an annulment — which reverted a woman’s legal status to that of never having been married — would have revoked her of all property, wealth, and status. Without

3 Ibid. An annulment declares that a marriage never happened because one of the requirements for marriage established by Catholic Canon was not met, thus the marriage was never legal in the first place. To this day Catholic
scientifically-backed treatments or tests, anyone who failed to get pregnant or produce a healthy child quickly could easily be labeled infertile. While a diagnosis of “infertile” today may lead to medical treatments or a desire to pursue adoption or surrogacy, in the Middle Ages one’s perceived fertility could change the course of one’s life, especially among the upper echelons of society. Politics, economics, and social standing could change drastically depending on the fertility of a woman in power. Catholic encouragement and cultural expectations united to create significant consequences for women who failed to produce children, prompting the use of certain aspects of religion as a cure for infertility, as well as various medicinal treatments.

**Literature Review**

While reading secondary sources, it became clear that most sources on medieval infertility tend to fall into one of two categories: either they focus on the role of infertility in the lives of the upper nobility, or they discuss infertility treatments during the era. Although both of these methods led to compelling research topics that add valuable information to the study of medieval infertility, none address the economic impacts or implications that infertility among the nobility had on greater society. The former is exemplified in “Anne of Bohemia and Her Struggle to Conceive,” which deeply analyzes every known action of Anne of Bohemia during the last year of her life as she failed to conceive. Kristen Geaman highlights a six-membrane collection of

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Canon does not recognize divorce; to remarry in the Catholic Church one’s first marriage has to have been annulled or their spouse must be dead.

apothecary bills held in the UK National Archives and explores how the Queen’s use of the herbs listed sheds light upon the practices of “late medieval English elites,” and discusses how her infertility affected politics and diplomacy during Richard II’s reign. Karen Cherewatuk’s chapter “Royal Bastardy, Incest, and a Failed Dynasty” in *Marriage, Adultery, and Inheritance in Malory’s Morte Darthur* similarly discusses the importance of fertility in politics, emphasizing the concept of legitimacy and how it affected a king’s divine authority.

The other major historiographical focus is on the medical history of infertility in the Middle Ages, such as in “Reconsidering obstetric death and female fertility in Anglo-Saxon England,” and “Literate Laywomen, Male Medical Practitioners and Treatment of Fertility Problems in Early Modern England.” These sources report to what extent trained physicians were called upon to help with fertility, and also which treatments among those available were most common.

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5 Ibid.
9 For further reading, see “Women Healers of the Middle Ages: Selected Aspects of their History” by William L. Minkowski in *American Journal of Public Health* and “Medical Practice, Urban Politics and Patronage: The
These secondary sources provide information on the medical knowledge and practices of the time, but rarely consider the practical nature of treatments. One source differs slightly from this trend and analyzes sociocultural evidence alongside medical sources to reveal how women felt about the methods available to them, and the commonality of certain practices. “Treating Fertility Problems” uses sources overwhelmingly written or produced by women, including journals, memoirs, letters, and other secondary sources. Daphna Oren-Magidor consults those who were usually the subjects of infertility treatments, and uses their emotional responses to understand the popularity of various treatments in practice, and why this was the case by comparing religious motives with additional societal expectations regarding a woman’s chastity and modesty, which were sometimes called into question following certain procedures. For this reason, she concludes that the most common and most important “treatment” by far was prayer — which allowed women to come to terms with infertility as part of God’s plan, and many believed that only acceptance of God’s will could bring a child.

Fertility and the Catholic Church

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London ‘Commonalty’ of Physicians and Surgeons of the 1420s” by Justin Colson and Robert Ralley in The English Historical Review.  
11 Ibid.  
12 Ibid, 152.
Throughout the Middle Ages, Catholicism was by far the dominant religion in Western Europe. The fifth arrondissement of Paris alone, a neighborhood less than one square mile in area, has 13 Roman Catholic churches or religious institutions, of which nine were built before the 17th century. Catholic faith impacted every facet of life in the Middle Ages across all demographics, from personal health and safety among the lower classes to government and finances among the wealthy. In pregnancy and childbirth, scripture and saints alike contributed to the culture that supported a woman’s primary role as a mother, in certain cases implying that a woman who failed to produce children was somehow incomplete. The Catholic Church used scripture and canon law to influence attitudes towards infertility in the political realm, instituting rules for the nobility to follow in order to ensure dynastic stability.

In Genesis 19:31-38, the two daughters of Lot are hiding in a cave with their father. The elder laments that there is no other man whom they could bear children for, and the two daughters decide to get their father drunk enough that he will pass out, at which point they will “lay” with him and thus bear a child. This passage, which describes direct incest, provides an insight into just how socially important

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childbearing was for most women. Although the Bible does not support the actions of Lot’s daughters in this passage, the sons they bear go on to found dynasties, thus in a way encouraging the idea that women should take any measures they deem necessary to have a child. The incest between Lot and his daughters also supports the already established notion in Catholic scripture that women are inherently more susceptible to immorality, first introduced with Eve’s causing humanity’s fall from grace.¹⁵

Dynasty, both in Catholic scripture and in the politics of medieval Europe, was one of the greatest rewards God could bestow upon a man. The first and foremost goal of every king was to father a son in order to secure his dynasty, ensuring another generation of political stability. But dynasty was dependent upon a king’s fathering of a legitimate male heir — meaning the woman who bore the child had to be his wife in the eyes of the church. The Code of Canon Law Chapter IV Title VII originates from the Decretals of Gregory IX, and outlines everything required before and throughout a marriage for it to be considered valid, including that neither party had any previous contracts to marry a third party in the past, unless it had been annulled by the church.¹⁶ A king’s legitimacy — that is, the authenticity of his claim of descent from a previous king, usually proven by the legal marriage from which he was begotten — was paramount to the stability and authority of his rule.

Catholic Cures

¹⁶ Code of Canon Law: Book IV, Function of the Church: Title VII, Marriage: Chapter I-IX.
The influence of the Catholic Church extended into methods of curing infertility, encouraging women to use prayer and pilgrimage to cultivate God’s grace and favor in hopes of producing a healthy child. In a letter from Katherine of Aragon to her husband Henry VIII, the King of England, the queen updates him on their victory against the Scots during her regency of England while he is on campaign in France. The letter is short, and for every positive sentence she writes, she thanks or praises God for His work. Katherine of Aragon is famous as the first of Henry VIII’s six wives, and in this letter, she demonstrates her deep devotion to the Catholic Church. Written on September 16, 1513, Henry VIII and Katherine were just over four years into their marriage, which had still failed to produce any surviving children. Despite this, Katherine writes in her message to her husband that “All that God sendeth is for the best.” At the end of her letter, Katherine requests the King’s prayers for a safe journey as she is going on a pilgrimage to “our Lady at Walsingham,” while she prays for his safe return to England. She adds that she is happy to finally start her pilgrimage, which promised to do “so long ago.”

Our Lady at Walsingham was a holy site for the devotion of the Virgin Mary, and a common site for pilgrimage among those hoping for

\[17\] This paper refers to Henry VIII of England and Katherine of Aragon using their anglicized names. Henry VIII may also be found in other literature as Henri VIII, and Katherine as Catherine, Kathryn, or Catalina.


\[19\] Ibid.
fertility.» The site was especially popular among pregnant women or those hoping for a successful birth, and this may have been Katherine’s announcement to her husband that she was pregnant. Four years into their marriage and without an heir, Katherine may have been concerned about her ability to provide a sorely needed heir for her husband. As she later mentioned in her speech during divorce proceedings, Henry’s only brother Arthur had died, leaving Henry only the second Tudor king and, without a son, the last.» For a pregnant woman to travel from London to Norfolk was no easy thing at this time, especially for a royal who would have been accompanied by at least her entire household, if not the entire court. For this enormous cost, a pilgrimage offers few tangible rewards for those paying — however, there was the aforementioned religious aspect which Katherine hoped would lead to a healthy son and heir, and a traveling royal family also brought new wealth to local economies, thus in the short term, providing work and wages for commoners.

After the death of his first wife, Joan of England, David II of Scotland still had no heirs and soon married Margaret Drummond, the daughter of a Scottish lord. Four years later, they still had no heirs, and the king was rumored to be considering divorce on the grounds of concealed infertility.» In 1368, David II wrote a letter to the Bishop of Winchester, William de Wykeham, requesting “safeconduct” for his

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22 Code of Canon Law: Book IV, Function of the Church: Title VII, Marriage: Chapter I-IX.
wife to enter England. The purpose, he notes, is for a pilgrimage to Walsingham “and abroad.” Like Katherine of Aragon, Margaret likely hoped that a pilgrimage to Walsingham would help her conceive. The fact that the king must first request “safeconduct” for his wife to enter England implies the potential danger in her pilgrimage, as the neighboring England and Scotland were invariably amid border skirmishes. In fact, the primary purpose of Katherine of Aragon’s letter was to inform the king of her progress in their war against the Scots, in which she boasts of the King of Scotland’s death in battle against the English. Despite the danger of war, Margaret requested a pilgrimage to England, an act that displayed her bravery as well as her faith in God’s ability to grant her fertility.

In the end, neither Katherine nor Margaret were able to produce a healthy son. After almost 20 years of marriage, Henry divorced Katherine in a highly controversial and politically dangerous move in which he split England from Rome and established himself as the head of the Church of England. In a letter to Henry VIII during early divorce negotiations, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, the most senior churchman in England, describes to the King his view of Katherine’s infertility as part of a Spanish plot to weaken England. David II had viewed his wife’s

24 Ibid.
25 Letters and Papers [...] 1509-1514.
27 Thomas Wolsey to Henry VIII, July 5, 1527, trans. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom: The National Archives),
perceived infertility in a similar fashion, divorcing Margaret in hopes of marrying again to produce an heir and ensure stability in his kingdom by creating a clear successor. He was unable to do so, and his death marked the end of the Scottish House of Bruce. And while Henry’s third marriage did produce a son, the boy died young and was the last king of the Tudor dynasty. The struggles these queens had with fertility led to each king’s desire first for annulment and later divorce, as Catholic custom allowed only legitimate children to inherit, an issue which prompted countless sibling rivalries, diplomatic incidents, and wars.

**Fertility as Political Stability**

In the Middle Ages, a queen’s fertility could ensure the continuation of a dynasty, which delivered political stability and diplomatic advantages to those who produced a large brood of children. In 1572, at the age of 19, Marguerite de Valois married Henri III of Navarre on the instructions of her mother, the Queen Regent of France.


29 Other literature may refer to Marguerite de Valois under an anglicized name, Margaret of Valois. Similarly, Catherine de Médici may be spelled as Katherine or Kathryn. Henri III of Navarre may be referred to as Henry III, but he may also be found under Henri or Henry IV of France, as he later becomes King of France and is the fourth of his name to hold that title.
In her memoirs, Marguerite recalls her mother’s insistence that she marry the King of Navarre despite her own pleadings that “[she] should dislike to marry any one of a contrary persuasion,” for “[she] was a good Catholic” and the King of Navarre was Protestant. She describes the intention of the marriage to unite the Catholic King of France, her brother Charles IX, with the French Huguenots, a strategy meant to end the religious wars that had been present in France for years. Marguerite records that the king, her brother, told her that “his own life [and] the safety of his Kingdom depended upon [her marriage],” which they hoped would also end the rivalry between their family, the Valois, and their Protestant threats, the Bourbons.

When recounting her childhood, Marguerite touches on each of her siblings in passing, barely mentioning their political marriages. First is her sister Elizabeth, who married the King of Spain as part of a treaty to end the Italian wars. Next is her late brother Francis II, who had married the Queen of Scots to unite France and Scotland against Protestant England. Her other siblings, Claude and Charles IX, also married for diplomatic reasons: Claude so as to stabilize French control of Lorraine, and Charles IX in order to reaffirm Catholicism in the royal family. When considering the marriages of Marguerite and her siblings, one sees the advantage of having many children — her mother, Catherine de Médici, had 10 children, six of whom lived into adulthood to make highly advantageous political marriages. From her writing, it

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid, Letter I.
33 Henri Estienne, Ane Meruellous Discours Vpon the Lyfe, Deides, and Behauiours of Katherine De Medicis Quene Mother: Wherein are Displayed
is clear that even 14 years later Marguerite resented her marriage to a Protestant, which she regards as an “evil design” forced upon her by her mother and the French Huguenot resistance. But Marguerite’s marriage had another effect that became clear decades later. As mentioned previously, Marguerite had five brothers, three of whom survived childhood. One after the other, each became King of France and died childless, ending the Valois dynasty, and leaving the throne of France to the next royal family — the Bourbons, of which Marguerite’s husband, Henri, was the most senior member. Because of Catherine de Médici’s fertility and insistence that her daughter marry their rival, she ensured that even when all of her sons were dead, her last surviving child would sit on the French throne.

Medical Cures

When religious cures failed, many women turned to medical cures in further attempts to produce a child and continue a dynasty. In addition to prayer and pilgrimage, there were two common ways women would go about confronting their infertility: the “physic,” and water cures. At this stage in medieval fertility treatment, the logic

34 Marguerite de Valois, Memoirs of Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre—Complete, Letter IV.
35 Ibid, Letter XX.
behind cures and specific forms of treatment were not as important as the perceived efficacy of the treatments themselves. The first step beyond religious practices was self-treatment with herbs, sometimes aided by a physician with knowledge of the ailment. An additional method was “taking the waters,” which was rarely mentioned in manuals or medicinal texts, yet grew to great popularity among those who could afford it. Still, all treatments included prayer throughout and integrated Christianity and biblical ideals of marriage and children as ultimately in God’s hands, which helped many women to feel more at ease. 

Although the treatments involving medicines or herbs could have been administered by physicians and other medical professionals, the personal nature of infertility often discouraged women from seeking out practitioners. Rather, any help they sought concerning infertility would have been from other women, or they would attempt to treat themselves. At this point, medical texts were widely read, and most members of the upper classes would have been more comfortable treating their ailments themselves, and only later would have sought professional help. Due to concepts of chastity and modesty at the time, women were hesitant to discuss their reproductive organs and sexual habits with a male physician. Only when a woman’s life was at risk would she approach a male practitioner for help, such as in cases of tumors, miscarriages, or difficult childbirths. Among medical treatments for infertility, the most trusted and most lasting reference

37 Ibid, 146-152.
38 Ibid, 152.
40 Ibid, 292.
manual was *The Trotula*, a collection of three books on women’s health, each derived from the works of many physicians and authors which were brought together and recorded in Latin in the 11th and 12th centuries. The three books, “On the Conditions of Women,” “On Treatments for Women,” and “On Women’s Cosmetics,” discuss cures for common maladies found in women. These works were popular through the 16th century, as nearly 200 Latin and vernacular manuscripts survive from across the European continent, and it is cited in the works of physicians beyond the 16th century. The remedies of the *Trotula* became well known over the centuries, and were likely used by all classes due to the simplicity and accessibility of the treatments. Most recipes call for common ingredients, such as eggs, boiling water, oil, or wine, while recipes to aid cosmetic desires call for more specific or rare ingredients such as white lead, frankincense, crab foot, or olives.

The majority of the *Trotula* offers remedies for general health problems that could happen to anyone, such as sunburns and lice, which would have been more helpful for the poor than for the wealthy, implying that it was written with a general audience in mind. While the remedies of the *Trotula* were commonly used by commoners as well as nobles, *de Viribus Herbarum* appealed to a more professional demographic. The original text is in Latin hexameter verse, which was commonly used for medicinal recipes as it was easier for doctors and apothecaries to memorize. The text that survives is from the first

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41 Monica H. Green, ed., *The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine.*
printed editions of the 15th century, and it includes the medicinal uses of 77 plants and herbs.\textsuperscript{44} The popularity of this medicinal text comes from its rhyme scheme, which could easily be understood and remembered, but only by those who knew Latin. For this reason, \textit{de Viribus Herbarum} was not accessible to many women and commoners, who did have a classical education.

One use of herbal remedies from both the \textit{Trotula} and \textit{de Viribus Herbarum} is found in the record of a bill given to Queen Anne of Bohemia from an apothecary, from June 1393 to June 1394. Anne was never able to have children during her marriage to King Richard II, but like any woman of her position, she tried to increase her chances of conceiving. A few herbs specifically mentioned in the bill are also listed in the aforementioned medical texts: including theriac, lemongrass, coriander, caraway, mint, rose, and orange water.\textsuperscript{45} The \textit{Trotula} prescribes hot baths of seawater, rainwater, and aromatic water (infused with “… mint, pennyroyal, and… hot herbs”) up to three times daily under a treatment “For Conception.”\textsuperscript{46} Mint appears again numerous times in the \textit{Trotula}, in “Provoking the Menses” and “On Pain of the Womb” following either menses or miscarriage.\textsuperscript{47} One of the largest concerns in the \textit{Trotula} are complications that arise during childbirth,

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{45} The National Archives, \textit{Apothecary’s bills for articles supplied to the Queen. 17 Rich II}, trans. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom: The National Archives), https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C4517946.

\textsuperscript{46} Monica H. Green, ed., \textit{The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women’s Medicine}. 91-92. Pennyroyal is actually an abortifacient, and even small doses can cause seizures, syncope, widespread organ failure, coma, and ultimately death.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 89, 109.
including aiding long labors, “Excessive Flow of Blood After Birth,”
anal or vaginal tears, “Pain of the Womb” (which appears in four separate entries), “For Exit of the Womb after Birth,” and for “Rupture of the Genitals after Birth.” For preventing late-term miscarriage and for strengthening the womb, the Trotula prescribes oils and citrus — which Anne orders in her bill. A later account of the privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York also includes numerous requests for oranges during her final pregnancy in 1503, over a century later. Both of these royal women trusted their health to the works of both the Trotula and de Viribus Herbarum, demonstrating the authority that both texts held

**Consequences of Infertility**

Women in the Middle Ages went to extreme lengths, both religiously and medically, when attempting to cure their infertility and avoid the permanent stain sterility could have upon one’s reputation. After her death, Anne of Bohemia was seen as a queen who failed to fulfill her most essential duty: bearing an heir. Many posthumous accounts remark that Anne was a good queen, but not without mentioning her perceived failure; chronicler Adam Usk noted her as the “most gracious queen of England, even though she died childless.” Anne herself laments her childlessness in a letter to her half-brother,

49 Nicholas Harris Nicolas, *Privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York: wardrobe accounts of Edward the fourth: With a memoir of Elizabeth of York, and notes* (London: W. Pickering, 1830), 74, 87, 93
https://archive.org/stream/privypurseexpenses00nicouoft#page/80/mode/2up/search/December+1502.
50 Kristen L. Geaman, “Anne of Bohemia and Her Struggle to Conceive,” 224.
Wenceslas IV. She ends the letter by saying that she is happy with her life in England, but that she and her husband were “grieving” following her miscarriage. In Anne’s case, her efforts to cure her infertility were fruitless, and she was thus criticized for her perceived failings as a woman.

Even when medieval methods of curing infertility were successful, some women faced accusations of witchcraft and heresy, both of which were crimes in most countries at the time. After a decade-long marriage without children, Catherine de Médici quickly gave birth to 10 children in 12 years, and many people began to wonder what prompted this sudden burst of fertility. When rumors persisted for years and public perception turned negative, Catherine became the subject of a calamitous publication. Written during the reign of her third son, Henri III, Henri Estienne’s slanderous book *Ane Meruellous Discours [...] of Katherine De Medicis [...] Bringing of the State of the Same Vnto Vtter Ruyn* blames all of the hardships of France on Catherine de Médici, the mother of the king. Estienne uses Catherine’s interest in astrologists and magicians to call her a heretic, accusing her of


52 Henri Estienne, *Ane Meruellous Discours Vpon the Lyfe, Deides, and Behauiours of Katherine De Medicis Quene Mother: Wherein are Displayed the Meanes which Scho Hath Practised to Atteyne Vnto the Vsurping of the Kingdome of France, and to the Bringing of the State of the Same Vnto Vtter Ruyn* (Edinburgh, Printed by J. Ross, 1576), http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search-proquestcom.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/docview/2240894851?accountid=10362.
poisoning the glorious Catholic-French monarchy from within using her spells and enchantments.

Whereas other queens may have used a few remedies here and there to cure infertility, Catherine had crossed a line. She was vilified and blamed as the cause of every negative event since her marriage to the King of France, especially during the lives of her many children. Estienne even implies at times that Catherine’s fertility was due to her use of dark magic and interest in heretical practices, when it was only with Catherine’s help that the French monarchy remained Catholic.53 A similar book, *Catherine de Médicis, […] du XVIe siècle* by Eugène Defrance, records additional allegations of witchcraft throughout Catherine’s life.54 Defrance questions how a woman who failed to have a single pregnancy during the first decade of marriage could so suddenly have nearly one pregnancy per year, implying that no natural means could reverse a woman’s luck so well.55

Decades later, one of Catherine’s daughters would face similar slander for her infertility. Marguerite de Valois’ memoirs were written in response to a poet’s account of her life, which she alleged contained several mistakes and unfounded rumors.56 Marguerite describes how the difference in religion between herself and her husband Henri became

55 Ibid, 18-19.
the source of irreconcilable differences.” When her youngest brother died and her husband inherited the throne of France, he requested an annulment from his wife of 27 years so that he could remarry and attempt to sire legitimate heirs. Her memoirs give her version of their marriage and her opinion of the annulment. Marguerite was seen by the French public as immoral and adulterous, as she complains in the opening of her memoirs. Without an heir, Marguerite was ousted from her life as the Queen and was left vulnerable to slander from the public.

Conclusion

The influence of religion and cultural expectations for women both created an environment in which women tried religious and medical means to cure themselves in an attempt to avoid the political and personal consequences that could result from infertility. And while today “curing” infertility may stop after the conception of a child, life during the Middle Ages was unpredictable and dangerous — malnutrition, stress, and disease are just a few factors that made conception less likely.” Miscarriage was common enough that the Trotula described it as an event “accustomed to happen… in the seventh or ninth month.” One usually did not consider oneself to be pregnant

57 Ibid, Letter VI.
58 Ibid, Letters X, XVII, XX, and XXI.
60 Monica H. Green, ed., The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine, 111.
until “quickening” occurred. If one successfully carried a pregnancy to term, complications from childbirth (including infection, hemorrhage, sepsis, and eclampsia) were responsible for almost half of all “young female fatalities” during the Middle Ages. Even when a mother survived the dangers of childbirth, roughly a quarter of children died during the first year of life, and nearly half died before they reached adulthood. Apart from the physical toll multiple pregnancies and childbirths could have upon one’s body and the maternal mortality risk, the emotional toll of losing half of one’s children before they reached adulthood would have had a profound effect on societal, political, and economic stability.

61 Fiona Harris-Stoertz, “Pregnancy and Childbirth in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century French and English Law.” Journal of the History of Sexuality 21, no. 2 (May 2012): 269-270, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.lib .calpoly.edu/stable/Query=Pregnancy+and+Childbirth+in+Twelfth- and+Thirteenth-Century+French+and+English+Law&filter=&ab_segments=0/basic_search/control&refreqid=search:b47e4f89 007249dce40d3954468c44ed&seq=7#metadata_info_tab_contents. In modern terms, “quickening” was the moment when a fetus’s movement could be felt by the mother, at which point according to medieval faith the fetus had acquired a soul and thus truly became a person.


Infertility remains to this day a deeply personal struggle faced across all demographics. All treatments and practices mentioned until now have been based on the medical theory of the four humors, as implied in the *Trotula.* Humoral theory has long since evaporated from medical practice, and the vast majority of ailments are now targeted specifically with thoroughly researched and scientifically developed cures, including fertility issues. The uncertainty and pressure that women may feel today is a fraction of what women experienced in the Middle Ages when trying to conceive and bear children, so it may be difficult to understand the strange treatments they believed might solve their problems.

The maternal mortality rate in the European Union is now eight maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, a far cry from when 50% of young female deaths were due to childbirth. A woman’s inability to bear a son will no longer lend support to an alternative government, nor will her efforts to have a child bring accusations of witchcraft or demonic dealings. Women today do not need to resort to herbal remedies or pilgrimages, although they may indulge in them if they chose. As equality between the sexes increased, so has medical

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64 Monica H. Green, ed., *The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine.* The theory also asserts that men were hot and dry, while women were cold and wet. Any health problems were due to either an abundance of or lack of one or more humors, and only in balancing the humors could one maintain health. For more information on humoral theory, see “Experiencing Age: The Medieval Body” in Roberta Gilchrist’s book *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course.*


66 Max Roser, “Mortality in the past—around half died as children.”
understanding of both male and female infertility, and procuring children is no longer seen as a woman’s primary duty to her husband. Political stability and economic progress have not been primary factors in a woman’s decision to have children for decades, yet women still undergo intense scrutiny and treatment to have children. In-vitro fertilization (IVF) in the United States costs upwards of $12,400, plus an additional few thousand dollars for each round of medications. For couples in which IVF does not work, surrogacy is an option — for roughly $100,000. Many royal women throughout history would have gladly exchanged huge sums of money for a child, and often tried to do so. Expensive pilgrimages, bills for medicines and ingredients, consultations with physicians, astrologers, medical practitioners, and magicians — over the centuries, royal women spent enormous sums to have children in the name of dynastic stability and social standing.

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A Lifeline for Millions: American Relief in an Age of Isolationism

Matteo Marsella

Abstract: American military involvement in the Great War is a widely discussed aspect of the conflict. The period following the war is often considered an example of American isolationist foreign policy. Lesser well known are American efforts to provide food relief to starving populations in Europe, which began during and continued well after the war's conclusion. This paper seeks to locate American relief efforts within broader postwar foreign policy. Although President Harding’s 1920 election victory on a platform of a “return to normalcy” is often construed as a rejection of Wilsonian internationalism and a return to prewar isolationism, there is no scholarly consensus. The American Relief Administration, created by President Woodrow Wilson and led by Herbert Hoover, distributed critical aid to starving millions across postwar Europe. Beginning during the Wilson administration, and continuing while Hoover served concurrently as Harding’s Secretary of Commerce, the American Relief Administration not only provided relief but also used conditioned aid to advance US foreign policy goals in Europe. I argue that American relief efforts illustrate that following the Great War, the United States practiced a pragmatic form of isolationism that kept the nation engaged in international affairs.

“Let us stop to consider that tranquility at home is more precious than peace abroad,” then-presidential candidate Warren Harding posited in an address to the Home Market Club of Boston in
May 1920: The Great War was over, and President Woodrow Wilson had set the United States on a path of increasing international involvement: a path which led the United States to become an integral member of the League of Nations and part of the postwar order tasked with keeping the hard-won peace.

Harding’s vision for the future stood in stark contrast to Wilson’s. Under a Harding administration, the United States did not join the League of Nations, and instead followed a policy of “America First.” Campaign posters reflected this distinction; in a poster titled “Under Which Flag?”, Harding stands proudly below the stars and stripes holding a copy of his “America First” platform while his Democratic opponent James Cox attempts to raise a flag on which “League of Nations” is written. Harding’s message was clear — his priorities lay in the United States with the American people, not with foreign peoples across the sea.

Along with his “America First” platform, Harding vowed that his administration would bring about a “return to normalcy.” The 1920


2 Although in 2020 most commonly associated with the Presidency of Donald Trump, “America First” has also been used as a non-interventionist slogan by President Woodrow Wilson before the United States entered into World War I and by the America First Committee before the United States entered into World War II.

3 Republican State Executive Committee, Under Which Flag?, 1920, Poster, Ohio History Connection, Columbus, https://ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p267401coll32/id/11876

election, considered by contemporary observers and historians alike to be a referendum on President Wilson’s internationalism and his League of Nations, made the wishes of the American people clear. Warren Harding was elected twenty-ninth president of the United States with a popular vote margin of over twenty-five percentage points and an electoral college landslide of 404-127. Frontpage coverage in the Los Angeles Times described Harding’s inauguration as “the knell of American espousal of...internationalism.”

And yet, despite a Harding presidency ostensibly marking the end of engagement overseas, there is widespread contemporaneous reporting of large-scale American relief efforts in Europe which cost millions in US government money appropriated by Congress and was signed off on by President Harding. This inconsistency begs the


question: how does foreign aid fit into the often-held view of an isolationist USA?

The origins of the term “isolationism” are unclear, but the idea of an American postwar retreat into isolation has been thoroughly picked apart by historians who have failed to come to a consensus on what exactly constitutes an isolationist foreign policy. Broadly, there appear to be two camps – those who agree that isolationism existed as a foreign policy, and those who contend interwar American foreign policy cannot be classified as isolationism or reject the term as unusable.

Political scientist Ronald Rubin’s description of 1920s and 1930s isolationism provides a concise definition that effectively describes the first camp: isolationism is “not…the complete withdrawal from world affairs but…refusal to make any political commitments infringing on the nation’s freedom of action.” Even among scholars who contend that the United States did practice an “isolationist” foreign policy postwar, the isolationism practiced is not considered absolute. Writing broadly about American isolationism throughout US history, Bernard Fensterwald Jr. states that in contrast to the strict isolation practiced by Japan in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, “our

7 What is clear is that by the end of the Great War, the idea of American isolationism already existed, with one English journalist lamenting a return to isolation in an article published January 27, 1919
policies never amounted to anything more than pseudo-isolationism.” This is not so much a rebuke of isolationism as it is a qualification. Isolationism as the idea that the United States retreated completely from world affairs and remained strictly within its borders in all matters has little if any credence among scholars.

Scholars who reject the term “isolationism” in general do so for a variety of reasons. Historian David Cameron Watt argues that the term has lost its usefulness because it has “been stretched to cover so much it has lost all shape or form of its own.” He seeks to replace the isolationist versus interventionist dichotomy with idealist versus realist. Watt does acknowledge that idealists and realists could both support the same policy for their own reasons, but he fails to acknowledge that this could lead to policies that produce results which could be described as isolationist. Writing about 1920s and 1930s American foreign policy, political scientist Bear Braumoeller asserts that foreign policy is defined on three axes: isolationist vs. internationalist, unilateralist vs. multilateralist, and neutralist vs. aligned. To make sense of isolationism in this context, he provides this definition: isolationism is the “voluntary and general abstention by a state from security-related activity in an area of the international system


11 Ibid., 7
in which it is capable of action.”  He points out that isolation must be
general so as to avoid mischaracterization of internationalists as
isolationists if they oppose specific instances of intervention.
Braumoeller’s absolutist view of isolationism fails to recognize the
possibility of nuanced or pragmatic isolationism.

In this paper, I argue that the isolationism practiced in the
aftermath of the Great War was not a comprehensive ideology and
retained pragmatic elements that might otherwise be contradictory. This
paper will initially delve into a close analysis of the meaning of
Harding’s “normalcy” and examine Harding’s choice of Herbert
Hoover as his Secretary of Commerce. Furthermore, I will explore the
creation of the American Relief Administration, its purpose, and its
distribution of aid throughout Europe and Soviet Russia.

Close examination of Harding’s central vow to “return to
normalcy” reveals that his meaning behind the statement is unclear. At
first glance, Harding’s vow to “return to normalcy” seems to indicate a
return to a pre-war policy of non-intervention. Bernard Fensterwald Jr.
agrees with this understanding, writing that “as far as international
affairs were concerned, normalcy meant isolationism.”

The “return to normalcy” associated with President Harding
also came from the address Harding delivered in May 1920 to the Home
Market Club in Boston. In it, Harding outlined the country’s present

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Policy Analysis 6, no. 4 (October 2010): 354, https://www-jstor-
org.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/stable/24909828

13 Bernard Fensterwald Jr., “The anatomy of American “isolationism and
expansionism,” The Journal of Conflict Resolution 2, no. 2 (June 1958):111,
https://www-jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/stable/172971
needs as he saw them and his hopes for the future. The overarching message of the speech held that the United States needed to take stock of its current position and should return to “normalcy”. The word normalcy itself was used in a series of contrasts that provide insight into its meaning:

America's present need is not heroics but healing; not nostrums but normalcy; not revolution but restoration; not agitation but adjustment; not surgery but serenity; not the dramatic but the dispassionate; not experiment but equipoise; not submergence in internationality but sustainment in triumphant nationality.\(^{14}\)

In the speech, normalcy was directly contrasted with nostrums, which does not imply a turn away from internationalism in itself. However, his call for “restoration” and “sustainment in triumphant nationality” made it clear that normalcy could be understood to mean a rejection of internationalism and a return to an earlier age where the United States was not bound to foreign powers and American soldiers were not sent across the sea to fight in foreign wars. Nevertheless, despite what this speech appears to suggest, the normalcy Harding spoke of is not so simply understood.

Although his “return to normalcy” address contextually implies a return to pre-war policy, his later definition of the term suggests otherwise. At the time, the word “normality” was more commonly used, so Harding’s use of “normalcy” prompted some newspaper editors to change the word before publication. Because of the controversy surrounding the usage and meaning of the word, Harding was later

asked to explain what he had meant by “normalcy”. This was his response:

By ‘normalcy’ I do not mean the old order, but a regular, steady order of things. I mean normal procedure, the natural way, without excess. I don’t believe the old order can or should come back, but we must have normal order, or as I have said, ‘normalcy’.

This definition seems to be at odds with meaning that can be understood from his speech. Harding is explicitly saying that his “return to normalcy” does not mean a return to pre-war America. This statement would be peculiar, if not completely incongruous for anyone whose politics were fundamentally isolationist.

Harding’s relationship with isolationism is further complicated by his choice of Herbert Hoover for Secretary of Commerce. Herbert Hoover was not isolationist and supported the entry of the United States into the League of Nations. He even lobbied for the League in a meeting with President-elect Harding before he had been offered a cabinet position. As Secretary of Commerce, Hoover was responsible for promoting and developing foreign and domestic commerce as well as manufacturing and industry. Hoover’s decision to accept the position came with conditions. Notably, the Commerce Department would be

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completely reorganized into a larger and more important department, and Hoover would have “a voice on all important economic policies of the administration…business, agriculture, labor, finance, and foreign affairs,” as they related to national development and reconstruction.” During the first years of his tenure as Secretary of Commerce, Hoover’s work was primarily domestic with projects including the reduction of waste in manufacturing, simplifying the process of constructing a home, and improving the health of the nation’s children.

In terms of foreign policy, Hoover’s involvement as Secretary of Commerce was rather mundane, managing trade relations with foreign nations and verifying the security of foreign loans. More interestingly, he was involved in the Washington Conference of 1921-1922, and was an advisor to the Dawes Commission. However, Hoover’s most significant foreign policy role lay outside of his department, and outside of government entirely.

Hoover’s final condition to join Harding’s cabinet was that he keep his position of Director General of the American Relief


19 Naval Disarmament Conference
20 Restructured German War Reparations

Created by an executive order from President Wilson, the American Relief Administration’s mission was to distribute food aid to the starving peoples of Europe.\footnote{Herbert Hoover, \textit{The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Cabinet and the Presidency 1920-1933} (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), 18, \url{https://hoover.archives.gov/sites/default/files/research/ebooks/b1v2_full.pdf}} The organization received a congressional appropriation of one hundred million dollars to help fund its efforts.\footnote{Ibid.} The executive order empowered Director General Hoover to choose how and where relief would be distributed.\footnote{“Hoover Made Head of American Relief,” \textit{The New York Times}, March 3, 1919. \url{http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/docview/100351880?accountid=10362}} At the beginning of 1919, an estimated one hundred twenty-five million people were in need of aid, in territories stretching from Belgium to the Baltic, Finland to Armenia.\footnote{Associated Press, “All Relief Work Put Under Hoover,” \textit{The New York Times}, January 4, 1919. \url{https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/docview/100527993/E67C4A37C9654E02PQ/2?accountid=10362}} Between 1919 and 1921 the American Relief
Administration provided food for millions across eighteen countries, saving the lives of at least an estimated fifteen million children.²⁶

Somewhat surprisingly, Harding viewed Hoover’s relief work very positively. As a senator, Harding voted against the one-hundred-million-dollar appropriations bill that provided the American Relief Administration with the funds required to begin feeding the starving peoples of Europe. After Hoover accepted his place in Cabinet, Harding commented that Hoover was “performing a big service to the world, rivalling in importance a Cabinet position,” and that relief work was “America playing her part in the world.”²⁷ These statements seem out of step with the message of Harding’s campaign; how can America be “first” when the overseas work of a Cabinet member’s private charitable organization is of equal importance to their responsibility to the American people?

When the American Relief Administration was created on February 24, 1919, it became a stabilizing force in Europe and stood as a bulwark against Bolshevism. In a statement following his appointment as Director General of Relief, Hoover stated that aid from the United States could “banish the spectre [sic] of Bolshevism,” and offered millions “the kernel of democracy.”²⁸ During the last two


years of the Wilson administration anti-communism by way of food had been stated rather overtly. Hoover described the distribution of food to the starving population as “a race against both death and Communism.” In response to fears that communists would attempt to overthrow the nascent Austrian government on May Day 1919, Hoover authorized the posting of a proclamation that read, “Any disturbance of public order will render food shipments impossible and bring Vienna face to face with absolute famine.” The uprising Hoover feared never materialized as the “fear of starvation held the Austrian people from revolution.” In March 1919 communists lead by Béla Kun took control of Hungary. Allied leaders initially considered using military force to dislodge the communists, but Hoover urged restraint and drafted a statement intended to rouse anti-Kun forces. The statement released July 26, 1919, read in part:

If food and supplies are to be made available, if the blockade is to be removed, if economic reconstruction is to be attempted, if peace is to be settled it can only be done with a Government which represents the Hungarian people and not with one that rests its authority upon terrorism.


30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., 400
Less than a week later, on August 1, 1919, Kun’s government was overthrown and Hungary was declared a republic. By the time Hoover entered Harding’s Cabinet in 1921, he had already begun to be credited with stopping the westward spread of Bolshevism into Europe.

The beginning of the Harding administration signaled a shift towards a more covert form of anti-Bolshevist aid. It is important to understand that by this point the American Relief Administration had been restructured into a private charitable organization. This move did not fundamentally change the organization; the funds and relief supplies of the government-led American Relief Administration were turned over to the new organization with its mission unchanged. However, this did lead to a situation where Hoover simultaneously served as the chairman of a private relief organization and as President Harding’s Secretary of Commerce.

33 Ibid., 400

35 A legal entity titled “The American Relief Administration” was created to keep the accounting of the Congressional appropriation separate from other payments. When its legal life expired, the decision was made to privatize the organization.

Hoover’s concurrent roles resulted in the blurring of private and public business. During a series of negotiations between the American Relief Administration and the Soviet Russian government, the level of Russian government involvement in relief efforts proved to be a point of contention. The Soviets insisted that their government participate in the distribution of food while the American Relief Administration insisted that it have control over food distribution. Despite the private and independent nature of the organization, a Cabinet meeting was held to discuss developments in the negotiations. The Associated Press reported the attitude of the Cabinet as “[insisting] upon the freedom of American control of food distribution in Russia.” Also, in an interesting reversal from his time in the Senate, President Harding signed a bill appropriating twenty million dollars to the American Relief Administration for Russian relief efforts.

If the anti-Bolshevist foreign policy of the Harding administration was more understated than it had been during the Wilson administration, the question that naturally follows is: why? It may reflect a general decline in public support for aid amongst the American public. In testimony delivered to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in December 1921, Hoover reported that the money collected from public charity since August amounted to seven hundred fifty

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This may not seem like a small amount of money raised for aid; however, a fundraising drive that lasted from December 1920 to March 1921 raised almost thirty million dollars. Hoover adeptly summarized attitude of the American public at the time rather effectively in his memoirs, “The American people were not too enthusiastic over saving people who were starving because of their Communist Government.”

In addition to a growing antipathy towards foreign aid, the argument that the government should focus on domestic problems first before venturing beyond our borders, which we so often see in political debates, was alive and well. Although not writing specifically about aid, in a letter to the *New York Times* titled “No Entanglements with Foreign Nations,” Idaho Republican National Committeeman John Hart wrote, “our government should spend more time in adjusting our agriculture and live stock [sic] business and give less time to conditions in foreign countries.” Even supporters of aid expressed this view. Senator Ashurst of Arizona, who supported the twenty-million-dollar appropriation for aid to Soviet Russia, believed that although the United

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41 Ibid., 21-22

States should help relieve suffering in Russia, “the needs of…disabled soldiers…claimed first attention.”

A policy of contingent aid began during the Wilson administration and continued during the Harding administration. The original executive order and corresponding appropriation that created the American Relief Administration explicitly excluded enemy nations from receiving aid. The executive order stated, “An act for the relief of such populations in Europe, and countries contiguous thereto, outside of Germany, German-Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey.”

Potential food aid was used as leverage to win concessions from nations otherwise unable to receive relief. In a statement in early 1919, Hoover asserted that since the desperate need for aid throughout Europe was due to German aggression, “the Germans should be called upon to provide ships to transport food supplies…and it will certainly be made a condition of the allowance of any food supplies to Germany that their ships shall be ultimately turned over to carry food for all the liberated territories.” The conditioning of aid was very clearly shown in negotiations between Hoover and the Soviet Russian government.


Considering that the American Relief Administration was an independent charitable organization, most of the conditions presented to the Soviet Russian government were not particularly surprising. Among the conditions were freedom of movement of American Relief Administration representatives, the ability to organize local committees without government interference, and assurances that the government would not interfere with the liberty of members, to name a few. An additional condition is of the most interest: the release of any Americans held in Soviet prisons.\(^4\) The inclusion of this condition resulted in the release of almost one hundred Americans from custody.\(^5\) Conditional aid made achieving American policy objectives possible.

A peculiar coincidence hints that there may have been ties between American aid and Soviet New Economic Policy reforms. In the December 24, 1921 edition of *The New York Times*, several back-to-back articles cover economic reforms in the Ninth All-Russian Soviet Congress and President Harding’s signing of a bill that would appropriate $20 million to the ARA for use in Russia. The reforms were described as foreshadowing the abandonment of socialism and consisted in part of “the partial re-establishment of private trade and industry,” and the adoption of “commercial principles” by remaining state-owned enterprises.\(^6\) This is by no means conclusive, but


considering the anti-Bolshevist nature of previous American aid to Europe and the conditions imposed on Germany for aid, ties between US government aid money and Soviet economic reforms are not implausible.

The election of Warren Harding in 1920 signaled a step back in American participation in international affairs. However, despite rejecting the League of Nations and ostensibly returning to “normalcy,” the United States remained engaged in the post-war world. Analysis of American postwar relief provides an additional layer of information in our understanding of isolationism. Unlike slogans such as “America First” or “return to normalcy,” or support or opposition to the League of Nations, aid cannot be categorized into such a binary. The varying levels of support and implementation of aid allow for the grey area required when describing foreign policy. The American Relief Administration distributed millions of dollars’ worth of food throughout Europe in an effort to save lives and prevent the Bolshevist wave from sweeping across Europe, signaling the advent of a pragmatic isolationism that saw the United States engage with the international community without embracing it.

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Chance Coates is a history major at Cal Poly. This paper was written for HIST 100: Introduction to the Study of History, with Dr. Kathleen Murphy.
Abstract: Exploring the ways in which the seizure of the American embassy and subsequent hostage situation of American nationals within Tehran in 1979 transcended international boundaries, this paper discusses the backlash that Iranian students at Cal Poly faced during this pivotal geopolitical crisis. In doing so, I review various protests and public statements that gave rise to a distinct social discourse that stigmatized Iranian students, effectively transforming this group into an “Other.” Further, I explore the ways in which the university as an institution contributed to this stigmatization. The paper overall concludes that the Iranian students on campus were, like the Americans in Tehran, held hostage within a hostile social matrix during and after November, 1979.

In 1953, an event of international importance occurred that would reverberate through Cal Poly twenty-six years later as an intense social discourse and reaction, specifically through student protest, activism, and institutional control. That year, the United States and Great Britain engineered a military coup in Iran to maintain their control over oil resources within the country, leading to almost two decades of dictatorship and tyranny under the Shah. Over time, social tension in Iran would develop, finally exploding in 1979 as the dramatic Islamic

Revolution and, some months later, the infamous seizure of the American embassy and subsequent hostage crisis in Tehran. This latter event, having occurred in response to the Shah’s welcome into the United States, is what is crucial to this paper’s inquiry. In fact, as shall be argued here, Cal Poly represented a microcosm of general American trends, with the Iranian student population on campus being held hostage to social stigma due to the events in Iran.

Nine days after the American embassy in Tehran was seized by Iranian protesters on November 4, 1979, around a dozen students gathered on the “quiet lawn in front of Jefferson Hall” at Cal Poly, all for a protest seemingly against the hostage crisis. Already by this time, the discourse surrounding this event had reached a jingoistic — indeed, one could say, unhinged — sentiment on campus. “Save America-Nuke Iran,” one sign declared. “Drown the Oil Rats,” another complemented. Surrounded by what was considered an overinflated media presence, including reporters from such outlets as KSBY, Telegram-Tribune, and the Mustang Daily, not many students joined the protest, although “they were greeted by mostly smiles.” Most of these demonstrators, it was reported, had vocally called for the deportation of all Iranian students, all while quizzically contrasting themselves from the “violent” acts that had occurred in Tehran.

This rhetoric displayed at the demonstration in front of Jefferson Hall, one should note, was not unique to Cal Poly. As is documented by the historian Will Teague, “social pressures” and discrimination were present across the United States, with demands to “deport” and “expel” Iranian students occurring in San Francisco; chants of “Camel jockeys go home” made in Beaumont, Texas; and

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with student newspaper editorials elsewhere questioning whether such students were being educated in the United States so that they could “fight the US interests in Iran.”

Clearly, the collective shock of the seizure of the American embassy was channeled into a collective anger against all Iranians, leading to students on campus facing stigma for their identity alone.

Meanwhile, the approximately forty Iranian students at Cal Poly, represented through such groups like the Iranian Students Association and the Muslim Students Association, had a complexity of opinions regarding the crisis. Although the student population “had kept a low profile” during this time, the Iranian Students Association officially backed the seizure of the embassy as an act of political dissidence. Parviz Boozarpour, the outgoing president of the group, observed: “We are [merely] students. We can’t solve the crisis of Iran,” going on to argue that the outrage that Iranians felt regarding the admittance of the Shah into the United States was similar to the shock that Jewish people would feel, in a hypothetical scenario, if Hitler were welcomed into the country.

At the same time, clear divisions in opinion emerged between the two student bodies. For instance, the Muslim Students Association also backed the seizure of the embassy and, furthermore, it was supportive of Ayatollah Khomeini, the revolutionary leader of the new Islamic Republic of Iran. One member, who notably asked the Mustang

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Daily not to be identified, had considered Khomeini to be a “devout Muslim,” and thus he would not have the hostages killed: “That’s why [President] Carter’s resting on the case.” On the other hand, an undefined amount of students, as well as Boozarpour himself, associated with the Iranian Students Association vocally expressed a distaste toward the Ayatollah, with Boozarpour calling him “as fascist as the Shah.” Despite these differences, both associations worked to avoid any unnecessary confrontations.6

Iranian students, furthermore, expressed a deep displeasure with the lack of context given to the seizure of the American embassy. “[students protesting against the hostage crisis] don’t know the real reasons for the troubles in Iran,” observed Kazem Yazdi.7 In one article published by the Mustang Daily, three other Iranian students who were a part of the Muslim Students Association asked for empathy. “Americans should try and put themselves in the place of Iranians and see how they feel,” one observed. Reporting that they all had relatives and friends in Iran who were “disappeared” by the SAVAK, the Iranian equivalent of the CIA, these students considered the Shah “a tyrant who had reckless disregard for human life in his quest for modernization and westernization.” They further clarified that “it was the government, not the people, of the US that is hated” by Iranian demonstrators. Finally, the students argued that the seizure of the embassy “was the only form of retaliation available” that would grab attention across the globe and, thus, would make their voices heard.8

These observations by various Iranian students at Cal Poly are similar, in ethos, to those made by Palestinian cultural critic Edward W. Said in 1981, reflecting on his position as an evocative public intellectual and professor at John Hopkins University at the time of the crisis:

Thus when Iranians seized the United States Embassy in Teheran they were responding, not just to the former shah’s entry into the United States, but to what they perceived as a long history of humiliation inflicted on them by superior American power: past American actions ‘spoke’ to them of constant intervention in their lives, and therefore as Muslims who, they felt, had been held prisoner in their own country, they took American prisoners and held them hostages on United States territory, the Teheran embassy.9

In making this argument, Edward W. Said was critiquing the conventional intellectual as well as popular discourse surrounding the hostage crisis as it presented itself on campus.

Meanwhile, the social matrix at Cal Poly remained tense. Days after the first protest on the front lawn of Jefferson Hall, a second, relatively unorganized, demonstration and march occurred.10 With chants of “USA all the way” and “Free our people,” in addition to the carrying of signs declaring “Deport all Iranians,” the ethos of this protest was captured by James Witty, a student whose “letter-to-the-editor” in the Mustang Daily expressed sympathy for the event. The body of the letter explains “60 American hostages are being held by

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10 Spearnak, Nov. 16, 1979.
Moslem [sic] militants at the U.S. embassy in Tehran,” with Witty going on to chastise President “Carter and his ilk” for “allowing our country to drift aimlessly into an insidious mediocrity and beyond.” Finally, the student calls for “all Iranians” to be deported “back to where they belong—in Iran. Simple, direct action.” It is safe to say that many of the protesters shared these sentiments, with one protest leader further claiming that many students “showed their support” during the march as well.\footnote{James Witty, “Good and Mad,” \textit{Mustang Daily}, November 16, 1979.}

During the following weeks, Cal Poly’s Iranian student population was ordered to meet with immigrations enforcement to prove their full-time status. This was due to President Carter’s order, handed down on November 10, 1979, that all Iranian students in the United States meet with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and subjected to a variety of criteria that could lead to their potential deportation. “As long as they’re attending school and are in good standing,” claimed the INS representative for San Luis Obispo, “I don’t see anything to worry about.” On the other hand, the further monitoring of the university’s students by the U.S. Border Patrol was causing “concern among some Iranian nationals.” The Dean of Students, Russell Brown, justified the requirement of Iranian students to have their photos taken, forcing some students, such as Masoud Kasaei, threatening to “walk out” in protest, given that “everyone [was] uncomfortable” with these efforts.\footnote{\textit{Mustang Daily}, Nov. 16, 1979. Teague, 118. Jill Hendrickson, “Agents on campus,” \textit{Mustang Daily}, November 28, 1979.}

In a sense, one could argue, the difference between those calling for deportation and the actions by the university was small: functionally making those Iranian students into an “Other,” with the
threat of being coerced out of the country hanging overhead. Thus, a “dangerous situation” was made worse by the university’s actions, which were sharply condemned in a “letter-to-the-editor” in the Mustang Daily from Gary Brozio, who had called the policies “a mockery and farce,” setting “a precedent whereby the federal government uses college as an administrative tool” for “discrimination [sic]”. According to Kasaei, the social discourse could, in some ways, only be distinguished by how much it degenerated. Consider a retired professor’s comments permitted in the student newspaper, calling for all Iranians, “legal and otherwise,” to be “placed in … military camps,” appealing to the internment of Japanese citizens in World War II (an appeal that was made elsewhere in the United States during this time). The retired professor then reveals just how little they value Iranian lives, going on to argue that “whatever is done to just one of our Americans” at the Tehran embassy should “be accorded to just 100 of the ‘protected’ Iranians” in the proposed military camps. The crucial distinctions, then, are the disparities in power between the institution of the university and the protesters and, furthermore, the disparities in rhetoric.

From the available primary source documents, it is not known whether any Iranian students at Cal Poly were deported. In fact, it appears to be unlikely that any were, given that only a relatively small proportion of the Iranian student population in the United States were subject to such procedures during this “witch hunt,” to quote an

American Civil Liberties Union official. But this is ultimately beside the matter. Crucial to this paper’s inquiry is that Iranian students on campus found themselves within a very hostile social matrix subsequent to the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979. By way of protests, discourse, and institutional control exercised by the university, a stigma was attached to a student population whose opinions on the controversial event at hand were, as argued above, quite diverse and at times in contention with each other. What occurred in November 1979, then, was a hostage crisis that transcended spatial dimensions: emerging as a seizure of the embassy in Tehran and, following this, the seizure of Iranian students at Cal Poly, serving as a microcosm of the United States, as an “Other,” to be held hostage until the overall geopolitical crisis ceased.

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14 Teague, 118, 129. By 1980, according to Teague, around 56,000 Iranian students were interviewed by the INS, with roughly seven hundred being forced out of the country.
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Victoria Duehring is a fourth-year history major who will attend graduate school for Public History and Culture. Thanks to her AP Art History teacher in high school, she has always been interested in analyzing visual culture and reading between the brush strokes. It was a pleasure to write this paper for HIST 304: Historiography, with Dr. Matthew Hopper.
The Literary Controversies of Michelangelo’s Sistine Ceiling

Victoria Duehring

Abstract: This literary review will focus on Michelangelo’s most significant work of color: the Sistine ceiling. Michelangelo’s work has spawned a plethora of literature, but this paper will focus on three main controversial topics: assistants (or lack thereof), the ignudi’s purpose, and restoration. I will also apply a psycho-historical approach to these controversies and identify potential avenues for future research.

It was early December in Firenze, Italy. There was a slight drizzle in the air, but it was nothing my wool coat could not handle. It was my first time traveling alone — not “without my parents,” but truly all alone. I had made Firenze my number one study abroad destination for a single reason: Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), the famous sculptor, poet, painter, and architect during the High Renaissance in Italy. I poured over readings for months while studying him and his work in my art history courses, because like many, I am fascinated with his authentic genius. On the first day I saw The David, and the second I spent three hours in the Uffizi Museum. The Doni Tondo brought me to tears with its sublime perfection and incredible colors. That long weekend in Firenze I was simply one of the many tourists, historians, and artists dedicating my trip to seeing his fantastic works.

Any member of the art community, history world, or even the general public has heard of Michelangelo, and is at least familiar with the Sistine Chapel’s existence. This holy landmark in the Vatican features two of Michelangelo’s greatest works of color: the last
judgement and the vaulted ceiling. When delving into the literary works concerning Michelangelo, I will focus on the Sistine ceiling. Historians studying the Sistine Chapel tend to focus on one of three controversial topics: whether Michelangelo finished his work alone (assistants vs. solitary work), the purpose of the ignudi (or lack thereof), and the current school of thought on restoration of the ceiling (or “ruination,” as some might call it).

**Assistants: Fact or Fiction**

One of the most hotly debated topics in relation to the Sistine ceiling is the question of whether Michelangelo completed the work alone or with the help of assistants. It is no secret that Michelangelo did not want this commission, as he is cited in many sources “pleading [to the Pope] that [painting] was not his art.” It is for that reason, among many others, that many scholars are under the impression that Michelangelo without a doubt had some form of help during this commission. While there is debate on the topic, most modern-day scholars believe that Michelangelo had at least some level of assistance throughout the project.

In Howard Hibbard’s *Michelangelo*, he dedicates forty-four pages to The Sistine ceiling alone. Throughout these pages he goes into extensive detail about iconography, how the *al fresco* method works, and unsurprisingly how Michelangelo had help throughout this process. From the very start Michelangelo wanted to work alone on this project, but according to Hibbard he had help from the get-go with his “iconographic program” which was “drawn up with the help of a [Vatican] theologian…for Michelangelo himself may not have been

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capable of working out the program he painted in all its allusive subtlety.” Not only does Hibbard mention this hands-off type of help, but he also writes about actual painting assistants. Michelangelo was a free-spirited man and “had his usual trouble with assistants. The Flood [was] painted by several hands, with Michelangelo’s part in the center. He then dismissed the assistants…and painted the rest almost wholly by himself although he surely had help with the preparation of the plaster and other such menial tasks.” The dismissal of assistants cannot mean, in Hibbard’s eyes, that Michelangelo would be spending time grinding pigments all day. Although, Hibbard does mention that Michelangelo claimed he was given no help, and worked as much as he physically could.

Also siding with Hibbard is William E. Wallace in his article “Michelangelo’s Assistants in the Sistine Chapel.” Wallace explains how the restoration of the work (discussed at length later) has “revealed the clear presence of several hands, not only in the painting of the architecture and decoration, but also in some of the secondary figures.” Wallace talks about the “dozens of assistants who are known to have collaborated with [Michelangelo]”, and he goes on to prove this with a detailed chart that denominates each person, how long they knew Michelangelo, and if they left voluntarily, were dismissed, or never left.

While it is possible, explains Wallace, that Michelangelo dismissed the assistants later on, it is very unlikely that he “painted every foot of bead

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2 Hibbard, 105.
3 Hibbard, 118.
5 Wallace, 1, 4.
and reel molding himself.” He also mentions how Michelangelo’s old friend Giuliano, an architect, most likely “assisted Michelangelo with the revolutionary scaffolding device to paint the vault.” This intellectual assistance is similar to the theological aid Hibbard mentioned previously, and is still a form of help. The rest of Wallace’s work explains the close personal relationships Michelangelo had with men that are proven assistants for this project, and how these close relationships lasted even after the Sistine project. Therefore, it is unlikely that Michelangelo fired them all while maintaining such close relationships with those same men. There are confirmed dismissals, and a few early departures, but even so “we are still left with at least seven assistants…examination of the ceiling from the scaffolding clearly reveals the presence of helping hands especially in the architecture, decoration, and many of the secondary figures.” There were many menial tasks that Wallace believes Michelangelo would have not wasted his time on, because they “required competence but not imagination.” It is, in his opinion, important that this work is still seen as Michelangelo’s masterpiece while maintaining that it he did not accomplish it entirely on his own.

To further develop the idea of intellectual assistance, historian Charles Robertson examines the relationship between Michelangelo and his contemporary Bramante in “Bramante, Michelangelo and the Sistine Ceiling.” Robertson pulls no punches with his opening statement, explaining “Michelangelo was neither a generous nor a

6 Wallace, 1.
7 Wallace, 2.
8 Wallace, 5.
9 Wallace, 5.
particularly truthful man.”¹⁰ It is Robertson’s belief that Michelangelo wanted to prove a point by claiming that he finished the ceiling alone: “…for by executing it virtually unaided Michelangelo proved to himself and to others that he could achieve what had seemed impossible.”¹¹ Robertson goes on to explain that not only did Michelangelo probably have assistants — “a letter [was sent] to [Michelangelo] from Francesco Granacci concerning assistants for the ceiling” — but he also delves into the similarities of Michelangelo’s work to Bramante’s. It is extremely likely, Robertson’s research explains, that direct inspiration was drawn from Bramante’s work due to the fact that “the form of the cross band [on the pilasters] [was] strikingly similar…to Santa Maria presso San Satiro,” a work by Bramante. There are anecdotal stories from their contemporaries that show Michelangelo and Bramante to have been friends, but there are also countering stories showing them to be enemies. With such speculation Robert turns to the primary sources, concluding that “once that commission had fallen to Michelangelo it was natural that he should turn to Bramante for help. The two must have frequently have come in contact between 1504 and 1506.”¹² It made sense for Michelangelo to respect Bramante and his work due to the fact that Bramante was close to Dante, who was one of Michelangelo’s greatest heroes.¹³ To further prove this admiration, or at the very least respect, Robertson points to the ceiling: “[Michelangelo] acknowledg[ed] his debt on the ceiling itself by making the figure of Joel a portrait of Bramante…The head of Joel pays tribute to one of the most remarkable artist [he] had known, and one who affected him

¹¹ Robertson, 91.
¹² Robertson, 100.
¹³ Ibid.
Since it was known that Michelangelo was not one to simply do as he was told, Robertson concludes that Michelangelo was thanking Bramante for his inspiration on the trompe l’oeil, and perhaps even for his advice along the way.

In accordance with modern historians, Michelangelo’s contemporary Vasari also claims that Michelangelo had some form of assistance during this project in *The Lives of Artists: Michelangelo*. Vasari first brings up assistance in the form of intellectual or structural aid from Bramante, as previously discussed. He writes that “the pope ordered Bramante to build the scaffolding in order to paint [the Sistine ceiling],” but differing from Robertson, he claims that Michelangelo took the entire structure down and rebuilt it according to his own standards. Although Michelangelo denied that form of intellectual assistance, it was written that “Michelangelo sent for men…lacking the necessary experience, he brought some painters who were friends of his to Rome from Florence to assist him in the project and also see their method of working in fresco.” In dealing with the more traditional assistance debate, Vasari makes similar claims as many contemporary authors. Vasari later mentions that these assistants may have returned to Florence later during the project, but what is most important is that they were present at the beginning. Without assistants, it is very unlikely that Michelangelo would have picked up the fresco technique as quickly and expertly as he did. It is also important to note these assistants were not simple artisans, but many were great artists:

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14 Robertson, 105.
16 Vasari, 440.
“Granacci, Jacopo di Sandro, the elder Indaco…” 17 According to Vasari these assistants were vital in Michelangelo’s completion of the Sistine ceiling.

Few scholars are on the opposing side of this assistance argument, and most of those who are base their claims on Michelangelo’s word. In James M. Saslow’s work “The Poetry of Michelangelo,” he provides detailed and modern translations for Michelangelo’s poetry. The poem that previous authors have cited concerning how Michelangelo publicized his solitary achievements is in this collection of works. Michelangelo sends his Sistine poem (that includes a self-portrait of him looking up while painting) to close friend Giovanni da Pistoia. His poem is dark, depressing, and essentially glorified venting. He explains how he is doing all this incredible work on the Sistine by writing “With my beard toward heaven, I feel my memory box atop my hump… I am bent like a Syrian bow.” 18 In his footnote for this work, Saslow does not mention whether Michelangelo had any assistants, but simply points out the bowed self-portrait.

The final work is a more contemporary look at this issue: The Life of Michelangelo, by his beloved apprentice and friend Ascandio Condivi. This was written as a response to the biography Lives by Vasari, because Michelangelo did not like the way he was portrayed in the latter. Knowing that Condivi was so close to Michelangelo, it is important that this work is taken with a grain of salt. Condivi dedicated twenty pages (out of only one hundred and nine) to the Sistine ceiling, and throughout those pages, explains iconography, technique, problems

17 Ibid.
with the pope, and the assistant question. He claims that “[Michelangelo] finished [the] entire work in twenty months, without any help whatever, not even someone to grind his colors for him.”\textsuperscript{19} This perspective differs not only from the modern perspective, but also from Vasari’s contemporary explanation. Condivi wants to express the great hardship that Michelangelo went through while laboring for this painting:

After he had accomplished this work, because he had spent such a long-time painting with his eyes looking up at the vault, Michelangelo then could not see much when he looked down; so that if he had to read a letter or other detailed things, he had to hold them in his arms over his head.\textsuperscript{20}

Condivi not only dismisses the idea of assistants, but he also makes it very clear that in choosing to work alone, Michelangelo suffered greatly. Sacrifice for the church and God is a reoccurring theme throughout his entire biography.

**Igundi and their Purpose**

More important than how the Sistine was created is the work itself — it is a complex theological plan that has been outlined in great detail by contemporary and modern historians, but there remains one mysterious subject among this work: the ignudi. The *ignudi* are the


\textsuperscript{20} Condivi, 58.
nudes that adorn the Sistine ceiling, and whose iconographical purpose has not been fully fleshed out to this date.

Howard Hibbard, of course, does not ignore the ignudi in his vast explanations of the Sistine ceiling. Hibbard claims the ignudi “form one of the clearest case-histories as well as showing a characteristic side of Michelangelo’s art.” He goes on to explain that they are “the most personal and revealing contribution to the ceiling, having no necessary function — their ostensible purpose, holding the ten bronze-colored medallions, hardly calls for such a powerful corps of workers.” Hibbard’s opinion was that the ignudi do not serve a complex iconographical purpose, but are simply “unique artistic daemon.” Hibbard saw the ignudi as a way for Michelangelo to showcase his true talent of sculpture by making the figures appear to be relief sculptures. All of the ignudi “are in a sense ideal restorations of the famous Belvedere Torso,” of which Michelangelo was enamored, claiming it to be beyond nature in its perfection. By having these auxiliary figures adorn the Sistine ceiling, Michelangelo was able to show more humanistic emotions in the figures’ faces, and create body types that went beyond the norm for theological characters. The ignudi, in Hibbard’s opinion, were Michelangelo’s way of “showing purely stylistic dynamism, [while] achiev[ing] an exalted emotional goal.” He also states that he does not believe them to be angelic or anyone specific from Michelangelo’s life.

21 Hibbard, 121.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Hibbard, 122.
25 Ibid.
Hibbard, of course, gathered much of his information about the ignudi from Michelangelo’s contemporary and biographer, Condivi. When it comes to the ignudi, Condivi claims off the bat that they “do not appertain to the narrative.” He describes the ignudi in plain detail, explaining that they are nude figures who hold up golden medallions in between scenes on the ceiling. Although, Condivi does seem to adore the ignudi, explaining that “in beauty of [their] compartments, in the diversity of poses, in the contradiction of the contours of the vault, Michelangelo displayed consummate art.” Condivi’s admiration goes so far that he felt explaining their detail would be “an endless undertaking.” He chooses instead to move onto further descriptions of the iconographic images. Condivi “passed over [the ignudi] briefly, wishing to cast a little light on the whole rather than to go into details as to the parts.” Even as “brief” as Condivi’s explanations of the ignudi were, they do answer the key question of the ignudi’s purpose: essentially, to look beautiful and showcase Michelangelo’s mastery of corporality.

Vasari gives the ignudi slightly more purpose. He does still claim that the ignudi serve a purpose of displaying Michelangelo’s immeasurable skill, explaining that the figures:

possess grace and delicacy…in which [Michelangelo] demonstrates the extremes and perfection of his craft, by creating nudes of all ages, all different in their expressions and forms, both in their faces and in their features, some with slimmer bodies and other with larger ones.

26 Condivi, 48.
27 Condivi, 48.
28 Ibid.
29 Vasari, 444.
Vasari clearly admired the ignudi, but he believed that they had a larger purpose than to exist as simply beautiful displays of Michelangelo’s aptitude. Vasari thought that the medallions held up by the ignudi dawned “garlands of oak and acorn leaves representing the coat of arms and insignia of Pope Julius [II] and signifying the fact that the period during his rule was an age of gold...”30 Vasari did acknowledge that the figures played a role outside of the main narrative, but he did not believe them to be completely devoid of any iconographic purpose.

Another author that follows Vasari’s train of thought in attempting to divulge the iconography of the medallions is Joost-Gaugier in her work “Michelangelo’s Ignudi, and the Sistine Chapel as a Symbol of Law and Justice.” Similar to all of her predecessors, Joost-Gaugier acknowledges the ignudi’s independence from the general story of the ceiling, stating that they are “generally regarded as auxiliary figures who attend their more important painted colleagues.”31 Joost-Gaugier followed in the footsteps of Vasari, and diverged from a lot of her modern colleagues, in the importance she placed on the oak leaves and acorns that accompany the ignudi throughout the ceiling. She explains that the oak leaves and acorns being so “major in size and location, provokes the thought that the association between the oak tree and these youthful figures is unique and specific.”32 Following this, she went into detail about the “stylized oak tree...associated with the reign of Sixtus,” for whom the chapel was built.33 Joost-Gaugier also goes into some allegorical stories of law and justice from Greco-Roman

30 Ibid.
32 Joost-Gaugier, 22.
33 Ibid.
mythology, claiming that the oak trees represent a “pristine age which was the ‘Golden’ age blessed with the fruit of the trees before men learned to defile their lips with the blood of animals and to dread the judgement of the Law.” In clearer terms, Joost-Gaugier later explains that by pairing the ignudi with “festoons of oak leaves and acorns, [Michelangelo] suggests that the governance of Pope Julius constituted a Golden Age for Italy.” Joost-Gaugier went to great lengths in researching contemporary sources to validate her claims, and provides more insight into the real purpose of these figures than previous scholars.

“Restoration or Ruination”

As time goes on, the Sistine ceiling remains one of the most significant works of art in human history, but sadly the passage of time also results in the depreciation of al fresco works. Along with other literary sources for this work, the concept of restoration also has two main schools of thought: one urges that preservation and maintenance is necessary to respect the art, and one focuses on the ruin that can occur — often from human error — during the restoration process.

Howard Hibbard touches on this in his vast examination of the Sistine ceiling and takes the first approach towards appreciating what restoration has done for the ceiling. He explains that certain questions regarding how specific aspects were painted will be answered by the restoration process. For example, the matter of “whether the lunettes were painted along with the other scenes, or all at once” will be clarified during the restoration process.

34 Joost-Gaugier, 25.
35 Joost-Gaugier, 27.
36 Hibbard, 142.
was completed, Hibbard highlights that the restoration process shows that “the coloration of the whole ceiling [has] revealed a masterly, broadly painted harmony of daring color juxtapositions: green shot with gold; rose; blue; gold.” Hibbard’s highlight that the restoration process involves adding value that the original work had is very important to the literature on this topic.

Corresponding with Hibbard’s viewpoint is historian and restorer Gianluigi Colalucci. In his essay “Michelangelo Buonarroti: Restoration of the Frescos on the Vaulted Ceiling and the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel,” Colalucci explains the benefits of restoration. Colalucci first notes that the antiquated form of restoring works and adding in “brighteners, varnishes, heavy retouching and repainting” has been completely done away with. In fact, he states that “anything that has been added during past restoration work, nowadays, tends to be removed.” Having debunked the opposing arguments, he then begins explaining how the restoration of this specific work has given us more insight into Michelangelo’s methodology; “[the] cleaning has helped bring to light the true colors of [his] masterpiece…” Colalucci clarifies that “the most visible and continuous damage [to the ceiling] over the years was due to the infiltration of rainwater from the roof and the endless smoke from candles, torches, and braziers which constantly rose toward the ceiling and along the walls of the Chapel.” This darkness, explains Colalucci,

37 Ibid.
39 Colalucci, 89.
40 Colalucci, 91.
gives the viewer a false sense of Michelangelo’s true intentions, which were actually to show extravagant color juxtaposition. Thankfully due to the science now involved in restoration the “cleaning of the frescoes, [has] allow[ed] them to return to their original state with the colors almost intact.” Colalucci makes it known that without restoration, Michelangelo’s true vision would have never been discovered, and the work would still have this false sense of “black melancholia” that was never intended nor desired for this work.

Turning away from evaluating direct restoration process as entirely good or bad, A. H. Maude focuses on something that restoration has revealed in “The Cracks in the Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.” Maude goes on to explain that during the restoration process, a friend “saw many cracks, natural cracks, but he also saw that nearly half of the cracks were cracks painted by Michelangelo himself.” Maude highlights restoration as an important factor in this discovery, because without attempts to clean and fix the ceiling, all of the cracks would have simply been seen as effects of age. The cracks were eventually deduced by the author to be Michelangelo’s retaliation for being “forced” into this commission. Without this restoration, claims Maude, the world of art history would know nothing of this clever trick Michelangelo played on the Pope.

Taking the opposing side of this argument is Charles Hope in his article “Restoration or Ruination?” Hope’s main argument for this work is that restoration creates unauthentic representations of classic works. He explains that “restoration is seldom undertaken solely to

41 Colalucci, 103.
42 Colalucci, 91.
counter physical threats…it aims to improve [the works] appearance.”44 Hope thought that altering the appearance of works from antiquity to make them more visually appealing “[did] not necessarily give a fair idea of how they originally looked.”45 Hope finds the restored Sistine ceiling to be “gaudy” in its colors, and he even claims that it now creates a sense of discomfort for him and other patrons. Hope writes that, “as a colorist, Michelangelo now seems almost closer to Disney than to his contemporaries.”46 Hope’s disdain for the restoration is not limited to the colors; he also believes that “most of [the] shadow, regularly shown in later copies, disappeared during the present cleaning.”47 This lack of shadows takes away from the chiaroscuro, which Hope mentions is commonly found in Michelangelo’s work. Hope urges art historians to work towards preservation, and to stray from restoration, as he finds it risky to subject masterpieces to such dangerous processes.

A Freudian Perspective

All of these controversial subjects about the Sistine ceiling are extremely prevalent in art historiography, but there is little literature that looks at these issues from a psychoanalytical perspective. The psychoanalytical perspective, often applied to concepts in history, was created originally by Sigmund Freud. Freud, commonly referred to as the father of psychology, was an Austrian theorist that developed psychoanalytic theory. What that means in Freudian terms is one of two things: “1) a particular method of treating nervous disorders and 2) the

45 Ibid.
46 Hope, 3.
47 Ibid.
science of unconscious mental processes, which has also been appropriately described as ‘depth-psychology’.” In his most significant publication *Civilization and its Discontents*, he highlights what he believed to be the natural progression of primal sexual instincts into the development of civilization. Essentially, the driving force of man is in his innate sexual desires that can be satisfied by either “genital love” or through human bonds like friendship and family (leading to a sense of community). The first few generations of men would have to overpower their fathers, and then through the bonds of working together, the building blocks of society would be laid. The female role in Freud’s eyes was one of childrearing, and the desire to protect their children at all costs (excluding them from sexual instincts or pleasure in sex). To Freud, being a part of society takes away from a person’s sexual energy, and forces them to conform; even so, it is worth the loss of energy and repression due to the protection that living in a community offers. In his words, “civilized man has exchanged a portion of his possibilities of happiness for a portion of security.” Freud also saw the notion of “trusting thy neighbor” as something unnatural. He thought that we betrayed our immediate reaction of suspicion towards our neighbor for the benefits of established modern society. In Freud’s eyes this did not come without a price on our subconscious mind; he thought our aggression, irrationality, and even desire for war were a result of the repression of our innate sexual desires.

Freud had many theories about the relationship between children and their parents, and the effect of that relationship on their

later life. The effect that our past has on our unconscious mind is something that is now more widely accepted, but most of Freud’s other theories have been debunked or are best taken with a grain of salt. Freud relied heavily on personal experience and his own clients’ struggles (which could have been projected upon by Freud himself), not clinical trials, and this has resulted in many of his theories later being disproven. Even so, the idea of psychoanalysis is still largely important and used in the study of history via psychohistory. Authors of psychohistory aim to “study the behavior and motivations not only of individuals but of groups in the past”; for example, Erik H. Erikson’s analysis of Adolf Hitler’s childhood, or Fawn M. Brodie’s findings on Sally Hemmings through Thomas Jefferson’s parapraxis (more commonly known as ‘Freudian Slips’).

In *The Legend of Hitler’s Childhood*, Erikson chooses to psychoanalyze a section of *Mien Kampf*, in which Hitler sheds light on his parents and childhood. The excerpt is a meager sentence long, but Erikson draws four main points from Hitler’s work: his sense of German and Bavarian pride, a complicated relationship with his father, slight obsession with his mother, and a rebellion in adolescence. Hitler was a part of a German minority group in Austrian territory, and Erikson believed that the struggle of the German people Hitler presented was actually a parapraxis for the struggle between his mother and father. He diagnoses Hitler (as well as the larger German populace) with an Oedipus complex: Hitler’s controlling father represented the old Austrian state, while his mother was the “young and beloved Reich”

who was manipulated into an unjust and horrible an alliance with Austria.  

This hatred for his father is evident to Erikson based upon later passages in Mein Kampf, where Hitler represents him as a weak civil servant that dominates and abuses his family, but acts cowardly towards his superiors and fails in rebelling against the state. Erikson believed that this father-son relationship was common in Germany, and that this sense of relatability is what gave Hitler the ability to persuade the German people into becoming his puppets. The relationship to his father is also closely tied to the idea of German adolescent rebellion: Erikson thought that because Germany had not had large scale rebellions, they had more pent-up aggression, rage, and angst that came out in the way of teenage rebellion. Hitler convinced his audience that he never let his adolescent rebellion die, because in the end he dominated his father, not the other way around, and because of this he would not allow Germany to be dominated again either. Hitler makes himself into a brother-like figure — the Führer. Someone who is sympathetic to women, due to his love for his incapable mother, but who would never let his relationship with another person (be it child or wife) overtake his connection to his national brethren or the German state. The main point that Erikson is trying to make in his analysis of Hitler is one that ties Hitler’s personal woes to the German people as a group. Erikson wants to establish a pattern that would partially explain the successful takeover of the Nazi regime.

Fawn M. Brodie takes a more empirical approach, while weaving in psychohistory, in her book Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History with a focus here on Chapter XVII: Sally Hemmings. Brodie uses empirical evidence in the form of letters from Sally Hemmings’

51 Green and Troup, 72.
son, account receipts, and even a lack of evidence such as the mysteriously disappeared volume of Jefferson’s letters in the year 1788 — when he was with Sally. On top of this more physical evidence, Brodie also employs psychoanalysis when examining Jefferson’s letters. After meeting Sally, Jefferson began to write a diary almost daily, and in this diary he used the word *mulatto* eight times to describe the landscape during his travels. This is notable because in previous writings he uses words like “dark, reddish-brown or dark brown” to describe the earth; Brodie makes the claim that he must have been thinking of Sally (who was of mixed race) so much that it began to subconsciously come out in his writing. Jefferson has these “Freudian slips” several times in both his diary and letters. For example, in a letter to a former lover, he wrote about the beauty of a painting of Agar and Abraham — Agar was a concubine and house maid from biblical times, given to Abraham by his wife so that he might produce children and be pleased. Brodie ties this to Jefferson’s desire to bed Sally, and equates his job as a devout diplomat and politician to a figurative wife: Sally would serve his needs without requiring him to give anything up. Brodie uses psychology to read between the lines of Jefferson’s writing, but does not make claims based upon this analysis alone. She also takes primary sources that prove an infatuation and obsession — the payment of a smallpox vaccine or the procuring of a nice room close to Jefferson’s while they travel. This empirical data gives her psychoanalysis more weight and validity, making her different from Freud or Erikson, who rely solely on theory.

**Applying Psychohistory**

53 Brodie, 229-30.
Freud was the “father of psychology” and gave the modern world a lot to think about: the subconscious mind, developmental stages, parapraxis, and the effect of childhood on an adult’s future life. Knowing the basics of his theories, and the field of psychohistory, my aim in future research is to apply said methodology to the three controversial topics that shroud the Sistine ceiling.

Ideally, I will travel to Italy in order to do the proper archival research needed for a psychohistorial approach. My first stop would be Firenze, where I would access Michelangelo’s personal archives at Casa Buonarroti. Here I will focus my search on the topics of assistants and the ignudi. Casa Buonarroti has archives full of Michelangelo’s personal letters, sketches, and diaries. Those specific types of primary sources are perfect for a psychohistorical approach because they provide a more intimate look into Michelangelo’s mind. I will focus my efforts on documents that are linked to the Sistine Chapel, Rome, Pope Julius II, assistants, finances of the project, the ignudi, and Tommaso dei Cavalieri. Tommaso has been somewhat accepted to be Michelangelo’s lover, but is at the very least confirmed to be his best friend. Due to that close connection, it is likely that Michelangelo let his guard down more with Tommaso, and that those texts would aid in psychoanalyzing him. While still in Firenze, I will pop over to the Medici Archives. The Medici had extremely close ties to Michelangelo, and their archives may have letters from him that give more insight into why he painted the ignudi or if he did finish the Sistine all alone. By looking at close confidants I will try to get into Michelangelo’s head to see his things from his, admittedly distorted, perspective.

My last stop in Italy will be Vatican City, Rome. This portion of the journey could take approximately a month, but with my E.U. citizenship I will not have to worry about travel visas and can stay for
as long as necessary. In Rome, I will attempt to unearth from the archives more information surrounding Michelangelo’s work in the Sistine. Looking into Pope Julius II’s personal archives would be especially useful to see what kind of a man Michelangelo was working for. Could the pressure that such a powerful man exerted over Michelangelo affect why he painted the ignudi, or decided to work on the project without “armatures”? Finishing with the topics of the ignudi and assistants, I would turn my attention towards the question of restoration. My plan of action for the psychoanalysis of restoration is to conduct a series of interviews from the Vatican’s conservation team, asking them why they felt restoration was vital. I would do the same series of interviews with those who do not believe in restoration. Then I would analyze these interviews and look for parapraxes: is restoration actually what is best for the work, or is it simply something people want to do from an aesthetic perspective? Analyzing their speech and the type of evidence the interviewees give would aid me in giving a psychoanalytic answer to the ever-important question of restoration.

The controversial literature surrounding the Sistine chapel is expansive beyond the limits of this review, but for the most part it does fall into the three categories discussed: assistants, the ignudi, and restoration. This literature is both from the contemporary world Michelangelo lived in, and from our modern world that is so heavily influenced by new technologies and sciences. Given the amount of debate amongst some of these topics, in my opinion it would be extremely beneficial to approach them from another historical perspective: psychohistory. However, even without this extra layer of analysis, art history lovers will never run out of literature to gobble up when it comes to the Sistine Ceil
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Riley Sanders is a fourth-year history major minoring in statistics and hailing from Santa Cruz, California. His interest lies in European intellectual history with a focus on the 18th century Counter-Enlightenment movement; broadly, Riley is keen on historical figures and movements which resist the march of modernity. Applying statistical software, he hopes to contribute to the budding field of "digital humanities," which sits at the intersection of computing and historical methods. With the end goal of becoming a professor, Riley hopes to attend graduate school where he can further explore how statistics could lend a helping hand to questions of history.
Not So Dystopian: A Historical Reading of Eugenics in Science Fiction

Riley Sanders

Abstract: Broadly, this paper is an effort in complicating traditional readings of eugenic themes in science fiction. Two landmark novels, Wells’ The Island of Dr. Moreau (1896) and Huxley’s Brave New World (1932), are highlighted as representative of the early and late stages of eugenics. By focusing on the troubling historical context surrounding these authors, I denounce the simple reading of these works as merely “dystopian”. Scholars like Francis Fukuyama advance these simplistic readings by instinctively assuming that Wells and Huxley were against eugenics. This paper continues the tradition that David Bradshaw popularized in his book The Hidden Huxley, which argues that biographical details of science fiction authors are relevant when extracting meaning from their work. Looking at the crossroads between science fiction, popular culture, and technological development, this paper argues that a historical interpretation of these incredibly influential works of science fiction will infuse conversations surrounding new genetic technology like CRISPR with the necessary nuance to wisely march into the 21st century.

“Eugenics” is commonly uttered in the same breath as 19th century Social Darwinism or Hitler’s 20th century racial cleansing. But the idea has roots much farther back in history: Plato, in The Republic, was one of the first to envision a method for producing a better human by encouraging high class citizens to procreate and discouraging marriages between lower classes. Francis Galton, twenty-four years
after his cousin Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, pinned down this idea first proposed by Plato as “eugenics”, literally meaning “good creation”. Science fiction’s relationship with eugenics can be traced back to the very beginning of the genre. *Frankenstein*, believed by Brian Aldiss to be the first true work of science fiction, features a man using science to artificially create a human. Clearly, there is considerable overlap between the theme of eugenics and what Aldiss believes is the function of science fiction: a domain to “search for a definition of mankind and his status in the universe”. This paper is concerned with how the theme of eugenics is demonstrated in science fiction from the late 19th to mid-20th century. To achieve this, I will apply two landmark science fiction works that feature this theme: *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) written by H. G. Wells, and *Brave New World* (1932) written by Aldous Huxley.

One crucial aspect of science fiction, especially in relation to eugenics and bioethics, is the genre's transactional nature. The first side of the transaction is clear: authors take the current science around them and make creative projections into the future. The second, and most overlooked side, is the reversal: when science fiction alters how real science is done. Specifically, how a fictional work like *Brave New World* can alter a real bioethical debate with broad terms like “Brave New Worlders,” or “test-tube babies”. As we creep into the 21st century, we must match technological advancements in biotechnology with increased nuance towards these influential works of science fiction in

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order to avoid a shallow, one-sided debate. By pointing this out, I am choosing to side with scholars like Evie Kendall who see it as mandatory that scholars ponder what science fiction achieves for the rapidly expanding field of bioethics, both in terms of the “potential for providing accessible philosophical arguments for public debate, and the risks of fueling sensationalist or negatively prejudiced images of emerging technologies.” On the other side of the argument are scholars like Francis Fukuyama, who, in his work *Our Posthuman Future*, assumes science fictions like *Brave New World* are unequivocally denouncing genetic engineering and the doctrine of eugenics. My role is to join other scholars like Adam Roberts, who highlights Wells’ eugenic sympathies, or David Kirby, who places *Moreau* and *Brave New World* in the historical context of the early and late eugenics movements, in their efforts to complicate the traditional readings.

I believe interpretations like Fukuyama’s, which treat these two works as simple dystopias, are ahistorical and fail to contend with the complex historical context that surrounded their creators. Other scholars like David Bradshaw have successfully countered a simplistic

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reading of eugenics in science fiction, in his case by digging up Aldous Huxley’s unknown nonfiction essays, to suggest that he was not the racially enlightened traditional liberal that many assume. In the same historical spirit as Bradshaw, I intend to argue that each source actively participated in different arguments tied to two separate time periods. Published 40 years after Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* mocked the Victorian stance on evolution by weakening the barrier between man and animal, while spearheading debates surrounding the definition of humanness and how eugenics should be properly carried into the 20th century. For Wells, this meant a form of eugenics closely tied to Darwin’s natural selection. *Brave New World*, written at the peak of the late eugenics movement, is not just a dystopian critique of eugenics, but Huxley’s imaginative portrayal of the late eugenics discourse defined by the blossoming role of pro-eugenic state planning, and Haldane's influential book *Daedalus; or, Science and the Future*.

To properly place these primary sources in their historical context, I will divide the late 19th century and early 20th century into two periods of eugenics, early and late, to investigate how each work was rooted in a specific conversation. *Moreau* exemplifies the early period (1859 to 1900), and *Brave New World* is representative of the late or “golden” era of eugenics (1900-1945). This periodization will be useful in explaining how the eugenics movement progressed throughout the 20th century and how both works are a direct product of a complex and widespread eugenic debate.

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Both Wells and *The Island of Dr. Moreau* were shaped by the early eugenics period, a time span defined by Darwin’s revolutionary publication *On the Origin of Species*, Francis Galton, and the complex debate surrounding how to properly conceptualize Darwin’s discoveries. It is hard to overstate how influential Darwin’s theory of evolution was across Victorian society. As David Kirby points out, Darwin forced humanity to rethink its position in the natural world by arguing that humans are animals with an evolutionary link to all life on earth. This was especially relevant to natural scientists at the time, as before the publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, “most people did not look to biology for solutions to societal problems.” It was Francis Galton, one of the many inspired scientists (and Darwin’s cousin) who took the notorious leap of applying Darwin’s ideas of natural selection to his own species. In 1883, Galton coined the term “eugenics” or “well born” in which the main guiding question, inspired by Gregor Mendel’s mathematical approach to breeding pea plants, was: “Could not the race of men be similarly improved?” Despite Galton’s unwavering assurance of the affirmative, the science at the time was extremely muddled; genetics — indeed the word genetics itself — had not yet been invented. Consequently, a confused and frenzied debate on how to apply Darwin’s ideas ensued.

Amidst this uncertain scientific culture, H. G. Wells was introduced to the blossoming debates surrounding human primitiveness that dominated Victorian Britain. Wells was first a scientist taken under the wing of Thomas Huxley, or “Darwin’s Bulldog”, a staunch defender

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7 Kirby, “Are We Not Men?” 95.
8 Ibid.
of natural selection and evolution. It was during this mentorship that Wells was initially drawn to evolutionary topics in support of Darwin. John McNabb argues that “while most scientists and lay public accepted the reality of evolution by the 1890’s, fear of the implications of the Victorian Man’s primitive heritage pervaded popular and scientific works.” Drawing off the broad interest in man’s primitive origin, the eolith question — a debate surrounding the finding of early stone tools — was front cover material through 1890 as Wells was writing Moreau. In its early stages of drafting, scientists like Eugene Dubois were traveling Europe “attempting to persuade scholars they had discovered a creature that was genuinely part way between man and the beasts from which he had evolved.”

As unsettling discussions of humanity’s link to animals swept through Europe, the fear of evolutionary devolution or “degeneration” dominated the Victorian consciousness, which, for Wells, highlighted critical flaws in how his peers conceptualized evolution. As Wells was writing Moreau, the common Victorian belief towards evolution was that humans “represented the top of the evolutionary tree, an inevitable consequence of their being a superior species.” However, this was thrown into doubt due to Darwin’s theory of degeneration, in which Darwin argued that an “ape-like, simple brain of a macrocephalus idiot offered a potent case of evolutionary reversion.” For the Victorians,

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11 Ibid., 9.

12 Ibid., 3.

13 Bonnie Cross, “But They Talk: Historical and Modern Mechanisms Behind the Beast Folk’s Language in The Island of Dr. Moreau,” *International*
especially the cliché tea-sipping aristocracy, this was pure horror, for not only did this mean humans were not at the top of the evolutionary tree, but they may already possess a “degenerative” quality of which they were unaware. Wells saw the general public’s outlook on evolution as one of arrogance and complacency. Due to his tight relationship with Thomas Huxley and unfettered support of Darwin, Wells believed that Victorians were fatally out of touch with the pressing reality of degeneration and pushed that “humans could not be assured of their continued dominance in the world.” A potent example of this sentiment can be found in Wells’ Zoological Retrogression published in the popular Gentleman’s Magazine. In this nonfiction work, Wells likened human evolution to a lost city dweller who takes many turns and backtracks on himself, therefore asserting that the true character of evolutionary change is not linear and instead full of unexpected twists and turns.

Given Wells’ displeasure with the Victorian outlook on evolution and his certainty that human evolution is not linear, I argue that The Island of Dr. Moreau should be read as Wells’ attempt to stoke Victorian anxieties surrounding man’s link to animal. Wells achieves this in Moreau by injecting the maximum amount of confusion regarding the barrier between beast and man. John Glendening echoes this sentiment, stating the “text’s handling of evolution casts an incapacitating net of indeterminacy over all characters by destabilizing those binary oppositions that help people make sense of their world.”


15 Ibid., 9.
As Pendrick, the main character who finds himself shipwrecked on Dr. Moreau’s eugenics experiment, scurries through the forest, he comes across one of Moreau’s vivisected half-beast, half-man creations and instantly blurts, “What on earth was he, — man or beast?” Pendrick, in a fashion similar to how many Victorians reacted to Darwin’s theory of evolution, is terrified when he utters “the three creatures were human in shape, and yet human beings with the strangest air about them of some familiar animal.” This is demonstrated most glaringly when Pendrick effortlessly assimilates with the beast creatures and observes the beasts were “human enough and even conceived a friendly tolerance,” suggesting that the beasts not only looked human, but exhibited human-like empathy. Wells drives his evolutionary point home in his depiction of Pendrick’s return to normal British society in which he could not persuade himself that “the men and women were not also another Beast People, half wrought into the outward image of human souls.”

Given Moreau’s failure to alter the beasts and his eventual demise, it is tempting to assume that Wells was denouncing the blossoming field of eugenics and its goal to speed up human evolution. This is certainly plausible, for despite his unfettered determination, Moreau failed to fully turn beast into man and eventually fell victim to a fatal popular uprising orchestrated by his own eugenic creations. However, this interpretation fails to account for Wells’ personal stance

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18 Ibid., 38.
19 Ibid., 126.
on eugenics. As Adam Roberts points out, Wells, in addition to having been comparably racist to the vast majority of middle class England at the time, was strongly affiliated with late 19th century eugenics and championed preventing inferior races and the disabled from procreating. This racism is illustrated in Moreau, easily seen in Wells’ description of the beasts having “black negroid faces” or in the common comparison between black faces and simian creatures. Wells’ eugenic sympathies are best demonstrated in his work Anticipations, where he lays out a utopian republic in which natural selection is brutally applied to humans in hopes that “weakness will be prevented from propagating weakness and cowardice and feebleness are saved from the accomplishments of their desires.” In this utopia, Wells wished to limit the “feeble, ugly and inefficient.”

The question then becomes: why did Wells, a racist eugenicist, publish a novel that illustrates a failed eugenics attempt? I argue that Wells was promoting a specific version of eugenics, in his case a eugenics program strictly opposed to directionalism and positive eugenics, and supportive of Darwinist principals. In other words, Wells was attempting to pinpoint how eugenics should be properly taken into the 20th century. Galton was a staunch supporter of positive eugenics, or the idea that specific superior qualities should be identified and bred at a high rate. Wells, in response to one of Galton’s 1904 lectures before the British Sociological Society, dismissed positive eugenics by stating the “conscious selection of the best for reproduction will be

20 Roberts, History of SF, 221.
21 Wells, Island of Dr. Moreau, Moreau 23.
23 Ibid.
impossible,” and instead “it is in the sterilization of failures, and not in the selection of successes for breeding, that the possibility of improvement lies.” Therefore, it is no coincidence that Wells created Moreau as a strictly positive eugenicist who consciously selected all the “best” traits for his creations. E. E. Snyder similarly argues that Wells created Moreau to push against positive eugenics but adds directionalism as a theory of which Wells also disapproved. Directionalism, a common Victorian stance, was the belief that evolution is a directed process aimed towards the perfection of human beings, a sentiment Moreau certainly holds in his extraordinarily confident eugenic experiments. Synder argues that “Moreau’s muddled philosophy read designed progress into an evolutionary process.” Furthermore, Wells purposefully depicts Moreau as a perversion of Darwin’s theory of evolution by claiming to select traits with the randomness of natural selection. However, as Snyder points out, although Moreau claims to operate in line with Darwin-like randomness, “Moreau’s experiments display a terrible obsessiveness manifesting in the idea of progress (or directionalism).” Overall, considering that Moreau was a failed positive eugenicist and a believer in directionalism, Wells was attempting to steer eugenicists like Galton

26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., 222.
away from perfectionist positive eugenics and towards a eugenics more in tune with Darwin’s impartial natural selection. This version would be much closer to his desired utopia in Anticipations, a utopia where “nature, not man, would slay the hindermost”.

In 1932, thirty-six years after the publication of The Island of Dr. Moreau, Aldous Huxley, grandson of Wells’ famed mentor Thomas Huxley, wrote the revolutionary book Brave New World. The mixed critical response soon after its publication was opposite the ubiquitous, dulled down consensus one finds today. Joanne Woiak proposes that most critics saw it as a “thin little joke” aimed at merely disgusting readers with perverse depictions of sex, but, among contemporaries who grasped the novel's complexity, Bertrand Russel “read the World State as a viable alternative to mass destruction in a future world war.”

Today, Brave New World is primarily used and read as a universal dystopia that undoubtedly, given the alarming soulless and machine-like society that still terrorizes readers, denounces radical biotechnological research and certainly the eugenic dogma behind it. Peter Firchow agrees, observing Brave New World has left so “deep a mark on the modern mind that the mere mention of it evokes a whole complex of hostile attitude towards science.” Firchow goes even farther, stating it has “become a byword for a society in which the values of scientific technologies are dominant and has therefore reduced man to a species of machine.” While there are an overwhelming

28 Roberts, History of SF, 239.
31 Ibid.
amount of valid interpretations to choose from, I believe the most common and accessible one critically ignores the environment in which Huxley crafted *Braved New World*, and therefore demands additional context. The most drawn-upon representation of this near-ubiquitous view is defended by the neo-conservative scholar Francis Fukuyama in his work *Our Post-Human Future*. Mirroring Firchow’s summary of popular reception, Fukuyama scatters the first chapter with phrases like “the nightmare of *Brave New World*,” and identifies the World State’s drug soma, among many other things, as methods to keep citizens as “happy slaves with a slavish happiness.” Fukuyama defends this by pointing to real life biotechnology that he feels was mirrored in *Brave New World*, most notably drawing a direct link between the World State’s cloning process (or Bokanovski process) and current in vitro fertilization. Most importantly, Fukuyama claims the purpose of his book is to argue that “Huxley was right, that the most significant threat posed by biotechnology is the possibility that it will alter human nature.” Here, Fukuyama displays his lack of historical nuance, for his claim contains wide-ranging assumptions surrounding Huxley’s stance on eugenics that, given the immense collection of scholarship available surrounding Huxley’s complex position on eugenics, are severely jeopardized.

Representations of *Brave New World* like Fukuyama’s are ones that I, and well-researched scholars like Evie Kendall and Sheryl Hamilton, fear could erode current debates in biotechnology by using slippery slope scare tactics. Kendall states that “biopolitics and SF speculation converge at the point at which political governance extends to biological life,” and claims that some people (scientists and

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33 Ibid., 7.
politicians alike) rely on “SF genre tropes to dramatize potential threats science may pose to humanity.” Following the TIME magazine cover-worthy cloning of Dolly the Sheep in 1996, both her creator and leading biologists instantly injected broad statements referring back to Brave New World and Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein in hopes of arguing that “cloning should be in the realm of science fiction.” This scientific reality points to Hamilton’s central argument that Fukuyama-like scholars and even credited scientists often have not read Brave New World and primarily reference it at the level of “broad trope” or “general symbol” to gain quick argumentative points. Just seven months after Dolly the Sheep made the cover of TIME magazine, Japanese scientists also successfully incubated a goat in an artificial womb. In response, the New York Times ominously titled their article “The Artificial Womb is Born,” which included direct references to Brave New World, even comparing the Japanese lab to the Social Predestination Room, the site where the World State takes full control over lab-created fetuses.

Much like Moreau and Wells were a product of the early eugenics evolutionary debacle, I argue Huxley and Brave New World should be conceptualized in the late eugenics period (1900-1945) so as to best read the eugenics theme with historical nuance. The term “late” is fitting in terms of periodization, for it accurately foreshadows the popular downfall of eugenics after WWII in which the term eugenics was, and still is, automatically linked to the horrific race cleansing atrocities of the Holocaust. The turn of the 20th century, however,

34 Kendall, “Utopian Visions,” 91.
35 Ibid., 96.
37 Kendall, “Utopian Fiction”, 93.
marked the popular explosion of Galton’s eugenics, previously confined to scholarly circles. Galton passed the baton to Charles B. Davenport who, in 1910, founded the Eugenic Record Office in Long Island, established to provide “the basis for eugenics efforts to prevent reproduction of the genetically unfit.” The terms “genetics” and “gene,” only slightly less muddled surrounding Moreau’s conception, were coined a year prior by the Medellin prodigy William Bateson. Michael Sandal rightly qualifies that the American eugenic crusade “was no marginal movement of racists and cranks,” highlighting eugenic sympathies of household names like Theodore Roosevelt and pioneer feminist Margaret Sanger. By the end of the American eugenic movement, “Fitter Family” contests were the mainstage at state fairs and the 1927 Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of sterilization in *Buck v. Bell.*

Across the Atlantic, an elitist group of left-wing intellectuals containing Aldous Huxley, J. B. S. Haldane, Julian Huxley (Aldous’s brother) and Bertrand Russell felt interwar Britain was deteriorating and supported state-run eugenics in hopes of breaking the cycle. Eugenics scholars like Kevles see this consequential group as part of the “Reform Eugenics” movement, a group defined by the grey area between (mostly) rejecting old eugenic doctrines of racial superiority and the widespread acceptance of mandatory IQ testing to rid Britain of the “feebleminded.” Regardless of whether Aldous Huxley fits this classification, he certainly does not emerge unscathed from Bradshaw’s

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39 Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 44.

40 Ibid., 68.

41 Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 173.
research in *Huxley’s Slump*. After touring the unemployment-ridden coal mining slums of Britain, Huxley was convinced that “the country faced a catastrophic collapse of its social and political structures and that a radical overhaul of government had to be effected.” However, Huxley saw the parliamentary system as weak and inefficient, making “prompt and comprehensive action all but impossible.” Aldous and Julian Huxley, in an effort to revitalize Britain, joined the Political and Economic Planning group, a national planning organization aimed at bypassing democratic processes and implementing eugenic reforms. In Aldous’ case, PEP meetings were a time to flirt with ideas of state control, often “sanctioning the bypassing of parliamentary opposition to Soviet-style planning.” One meeting featured Julian Huxley stating: “it is of utmost necessity to plan for quantity of population and for racial improvement,” a position of which Bradshaw believed, “Aldous would have concurred with every word.” Huxley’s role in 1930’s state planning should make readers like Fukuyama think twice about the “dystopian” world government in *Brave New World*. With some scholarly reticence to avoid Fukuyama-esque certainty, Bradshaw suggests that, rather than a “fictional embodiment of supposed loathing of statism and eugenics, *Brave New World* may be seen as a tentative, paradoxical expression of Huxley’s fervent interest in the planned state.”

Haldane’s *Daedalus; or, Science and the Future* (1924) had an immense influence on the late eugenic discourse and *Brave New World*. Haldane, conforming to Kevles “Reform Eugenics” idea, dismissed

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42 Bradshaw, “Huxley’s Slump”, 5  
43 Ibid.  
44 Ibid., 8.  
46 Ibid., 7.
“old eugenics” for its limited application of genetic principles, but as David Kirby qualifies he, like Aldous, “believed strongly in the need for some sort of eugenics program.”47 This program would be centered around direct biological control or a “technological solution to the eugenics problem.”48 Haldane realized that while biological theories such as Darwin and Mendel’s can have alarming effects conceptually, applied biology or the direct control of human genetics would change society far more rapidly.49 In Daedalus this was expressed as the fictional “ectogenesis” or the creation of embryos in artificial conditions. Not so fictional today, the buzzword is now “test tube babies”. Haldane’s acceptance of direct biological control is directly mirrored in Brave New World’s notorious opening scene in the World State hatchery. A group of young children are lead through the state controlled “modern fertilizing process” in which machine packed, temperature controlled rooms are stuffed with ova, egg and sperm.50 After the consideration of “optimum temperature, salinity and viscosity,” state eggs are brought to the decanting room to be checked for abnormalities.51 Clearly, a human controlled process of direct eugenics is present in Huxley’s opening scene, but even Haldane’s term “ectogenesis” found its way into Brave New World when Mustafa Mond, the lead world controller, remarks that direct biological control, like ectogenesis, is a much easier way to control populations when

47 Kirby, “Are We Not Men?”, 96.
48 Ibid., 97.
51 Ibid.
compared to direct force.\footnote{52} Although Haldane is not realized as a scientific influence by the public, it is Huxley’s uniquely haunting depiction of his direct genetic manipulation, first touted in *Daedalus*, that explains the omnipresent dystopian interpretation.

Considering the chilling atmosphere of the government hatchery, many people assume that Huxley was against state-controlled eugenics. Joanne Woiak concurs, stating “many readers of Huxley’s story probably assume that he was wholly critical of eugenics, given the way he presents gamete selection, embryo cloning, and artificial wombs as techniques for eliminating individuality and meaningful personal relationships.”\footnote{53} Fukuyama clearly illustrates this assumption in his decision to place the single mention of ectogenesis in *Brave New World* as the introductory quote to the chapter “Why we should be worried”. This chapter, unsurprisingly, uses brief mentions of the state-run eugenics program in *Brave New World* to bolster his claim that modern society should be tremendously skeptical, in some areas even outright opposed, to any scientific progress in biotechnology.\footnote{54} Bilal Hamamra makes a similar claim, asserting that *Brave New World* depicts a dystopian systematic control of the mind and body through eugenic engineering and biological conditioning.\footnote{55} More specifically, Hamamra argues that Huxley is criticizing biological engineering and eugenics

\footnote{52} Ibid., 50.  
\footnote{53} Woiak, "Designing a Brave New World", 118.  
\footnote{54} Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future*, 84-105.  
“since BNW bears witness to a nightmarish fear of ideology that crushes man’s humanity”\textsuperscript{56}.

While I, and scholars like Bradshaw, agree that \textit{Brave New World} is one of the most daunting literary depictions of biological control to date, Huxley’s lesser-known nonfiction essays complicate this dystopian reading. In a 1927 \textit{Vanity Fair} essay, Huxley asserts that “[w]e know nurture cannot alter nature and that no amount of education will make men virtuous,” and instead, “eugenics will be practiced in order to improve the human breed.”\textsuperscript{57} Noteworthy is his former claim that “we do not believe in equality.”\textsuperscript{58} This “we” is most likely his brother Julian who was likewise frustrated with the “nurture approach,” complaining that “our understanding of controlling human machinery has been limited by being confined to the period after birth,” a period when the “placidity of the organism has been lost.”\textsuperscript{59} Julian therefore wished that if “ectogenesis were possible, we could play all the tricks we liked on the early development of man.”\textsuperscript{60} Similarly, in his short but telling essay “What is Happening to Our Population?”, Aldous resents a decrease in infant mortality due to its unintended consequence of increasing the number of “defective halfwits,” a reality, he fears, that

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
could “impair the potential efficiency of Britain.” 61 Considering this unambiguous support, scholars like Fukuyama and Hamamra should reconsider appealing to Huxley’s supposed scorn of eugenics in order to support their dystopian reading.

Given Huxley’s worrisome support of state control and eugenics, the exact question posed at Wells becomes relevant again: how should the theme of eugenics in Brave New World be read, if not a gleaming paradigm of anti-eugenic argument? Michel Houellebecq ambitiously claims that “BNW is our idea of heaven,” and that both of the Huxleys “believed totally in the kind of society depicted in BNW.” 62 Alongside Brad Congdon, I disagree, for a “close reading of BNW reveals too many sites of satire to simply claim Aldous was endorsing the specific society he depicted.” 63 Woiak claims that the extreme version of eugenics was “obviously being ridiculed,” but also keeps in mind that Huxley was a “known supporter of the eugenics movement.” 64 While there is certainly not one correct answer, I believe a middle ground must be taken somewhere in between Fukuyama’s dystopian reading and Houellebecq’s claim that Huxley supported mass government sanctioned cloning.

This middle ground position must consider the often-overlooked negative portrayal of John the Savage's native homeland Malpais and the parallel between the fictional world controller Mustafa Mond and the real Aldous Huxley. Curtis Carbonell saw Huxley’s


63 Ibid.

64 Woiak, “Designing a Brave New World", 118.
depiction of Malpais as a “damning representation of the indignity of human frailty.” This may show that Huxley, at the time, considered a state that controlled its population's biology as either equal to, or more appealing than, the brutal limits of humanity that played themselves out on the Savage reservation, a place where old age ravages everyone, disease spreads, religious ritual deforms the body, and pain is ubiquitous. Given his support of state control at the time of writing *Brave New World* shown by David Bradshaw, and his avid support of eugenics shown in his nonfiction essays, it is likely Huxley wrote *Brave New World* as a speculative eugenic thought experiment, one in which he embodied Mustafa Mond. Bradshaw claims that not only does Mond “have the most persuasive voice in *BNW*,” but he can be seen “as Huxley’s ideological spokesperson” given Huxley’s aggressive position in the 1930’s planning movement in which his number one goal, like Mond’s, is social stability. This becomes less speculative when one considers that Aldous’s favorite model of social planning was the work of Alfred Mond, the industrialist who in 1926 had amalgamated and rationalized the major British chemical companies.

Further pointing to Huxley’s connection to Mustafa Mond is his essay *A Note on Eugenics*. Given Huxley’s equivocal, sometimes even concerned approach, towards eugenics in this 1927 publication, one could interpret this source as Huxley arguing against eugenics. However, this is not the case, and instead it should be understood parallel to Wells’ depiction of eugenics in *Moreau*: a calculated stipulation regarding how eugenics should be properly carried out. In

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66 Bradshaw, “Huxley’s Slump”, 10

his essay, Huxley proposes a society crafted by Haldane’s ectogenesis, a society in which “every genius will be able to scatter his Maker’s image through the land,” but worries that a society filled with genetically perfect individuals will inevitably fall into “chronic civil war.” Mustafa Mond, as Congdon puts it, is “essentially ventriloquizing Aldous’s point of view” in his identical reservations illustrated in the “Cyprus Experiments”. Mond acts as a vehicle for Huxley to envision this perfect, eugenically designed society, in this case a failed utopian society filled with “Alphas”, the highest cognitive caste created by the World State, which, “within six years, fell into a first class civil war” and “nineteen out of the twenty two thousand died.” Both Huxley and his creation, Mond, seem to agree that a eugenic society must have inferior and superior members with Huxley concluding that a eugenic society “must have its subjects and rulers” and Mond concluding that the optimum society must be modeled after the iceberg: “eight-ninths below the water line, one ninth above.” This is illustrated front and center with the notorious class system consisting of genetically perfect “Alphas” at the top and near-disabled “Epsilons” at the bottom. The connection between Mond and Huxley shows two things: Mustafa Mond should be interpreted as an intellectual

69 Huxley, Brave New World, 223.
70 Ibid.
71 Kendal, “Utopian Visions”, 93.
experiment of Huxley, and that Huxley was not against eugenics, but merely skeptical of a society in which everyone is the genetic 1%.

At first glance, both Moreau and Brave New World seem to depict eugenics as a unilaterally horrifying practice to avoid, may it be Moreau crafting beast-men by the stroke of his scalpel or a World State designing subvariant slaves in a lab. Consequently, a dominant, almost unconscious, assumption has ruled popular culture that both works should be read as dystopias aimed at obliterating eugenics. Using relevant historical and scientific context, this essay complements a uniquely contextually focused area of science fiction scholarship that aims to introduce much needed nuance so as to alter current conversations in the rapidly developing field of biotechnology in which we find ourselves today that, often troublesomely, uses SF dystopia as a broad-brush scare tactic. Looking onwards, it is clear that science fiction’s impact on real science did not end in 1996 with Dolly the Sheep. In 2013, the 1996 New York Times article previously titled “The Artificial Womb is Born”, which compared the creation of Dolly to the horrific Social Predestination Room in Brave New World, was republished under the new title: “The Artificial Womb is Born and the World of the Matrix Begins”. Thus, the media once again superimposed the SF nightmare of widespread human enslavement onto genetic engineering. As science marches on, developing new genetic technology like CRISPR, an ever-cheapening genetic tool which can directly alter the human genome, the impact of eugenic science fiction on real science must be studied more. This crucial task will demand open-minded and historically complex discussions, two features that a one-dimensional dystopian reading will be quick to stifle.
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Forgotten Crime and Cultural Boom: New York and Brazil’s Coffee Trading Relationship in the Early Twentieth Century

Collin Green

Abstract: In the United States of America, coffee and its ever-evolving culture has become a focal point of everyday life. However, we did not just stumble upon this phenomenon; the popularity of coffee was carefully calculated by leaders of the wealthiest coffee companies of the early 20th century in America’s biggest city, New York. In this paper, the history of the powerful coffee trading relationship between Brazil and New York is analyzed on two different levels. Firstly, I examine how New York's big coffee companies successfully participated in criminal activity on an international and national level. Secondly, my focus shifts to how this relationship and its economically motivated major players created a cultural change in New York, demonstrated through newspaper advertisements, business openings, and a lifestyle shift for city dwellers. This paper is separated into three main sections: the early history of Brazil and New York’s coffee trading relationship, the forgotten story of crimes committed by New York’s major coffee companies, and the plan for and execution of a cultural boom. My hope is that these findings will expand the historiography of this topic by shining light on the exciting and untold story of greed, power, and cultural development.

“It is a democratic beverage. Not only is it the drink of fashionable society, but it is also a favorite beverage of the men and women who do the world's work, whether they toil with brain or brawn.
It has been acclaimed ‘the most grateful lubricant known to the human machine,’ and ‘the most delightful taste in all nature.’ In his life’s work, *All About Coffee*, William H. Ukers introduces what has become one of the most predominant and unifying drinks for all of humanity. During the focal point of his career, Ukers spent seventeen years in the early 1900s as an employed researcher exploring and collecting data around the world's coffee producing countries. After seventeen years of exclusively studying coffee, this is the conclusion he drew about the true global impact of the beverage.

In the United States of America, Uker’s statement rings equally true. Coffee has become a focal point in our society and the cultural impact on our nation surrounding the product is unarguably gigantic. However, we did not simply stumble upon this phenomenon; it was carefully calculated by leaders of the most wealthy coffee companies of the early 20th century, spawning from America’s biggest city, New York. Utilizing a powerful trade relationship with Brazil, the leaders of these New York coffee companies inspired a coffee culture in the city that was taken to never-before-seen heights while acquiring large sums of money through a series of mysterious and illegal interactions that are scarcely mentioned by modern historians and researchers. In this paper, the coffee trading relationship between Brazil and New York in the early 20th century is analyzed on two different levels. First, I examine how New York's big coffee companies successfully participated in shady criminal activity on national and international levels, especially with regard to their coffee trading relationship with Brazil. Second, my focus will shift to how this relationship and the economically oriented intentions of its major players created a cultural change in New York,

demonstrated through newspaper advertisements, business openings, and a lifestyle shift for city dwellers.

In past publications, many historians and researchers have studied this trade relationship, specifically focusing their arguments on the key historical events preceding it. Additionally, a greater focus is placed on the Brazilian side of events, as opposed to New York companies, American transactions with Brazil, or the direct impact this relationship had on New York. In “Origins of the World Coffee Economy,” the first chapter of W. G. Clarence Smyth and Steven Topek’s 2003 book *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, Topek argues that “no colonies could compete with Brazil in price nor meet the large new demand in the colonial powers of the United States,” making for a perfect trading relationship. His main points included that colonial independence, an ideal agricultural climate, and slave labor in Brazil started large coffee production in Brazil, while a telegraph cable installed to connect New York and South America alongside the building of large warehouses for storage helped solidify and strengthen the trade relationship.

Taking a similar focus, the article “Institutional Development and Colonial Heritage in Brazil” in a 2012 publication of *The Journal of Economic History* argues that Brazil became the most important coffee producer in the first half of the 20th century due to a shift in labor

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laws and recent technological changes. Authors Joana Naritomi, Rodrigo R. Soares, and Juliano J. Assunção wrote that a rise in coffee prices and the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888 incentivized a transition to labor from European immigrants, and that the expansion of railroads greatly increased coffee production and bettered international relations, implying a connection to one of their most predominant partners, New York City.

For my research, these documents provided sound and accurate arguments that inspired the direction of my studies by providing in-depth background information that could be built upon. My findings expand the existing historiography of this topic by specifically honing in on the New York coffee companies and businesses while focusing on unexpected findings of dishonesty and crime at the corporate level, in addition to ways in which the pursuit of economic success created a cultural change in New York City. Now, before discussing the take-off of the turbulent and fast-moving rocket that was New York and Brazil’s coffee trade relationship, it is important to acknowledge a few key events of orientation.

The Early Stages: New York and Brazil’s Coffee Trading Relationship

As the second half of the 19th century came around, New York City coffee companies solidified their trade relationship with Brazil, causing New York to emerge as the most influential location in

America’s coffee trade. This was achieved through the developments of a telegraph system connecting New York and South America (making information about supply, pricing, and demand readily available), the building of large warehouses for storage (strengthening marketing position of importers), and the creation of the New York Coffee Exchange in 1882 to establish a set of uniform rules and regulations surrounding America’s actions in the coffee trade.

From this point on when Brazilian coffee planters, or *Comisarios*, sold their coffee crops, the vast majority ended up in the hands of importers that traded in the coffee markets of New York. In fact, these New York markets received over 95 percent of all of America’s annual coffee imports. These products would either go through local roasters, dealers, and business people to sell or through larger scale transactions by the ever-growing New York Coffee Exchange, which continued to acquire hundreds of representative houses in the city and abroad paying thousands of dollars to maintain their spots on the committee. Through the solidification and evolution of this trading relationship, New York’s richest coffee companies, Arbuckle Bros. and W. H. Crossman & Bros., attempted to sustain economic prosperity by pushing for increased interaction with Brazil into the early 20th century. Throughout the late 19th century, these two companies were America’s leading direct importers from Brazil by a wide margin. In the year 1894 alone, Arbuckle Bros. imported 688,724

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bags of coffee, followed by W. H. Crossman & Bros. at 355,864. With these key players heavily invested in a relationship with Brazil, the groundwork was laid for a cultural boom in New York.

Come 1906, Brazil experienced an uncharacteristically large coffee crop. This did not bode extremely well for business because the amount of coffee produced would exceed demand and lower prices significantly. In reaction, the presidents of the three large coffee producing states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais created the Treaty of Taubaté, permitting the valorization of coffee in Brazil. The goal of this plan was to raise the prices of its coffee crop by aiding the leading coffee companies abroad, specifically in New York City, in their purchase of a large surplus of coffee to remove it from the market. A seventy-five million dollar loan was distributed by the Brazilian government to accomplish this, exclusively negotiated and overseen by Herman Sielcken, an avid member of the New York Coffee Exchange and full partner of W. H. Crossman and Bros (in 1904, the coffee powerhouse changed its name to Crossman & Sielcken). With such an obscene amount of money single-handedly given to a New York coffee tycoon, one could only wonder, how did the leaders of New York coffee companies strategically create this situation? The answer: they utilized their leverage over Brazil during a period of desperation.


8 Francisco Fernando Ramos, The Valorization of Coffee in Brazil (J.E Buschman, Antwerp, Belgium, 1907).

Throughout the early 20th century, the largest coffee companies of New York participated in patterns of scheming as well as shadowy and illegal activity while utilizing their auspicious relationship with Brazil and positions of economic power to ensure that they were never caught.

**The Forgotten Story: Shadiness in New York’s Major Coffee Companies**

In the past, historians often present the predominant New York coffee companies that traded with Brazil in the early 20th century as merely successful and wealthy. However, the underlying illegality with which they acquired this wealth is left unmentioned. Demonstrated through written accords, articles, and court cases of the time period, it has become evident that large New York coffee companies participated in shady activity in their international interactions with Brazil, product distribution within America, and the manipulation of the general public to maximize profits.

Beginning with a focus on international trade with Brazil, the negotiation process and immediate aftermath of the valorization deal demonstrates a slippery pattern of manipulation and law breaking. Hermann Sielcken utilized Brazil’s difficult economic situation to create an overwhelmingly uneven deal benefiting New York coffee companies. His contract stated that the predominant New York coffee merchants including his company, Crossman & Sielcken, and the nationally renowned Arbuckle Bros., would finance eighty percent of the excess bags of coffee if Brazil significantly lowered their coffee prices by the pound. The government would fund the purchases of the
coffee bought at a price higher than what was agreed upon. Sielcken knew that this request was unrealistic due to the prices the Brazilian coffee planters were selling to their government, and that it would force the Brazilian and American governments to utilize their own money to make up the difference of the cost. This caused the coffee merchants to see extreme profits after selling the coffee in America.

Additionally, the international coffee trade that occurred in the following years after the completion of the valorization deal was placed under investigation for breaking American antitrust laws. The suit was dismissed largely in part due to a note from the Brazilian ambassador to the American Secretary of State stating the case stood as an obstacle to the trading relationship of the two countries. The protection provided by the Brazilian government demonstrates how New York’s biggest coffee merchants created an agreement that not only permitted great financial benefits, but also resulted in a protection net that allowed them to more easily circumvent the American legal system.

In the United States of America, New York’s large coffee companies followed a similar pattern with their other business partners. Well-known American coffee merchants were often accused of various crimes due to their distribution and selling of Brazilian coffee to American companies throughout the early 20th century. Before and after the integration of the valorization deal, Crossman & Sielcken was part of two high profile cases. The first case, taking place in 1903, was an accusation of an alteration of coffee from Rio de Janeiro. The


opposing firm claimed that the beans they received were “adulterated for the purpose of fraud and deception.” The coffee beans were said to be artificially colored to hide the poor quality of the product. However, because the buyer was a resident of Maryland, the alteration to the coffee had no dangerous or poisonous substance involved, and that in some parts of the country this product was a recognized and desirable article of commerce, no charges landed.

The second case was a lawsuit that took place in 1919. A company stated that they lost 932,000 dollars on Brazilian valorization coffee sold by Crossman & Sielcken. The company claimed that the product was sold at an artificially enhanced price and that Crossman & Sielcken hid information that the coffee price would significantly drop before the buying company would be able to resell it. When the transaction was complete, Crossman & Sielcken collected over three million dollars for the coffee. Despite the sums of money involved, no great efforts were made after the initial suit and no charges landed.

If either accusation were true, this would mean that Crossman & Sielcken were making large profits from selling Brazilian coffee at a dishonestly high price to American companies over the span of more than a decade. Even more amazingly, on the national and international levels, the main players of the New York coffee industry were able to utilize the benefits of their trading relationship with Brazil to obtain legal protection, an endless supply of cheap products, and a generally unscratched historical reputation. Although impressive, nothing comes

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close to the level of vastness or permanence of the final money-making scheme conducted by New York's coffee companies with the help of their partners in Brazil: the creation of a coffee advertising and propaganda plan that instilled a permanent cultural change in New York City.

**The Cultural Boom: A Plan of Propaganda and its Execution**

On March 4th, 1918, a negotiation was made in New York City between the leaders of New York’s large coffee companies and Brazil’s coffee planters, businessmen, and societies. The pact stated that over the following four years, America and Brazil would collaborate on a publicity campaign worth over one million dollars to spread coffee advertisements throughout America and continue to increase profits for both parties. Implementation of the plan included “the encouragement of coffee drinking as a substitute for alcoholic drinking, the instruction of Americans in the use of coffee as a flavor, the introduction of coffee hour in factories, and the opening of coffee houses.” To seal the deal, Louis R. Gray, the Arbuckle Bros. representative for Brazil, was positioned as head salesman of the operation to ensure things went smoothly. The selection of an Arbuckle representative as the main communicator of this deal hammers home the fact that economic success was the sole motive of the campaign.

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The Arbuckle Bros., so predominant throughout America that the phrase “Arbuckles” was used synonymously with “a cup of coffee,” made sure to use their power to position themselves at the forefront of the advertisement deal so as to reap as many of the benefits as possible. As New York’s other competitive coffee companies followed suit, the cultural boom began. Documented through newspaper articles and advertisements, coffee house openings, and accords of New York residents developing coffee-influenced changes in their lives during the early 20th century, New York’s large coffee companies utilized their economic motivations to create a collaboration with Brazil and spawn a cultural boom in New York.

The development of New York City’s coffee culture was demonstrated widely throughout newspaper advertisements. A full-page coffee advertisement in the New York Times titled “From strange people in far away lands to the world’s greatest coffee warehouses,” published in 1919, advertised Yuban Coffee by the Arbuckle Brothers. In it, the company tracked the process of coffee coming “from the vast expanses of tropical Brazil” and its journey to Brooklyn and safe arrival at the Arbuckle Brothers’ warehouses. After showcasing the process, they confidently referred to themselves as “the world's greatest coffee merchants.” The diverse strategies of advertising covered in this article demonstrate the many sales opportunities and benefits that collaborating with Brazil brought to the table. By utilizing the exotic and adventurous appeal of Brazil as a location while articulating the


17 “From strange people in far away lands to the world’s greatest coffee warehouses,” New York Times (New York), November 30, 1919.
great quality of their product, this commercial presented the coffee as enticing and desirable.

The last paragraph of the advertisement states that “New York’s most critical coffee lovers instantly recognize its distinct quality.” More than anything, this phrase demonstrates how the advertisement campaign created a cultural boom in New York. Arbuckle Bros. would not include this in the advertisement if they did not believe the statement would effectively assist in selling their product. This means that at the time, there was a large population in New York who considered themselves coffee connoisseurs, specialists, or hobbyists who cared enough about coffee to notice the differences in taste and quality. In order for a population of people to develop into coffee specialists, that group of people would need places to drink, discuss, and experience the coffee. This is where the coffee shops came into play.

The opening of many Brazilian coffee houses throughout New York assisted in the cultural change and permanence of coffee culture in the city after the installation of the advertisement plan. These businesses served specialized Brazilian drinks, such as the northern Brazilian tea Maté, and provided a great location for the large New York coffee companies and merchants to sell their coffee throughout the city. More importantly, these shops provided locations where people could congregate and organically continue to instill the coffee culture of the city through conversation and shared experience. As years passed and the advertising plan continued to develop, the popularity of

\[\text{18} \quad \text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{19} \quad \text{“Here’s a new Rival of Afternoon Tea,” New York Times (New York), January 4, 1920.}\]
Brazilian coffee houses continued to grow. Two articles from the *New York Times*, one published in 1920 and the other in 1921, display the success and appeal of Brazilian coffee in New York.

An article from 1920, titled “Here’s a New Rival of Afternoon Tea,” advertises a business called “Brazilian Coffee House” on 108 West Forty-Fourth Street. A year after this publication, a second piece was released. This article, “Alter Coffee House Name,” described a coffee house on 114 West Forty-Fourth Street, just down the street from the previously mentioned advertisement, originally named “Brazilian Coffee House.” This coffee house was in a legal battle over the name with another restaurant down the street claiming ownership to it. Over the course of one year, three separate businesses on the same street identified Brazilian coffee as their selling point. Additionally, these companies were popular enough to have articles written about them in the newspaper and the appeal for Brazilian coffee was high enough for legal action to be taken. If there was no appeal for Brazilian coffee in New York, the name would have been significantly less sought after. This combination of media attention and the competitive nature of acquiring the “Brazilian Coffee House” name shows the true impact that the advertising plan of two years prior had on the city. Through the combination of newspaper representation and the opening of coffee houses, New York and Brazil’s coffee tycoons created an environment

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21 “Alter Coffee House Name: Roosevelt and Robinson Give up ‘Brazilian’ Title Claimed by Another,” *New York Times*, Feb 02, 1921.
that provided the resources and spaces for the people of the city to develop an irreversible cultural shift.

**Concluding Remarks**

The story of New York and Brazil’s coffee trading relationship in the early 20th century is one of economic desire, desperation, power, and significant impact. Through the ruthless and economically savvy strategies of New York’s largest coffee companies, big businessmen were able to utilize their relationship with their Brazilian counterparts to acquire great sums of money while evading legal repercussions or historical villainization. As a result of this mindset revolving around money and power, a collaborative effort between the coffee tycoons of New York and Brazil created an advertisement plan in New York that changed the New York coffee culture forever by increasing media attention and providing coffee shops for people to develop specialization, interest in, and community over coffee.


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Making Patriots of Pupils: Colonial Education in Micronesia from 1944-1980

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Abstract: This article explores American colonial education in Micronesia from the final months of World War Two to the late 1970s. The primary research question concerns American usage of education to pursue political and military goals, and how this affected multiple dimensions of Indigenous life. Although the dominant narrative at the time blamed Indigenous people for difficulties in implementing American education, the Western values permeating the American consciousness significantly inhibited the possibility of success as Americans defined it. This article details American motivations and efforts to implement an educational system as part of a larger goal of “economic development” and analyzes the effects that this imposition had on Indigenous populations, particularly in consideration of the fact that the creation of “Americanized” Micronesians and a cooperative political unit in the Pacific were highly desirable for American strategic interests. Indigenous adoption of American education demonstrated that they were active participants in this process, though, and adoption of foreign institutions secured avenues of advancement for many Micronesians. This ability to use education for their own means ultimately became a centerpiece of both cultural and political independence movements. The number of concerned parties and players coupled with the realities of globalization and peripheralization make this story complex, if not paradoxical, at times. As a result, the role of education in the region is still contested today and the various effects that it had on Indigenous peoples make it a living remnant of the colonial past.
Education, a cornerstone of the Western tradition, has impacted all who will read this paper. A crucial part of the Enlightenment, it has been hailed as the key to civilizational progress as well as individual advancement. Linked to the lofty ideals of liberal democracy, it boasts the ability to create a populace capable of thinking critically and using its skills towards a teleological end of society. With such moral underpinnings, it is no surprise that education has been adopted as one of the tools of imperialism when a colonial power sees a population in need of “advancement.” Injudicious implementations of education, though, have disrupted Indigenous lifestyles through ostensible goals of “development.” The research exploring cross-cultural contact during colonization is extensive, but I will investigate the specific ways that education was used as an extension of the American empire in Micronesia during the second half of the twentieth century.

I incorporate many of historian David Hanlon’s ideas regarding “development” in Micronesia to my analysis, as he has made a convincing argument that economic development was a means to justify American involvement in Micronesia whilst maintaining a national identity as a benevolent caretaker and beacon of democracy. I situate myself beside Hanlon’s work by arguing that education was an important component of “economic development” and was used to achieve strategic American political goals. I have also incorporated the extensive body of work of Francis Hezel, a Jesuit priest and historian,

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2 Hanlon, Remaking Micronesia, 34.
that describes Micronesian responses to American education. However, I also use educator-historian David Kupferman’s contributions, which argue that the American definition of education was fundamentally different to that of the Micronesians’, to push against what can be seen as Eurocentric themes that run through Hezel’s work. I employ a postcolonial method of analysis to a variety of primary sources to investigate the political, social, and cultural dimensions of American intervention and ultimately argue that, through education, “economic development” necessitated fundamental changes to Micronesian ideas and ways of life.

The scope of this project is limited temporally from the mid-1940s to the late 1970s, when American planners and administrators had the greatest control over education in Micronesia. I have elected to not use the dates when Free Association Contracts or Commonwealth Unions were established as end dates because, as many Micronesians and Pacific Islanders have argued, these agreements have not ended dependence on the United States. Rather, I will conclude the bulk of my analysis during the time when Micronesians were becoming conscious of the role that education had in their growing independence movements. This is not to say that the impact of education concludes with the close of the century, as education has produced a significant


5 Hanlon, Remaking Micronesia, 226.
restructuring of Micronesian values and identities that are still grappled with today.

**An Encounter Based in Difference**

Micronesians and Americans had very different value systems that informed the economies they established, the cultures they had, and the identities they held. These differences would become clear when the two parties collided and an unequal distribution of power gave the administrators from the United States the leverage to manipulate Micronesian value systems in order to achieve their own goals.

The American value system was influenced significantly by Western capitalism; David Hanlon argued that American culture and politics were based in values created by capitalist economics. Informed by Hegelian ideas of a teleological human history that ultimately concludes with the triumph of capitalism, Americans adopted the view that progress was inextricably linked to a market economy. As the cultural foundation to the Western tradition, capitalism prescribed liberal democracy, which valued private property and individual rights, as the only proper form of government. This marriage between liberal democracy, capitalism, and progress led Americans to believe they were responsible for advancing less “developed” societies by spreading democracy and capitalism. Ultimately, Americans came to Micronesia with teleological notions of progress and assumed that their political and economic systems must be imposed upon other societies in the

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name of “progress.” Thus, concepts of “development” necessitated distinct changes to Micronesians’ lifestyles and ideas.

The Micronesian value system was informed by a much different history than that of the Americans. While Micronesians were incredibly diverse and each island varied in their specific traditions and beliefs, they shared common ideas and values because of the interconnected nature of their islands. Especially important to consider is their emphasis on the community over the individual and the value of collective harmony. Micronesians had what Western economists would call a subsistence economy, one which resembled the agrarian societies of Europe before the Industrial Revolution. They did not hold teleological views of history with explicit links between production and progress. Furthermore, their notions of political concepts were centered in small communities and did not employ Western definitions like “sovereignty,” “self-determination,” or “democracy.”

**American Strategic and Political Motivations**

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It is worth prefacing a discussion of the colonial institution of education with the strategic and political interests that the United States had regarding Micronesia. At the end of World War Two, President Harry Truman asserted that the Navy’s control over the islands was necessary to ensure a buffer between American military bases in the Pacific and Japan.\textsuperscript{13} Later, in line with the containment rhetoric of the Cold War, Micronesia was seen as a potential sphere of influence to spread democracy and protect against the expansion of communism from the Soviet Union and China.\textsuperscript{14} Additionally, it was valuable as a space for nuclear testing given its status as a political periphery, its remoteness, and its sparse population.\textsuperscript{15}

In order to protect these interests, the United States needed to justify its presence in Micronesia through “development” and the establishment of Micronesian governments. This would legitimize their dealings in the area and prevent international condemnation for actions that contradicted the anti-colonialism that it claimed to stand for. The Solomon Report, created by the United States government in 1962, revealed these political and strategic goals by identifying “the movement of Micronesians into a permanent political relationship with the United States as the ultimate objective of all American effort and

\textsuperscript{13} Bogan, “Government of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands,” 170; Hanlon, \textit{Remaking Micronesia}, 34.


initiative in the Trust Territory.” These efforts included political, economic, and social “development” that would encourage a permanent association with the United States. By ensuring that Micronesians had an ostensibly free and “self-determined” political unit, Americans could reconcile their identification as a force for democracy and freedom with their strategic and political interests.

**Justification of “Economic Development”**

When American troops landed on Micronesian islands in 1944, they found populations ravaged by aerial bombings and the shortages of war. A handbook for teachers in Micronesia from 1955 described this as “the dark ages for Micronesia,” where “the natives lived in abject misery and fear” until the arrival of American forces. A memo passed in 1944 instructed the Navy to return the islands to “their normal degrees of self-sufficiency” by distributing food and supplies, increasing sanitation, and instituting schools and municipal governmental bodies. Navy officers and anthropologists as early as 1948 acknowledged that a capitalist economy would not be successful in Micronesia due to the islands’ isolation, climate, lack of natural


resources, and Indigenous attitudes towards creating a market economy.\textsuperscript{20} Rather than question their own worldview, though, Americans elected to pursue an initiative of “economic development” that would remake Micronesian society into one conducive to capitalism. Unable to square their preconceptions with the realities on the islands, Americans began to fundamentally restructure the Indigenous value systems that had served them for so many years.

This transformation was engineered to preserve the Americans’ identity as a global force for good. “Development” was a benign term that accentuated humanitarian motivations rather than the political and strategic goals that necessitated American presence in the region. This was further bolstered by early claims that self-sufficiency and self-determination were the chief goals of development.\textsuperscript{21} The United Nation Trusteeship Council, created in 1946 and composed of several colonial powers to manage decolonization, approved the Strategic Territorial Trust Agreement in 1947. Under it, the islands became the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands with the U.S. Navy, and later the Department of the Interior, as the administrative power.\textsuperscript{22} The agreement, which tasked the Americans with developing the Micronesian islands, legitimized the American presence and granted

\textsuperscript{20} Hanlon, \textit{Remaking Micronesia}, 15, 38.


\textsuperscript{22} Hezel, \textit{Strangers in Their Own Land}, 284.
them considerable power to define “development.” Micronesian culture was blamed for the challenges that the Americans faced in establishing a capitalist economy, implying they had to be fundamentally changed in order to “progress.”23 As the Trust Territory administrator, though, the United States faced pressure from the United Nations to guarantee self-determination and freedom for the Micronesians. With their strategic concerns still at the forefront, American officials turned to education to create a population that had ostensible political sovereignty yet would still serve American interests.

**Education as Economic Development**

As a form of economic development, the administrators of the Trust Territory used education to guarantee a favorable view of the United States, promote democratic ideals and self-government, and to foster a pan-Micronesian identity and political unification. “Development,” including the institution of schools, sought to prove to the international community and to Micronesians that the United States should remain in the region as an administrative body.

American education intentionally familiarized Micronesians with American ways of life and encouraged them to respect United States citizens. A 1945 directive from the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Ocean Area stated explicitly that the schools were intended to “inculcate respect for and loyalty to the United States by teaching the history, customs, and beliefs of the United States and its people.”24 The


Solomon Report reaffirmed this idea in the 1960s, stating that “Washington should facilitate the general development of Micronesian interest in, and loyalties to, the United States by various actions, [including] introduction in the school system of United States oriented curriculum changes and patriotic rituals.” The report acknowledged education’s cultural influence, stating that “schools, more than any other public institution and agency, [are] the vanguard of a deliberate program of cultural change.”

The use of American curriculum further promoted familiarity with American culture and transformed America’s image from that of a colonizer to an integral part of Micronesian life. This was exacerbated by a general lack of funds that prevented a more “island-oriented” curriculum, resulting in the frequent use of second-hand American textbooks. Establishing friendships with Americans themselves was also encouraged by the schools. An article from *Micronesian Monthly* detailed how Micronesian students received Christmas gift boxes from American students. The recipients were encouraged to correspond with the pupils who packed the boxes so that, “a real live acquaintanceship among children of the United States and the Trust Territory [would be] generated.” The schools thus served as

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25 Solomon Report, 54.

26 Solomon Report, 131.

27 Lawrence, “Handbook for Teachers in Micronesia,” 147.


29 “Red Cross Gift Boxes are Received,” *Micronesian Monthly*, September 1952, accessed February 4, 2021, [link](http://www.pacificdigitallibrary.org/cgi-bin/pdl?e=d-000off-pdl--00-2--0--010---4-------0-1l--10en-50---20-text---00-).
a method of inculcating affection in the Micronesian students for both American ideas and Americans themselves.

The secondary goal of American-sponsored education was for Micronesians to learn democratic ideals and eventually transition to self-government. A majority of educational initiatives put into place followed the theme of pursuing economic development by imposing democracy through the schools and encouraging self-government. A case in point is a yearbook from an intermediate school in Palau from 1955. It contains the school’s student council, complete with a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, whose purpose was to familiarize students with democratic proceedings at a young age. The schools also sought to produce politically interested, individualistic citizens well-suited to a liberal democracy. A handbook for Micronesian teachers from 1955 enumerated “Citizenship Responsibilities” for the students, insisting that they understand their history, the values of citizenship, and the concept of nationhood.

High Commissioner Nuck of the Trust Territory emphasized the link between education, self-government, and economic self-sufficiency when he spoke at the dedication of PICS in 1959. After a


31 Ninth Grade of Palau Islands Intermediate School, The Endless Horizon (Koror, Palau: Graduating Class of 1955), Pacific Digital Library.

barrage of patriotic references to the likes of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln, he told the students, “You people well may wonder why Americans consider education to be so important to Micronesians. The answer is very simple. If there is to be government by the Micronesians, then Micronesians must be well enough educated to govern.”

Francis Hezel, speaking from his experience as an educator in the region, attested that one of the roles of the schools was to provide a “mental enlightenment that will enable future voters to understand a democratic government and to make wise and constructive choices in the future.” Just who this government would be constructive for, though, remains a subject of debate.

There was a concerted effort on behalf of the Trust Territory government to consolidate Micronesia into a single political unit and to produce what I have dubbed a “pan-Micronesian identity.” This identity, though, contradicted the findings of ethnographers and anthropologists who had already informed the Trust government that the islands were diverse and differed culturally and ethnically. The Solomon Report, recognizing this reality, identified the need to build a national conscience. Emphasizing how the districts were divided by distance, culture, and language, the report stated: “The Mission found little consciousness among the people of the Trust Territory of


34 Hezel, “In Search of a Home: Colonial Education in Micronesia.”

themselves as ‘Micronesians’ and no emotional nationalistic feelings. There are no traditions of unity but rather a history of individual island cultures.”

This pan-Micronesian identity was to be developed through the schools, leading American planners to interpret the minimization of differences between islanders as a sign of progress. One of the earliest examples of schools functioning as a vehicle towards a pan-Micronesian identity is found in an account from Cy Pickerill, principal of PICS in the 1950s. In an article from *Micronesian Monthly*, she said that in the early days of the school, fights between the children were often along island or district lines. Over time, though, the schools created more harmony and cohesion: “Gradually PICS has come to be the primary ‘melting pot’ of the Trust Territory, and today it is not uncommon for a fellow's best friend — girl or boy — to be from a district far from his own home island. No longer do students engage in fist fights on an island basis.” The 1955 handbook for teachers in Micronesia revealed how a pan-Micronesian identity was also encouraged through curriculum. Teachers were instructed to emphasize the following to students:

1. The districts have a common background and common interests.

36 Solomon Report, 15.

2. There is great importance and value in the similarities between the districts.

3. There should always be understanding, unity, and harmonious relationships between the islands and the districts.

This harmony and “melting pot” metaphor may be attractive with the modern tendency to celebrate multiculturalism, but one must be critical of how these changes were imposed on the Micronesians and perversely fed into Western preconceptions about Oceania that artificially grouped Indigenous populations together despite their differences. Further, the education system ensured that this “melting pot” came together under American auspices and students had to bond over a shared knowledge of American culture and the English language. Thus, this blending of cultures was not a celebration of individuality, but a means to eliminate difference in order to produce more Americanized students.

The use of boarding schools underscored this initiative of assimilation, as they removed students from their Indigenous settings and brought them into one controlled by American administrators. The Solomon Report identified boarding schools as particularly effective at encouraging a pan-Micronesian identity, saying, “a valuable service


performed by the Pacific Island Central School and by Xavier High School at Truk is to bring together intelligent Micronesians from all districts where the only common language is English and where students can learn about the rest of Micronesia.”

**Why Micronesians Adopted American Education**

It is necessary to explore why Micronesians accepted American schools and other forms of economic development. A sweeping generalization of Indigenous acceptance implies a superiority of Western ways and fails to acknowledge that Micronesians had legitimate reasons to adopt foreign institutions. Beyond the lack of basic commodities in Micronesia following the war, American military and economic advantages allowed them to impose their own constructs of power onto the islands. As a result, Americans had the power to define success as well as control avenues of advancement through education and employment.

As mentioned before, the Micronesians were in a desperate state when the Americans arrived. Shortly after their arrival, the majority of Micronesian chiefs determined that, as it would benefit their people, they would accept an expansion of aid. The motive for accepting these initiatives of “economic development” was the acquisition of commodities, a recurring theme evidenced by Indigenous affinities for American consumer goods.⁴² Although some Micronesians

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⁴¹ Solomon Report, 48-49.

were skeptical of American intentions, the majority accepted Western aid, including schools, of their own volition. ‘

A Micronesian student at PICS in 1959, Bermin Weilbacher, demonstrated the enthusiasm that students had for adopting education and his sense of privilege at being granted a place at the schools. He described visiting the campus: “I felt more than ecstasy… Now that I'm in the position of my long-dreamed wish, I feel proud. I believe PICS has the most beautiful set of buildings ever erected in the whole Trust Territory. This gives me a clear idea of how improtant [sic] education is.”’ A genuine desire for education, echoed by many other Indigenous students, is not necessarily surprising when one considers that it was essentially a prerequisite for success in the economic and political system that the Americans imposed.


http://www.pacificdigitallibrary.org/cgi-bin/pdl?e=d-000off-pdl--00-2--0--010---4--------0-1l--10en-50---20-text---00-3-1-00bySR-0-0-000utfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL1.7&d=HASH018f9bcb9f042688015b6e58.28. See also Anibar Timothy, “What I Think of PICS,” Micronesian Monthly, December 1959, accessed February 4, 2021, http://www.pacificdigitallibrary.org/cgi-bin/pdl?e=d-000off-pdl--00-2--0--010---4--------0-1l--10en-50---2 0-text---00-3-1-00bySR-0-0-000utfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL1.7&d=HASH018f9bcb9f042688015b6e58.29, and See also Katharine Kesolei, “My Arrival at the New PICS,” Micronesian Monthly, December 1959, Accessed March 8, 2021, http://www.pacificdigitallibrary.org/cgi-bin/pdl?e=d-000off-pdl--00-2--0--010---4--------0-1l--10en-5 0---20- text---00-3-1-00bySR-0-0-000utfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL1.7&d=HASH018f9bcb9f042688015b6e58.17.
Americans controlled Micronesian advancement by giving the highest-paying government jobs to those who were educated and spoke English. The Trust Territory of the Pacific government was the largest employer as early as 1949 and, as they provided American currency, government positions were highly desirable. Furthermore, just as many Americans do today, Micronesians saw education as a way to avoid a life of hard labor. In order to reap the material benefits from education, though, the Micronesians had to enter an American-dominated school system.

Americans used language to control avenues of social, economic, and political advancement. As the Trust Territory was more likely to hire English-speakers in roles that would boost their political and economic status, Micronesians had reason to adopt the language and advocate for more English instruction. A belief that “Indigenous tongues” were inadequate in the modern world resulted in “development” being defined as the degree of English acquisition; thus English became the primary language of instruction. Interestingly, it was advocated for by Micronesians themselves. Pacific historian Karen Peacock wrote, “Proponents of the new emphasis [on English instruction] could point to much support from Micronesians who had for years been clamoring for increased English in the classrooms. To

45 Hanlon, Remaking Micronesia, 58.


Micronesians, English and further education meant the chance for government jobs and a secure future for their children.”

A fitting metaphor for English acquisition as a prerequisite to personal advancement comes from the 1955 Handbook for Micronesian teachers. One of the lesson plans instructed the teacher: “sometimes when the pupils are playing various outdoor games, have them try to use English rather than their own language... If the teacher hears a pupil using the native language, he is put out of the game.” The same could be said for Micronesians who were put into the professional business sector or the political arena. Those who refused to adopt democratic, Americanized ideals and the English language were effectively “put out of the game” and would likely never be hired to positions of power. Even those who would later speak out about American colonial tendencies and advocate for autonomy were products of American and Western educational institutions.

**Education’s Effects on Indigenous Epistemologies and Culture**

The adoption of American education and resulting Westernization unarguably changed Indigenous epistemologies and cultures. These changes, particularly in the ways that they produced an “Americanized” younger generation that was more critical of traditional ways, fed into a contentious generational divide. The differing opinions about how Micronesia ought to be developed, varying across age groups and educational backgrounds, were a

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49 Lawrence, “Handbook for Teachers in Micronesia,” 739.
reflection of how the school system produced different ways of thinking and of conceptualizing Micronesian identity.

Micronesian educational systems and epistemologies did not resemble those of the Americans, with Francis Hezel going as far to describe colonial education as “alien” to traditional values.  

David Kupferman also agreed that Western schooling was “a fairly recent phenomenon… and is therefore not a concept that is indigenous to the islands nor necessarily compatible with island contexts.”  

A report on Indigenous life in Palau stated that wisdom was passed down orally, through chants and songs, and in the mastery of skills.  

The education was gender-based; typical skills for boys were fishing, wood carving, or building canoes, and girls were educated in raising children, taro gardening, and handcrafts. Furthermore, education took place in the home with the primary educators being the child’s parents and maternal uncle.  

These methods of education, although didactic in nature and tailored to Micronesian life, were not recognized as true education by the Americans.  

David Kupferman argued that Americans assumed that Micronesians lacked education because they did not have formal

50 Hezel, “In Search of a Home: Colonial Education in Micronesia.”

51 Kupferman, Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific, 3.


53 De Jong, “Palauan House,” 144.

schools. This was a product of preconceptions that education “is somehow an ontological experience that is universal, essentializable, and coincidentally American. In other words, the proper way, and indeed the only way, to ‘educate’ Micronesians is by employing American... schooling habits and practices.” He continued to argue that this narrow definition foreclosed any alternative methods of education, including incorporation of pre-existing Indigenous methods that arose from an island context. Schools were seen as the only method of education, undermining Indigenous concepts of knowledge and education. Kupferman’s analysis seriously calls into question if even the most “island-oriented” schools could capture Indigenous epistemologies because, by definition, they reflected the Western tradition and Western epistemologies. Furthermore, efforts to objectively measure intelligence of Micronesian students revealed a troubling theme wherein American control over education led to an imposition of their definitions of knowledge, education, and intelligence as objective realities.

Kupferman’s work reveals a disagreement within the existing historiography of this topic. Challenging Francis Hezel, who continues to be a dominating force in the literature of Micronesian education, he argued that a faith in American education for modernization is problematic because it “betrays a teleological faith in western

55 Kupferman, Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific, 3.

56 Kupferman, Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific, 4-6.

developmental models.” He criticized Hezel’s analysis which partially excused the actions of the American administration by suggesting that the schools “liberated the minds” of the Micronesians. On Hezel’s end, he was able to imply that the normalization of Western schooling was objectively good due to its “modernizing” nature and the fact that Micronesians advocated for its expansion. A different perspective, though, is that this desire for American education was a result of American impositions of new power structures, not an objective superiority of American education. Kupferman, likely drawing influence from Hanlon’s arguments in “Beyond ‘the English Method of Tattooing’,” implied that an expansion of the definition of education itself reveals that Micronesians indeed had their own educational system: one which was better suited to their cultural context and produced individuals who were educated in their own right.

Adoption of American education also affected Micronesian culture. An article on education and cultural change in Micronesia reported that Micronesian children’s tastes in food, drink, and entertainment fell more in line with international trends than traditional choices. It attributed these changes to American-oriented curriculum, English instruction in schools, and “a shift away from traditional family-based cultural education to a more formal school-based

58 Kupferman, *Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific*, 5.

59 Kupferman, “Power and Pantaloons: The Case of Lee Boo and the Normalizing of the Student in Micronesia,” 55.

model.”

It also mentioned the role that American teachers had in spreading American culture to Micronesian students. Perhaps the Westerners working in Micronesia were not individually at fault, as many were Peace Corps volunteers with pure intentions, but their presence in the schools led students to identify less with their Indigenous cultures and more with the near-omnipresence of American culture.

An article entitled “Self Reliance School” revealed a generational divide that resulted from these cultural and epistemological changes. The Modekngei elders, an Indigenous Palauan cultural and religious group, were creating a school to address what they saw as the concerning “disintegration” of traditional Palauan culture. They described a “familiar litany of disturbing trends among young Palauans — lack of respect for Palauan customs, loss of traditional knowledge, loss of personal identity, and growing problems of drinking and delinquency.” Reflecting frustrations with American schooling’s individualistic nature, the school was to serve the whole community and resemble a traditional Palauan village so as to foster cultural and communal identification for all generations. Furthermore, Palau would be the primary language of instruction, echoing another

63 “A Truly Micronesian School: The Palauan Modekngei Learning Center.” Friends of Micronesia, Fall 1974, accessed January 15, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2014008.afc2014008_ms1107/?sp=72&r=0.015,0.126,0.506,0.354,0.
64“A Truly Micronesian School: The Palauan Modekngei Learning Center.”
frustration with how students returned from school with a greater appreciation for English than their Indigenous language.

The Solomon Report of 1962 showed that accelerated cultural change through the schools was intentional at the administrative level: “[the schools] will help to break down traditional patterns of behavior which inhibit raising living standards… will reduce the parochial attitudes now prevalent within each district and will increase dependence on a common culture based around the English language and modern ways.” 65 Francis Hezel, in his article, “Who Shall Own the Schools,” excused this deliberate socialization by implying the superiority of Western ways: “If the school is intended to subvert certain traditional aspects of the society, it is only because these are seen as retarding economic and social development. The school is the incubator of new attitudes and values, among them a taste for material progress and the blessings it confers.” 66 Thus, Hezel interpreted the generational tensions as proof of the “primitive” nature of Indigenous Micronesian culture.

How Education was Used to Express Indigenous Agency

Although Americans did grant access to means of advancement, they only did so after restructuring Micronesian life and definitions of success in a way that made Indigenous lifestyles less valued. Many Micronesians went through the education system enthusiastically, though, and used it to advance as individuals,

65 Solomon Report, 48.

recognize the faults of “economic development,” demand more political autonomy, and even realize the ways that education itself had reshaped Micronesian identities and ways of life. It is important to recognize this as a form of Indigenous agency even if the system they were working within was dominated by a foreign power. Although Francis Hezel’s work can be criticized for Eurocentrism and even white saviorism, I incorporate his ideas to show that American education did allow Micronesians to adopt the social, intellectual, and political tools necessary to challenge colonial power structures as well as to assert new identities on their own terms.

As early as 1952 it was evident that American education had become a means of personal advancement for Micronesians. An article from *Micronesian Monthly* wrote, “The first Ulithi student, Ramon by name, has departed from Yap to PICS to ‘pick up a leattle [sic] English’… We hope to see him as the first Ulithi doctor.” This hope for the schools to produce individuals with higher standing in their society was confirmed by Francis Hezel, who wrote that the schools “supplied a small stream of men and women equipped to take over the first government positions. These young Micronesians would in time become the ruling elite in the islands.” High-ranking jobs in education, politics, and health were becoming more available to those who had


received a Western education, thus making the schools a conduit to political power.  

The newsletter *Friends of Micronesia* released a series of articles in 1973 which showed that education gave the new Micronesian political elite the tools to express political dissent. Invoking democratic ideals and notions of self-determination, they called for greater political autonomy; for example, Carl Heine used his college education from San Diego to become a prominent political figure as well as the first published Marshallese author. The article, “US Censors Political Ed.,” detailed how he had been actively calling for more political education for Micronesians and challenging the educational plans coming from Washington. Furthermore, his book criticized the Trusteeship under the United States and questioned Micronesia’s political future. This challenge to American dominance when planning the future of Micronesia can be attributed to his access to education.


73 Heine, *Micronesia at the Crossroads: A Reappraisal of the Micronesian Political Dilemma*. 
John Mangefel, the first man from Yap to earn a college degree, was also part of the first wave of educated political elites. He was a member of the Congress of Micronesia, the Governor of Yap, and later a senator in the Trust Territory government, using his positions to argue that colonialism had stripped Micronesians of their political sovereignty. Also part of the educated elite was Senator Roman Tmetuchl, who demonstrated an understanding that education had a key role in Micronesian independence movements. Speaking to Indigenous high school students in the early 1970s, he encouraged independence and self-rule by saying, “God did not create us to be under some other people… In this world you have to struggle to survive and unless we fight we will be overwhelmed by selfish foreigners… Now is the time to rule ourselves and to have our own identity.”

Beyond their frustrations with American administration, Micronesians used the powers conferred by education to assert a new pan-Micronesian identity. In Micronesia, this identity was encouraged by some Indigenous politicians as part of an effort to ensure more economic self-sufficiency and freedom from political dependence. Sasauro Haruo from Chuuk believed that, even though Micronesia had

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74 “Who Do You Trust?,” Friends of Micronesia, Fall 1974, accessed February 4, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2014008.afc2014008_ms1107/?sp=6&r=0.225,-0.067,0.679,0.478,0.


been artificially constructed, the people had a real sense of unity that could serve them in their efforts to become independent from the United States. Unlike the pan-Micronesian identity that the schools enforced, this identity was created by Micronesians and meant to serve their own purposes.

Similarly, Micronesians used education’s benefits to protect their own cultures within the Westernized reality constructed in the Pacific. For example, English transcriptions were used to preserve pictorial engravings and Indigenous legends from a building in Palau. Another example exists in the creation of the Palau Modekngei Learning Center in 1973. Recognizing the shortcomings of the American education system, particularly how it produced graduates that were not keen to do labor or remain in the islands, Micronesians began to wrest control back from the Americans in the educational realm. With a fundamental theme of self-reliance, the school aimed to “reinforce and transmit native culture while also preparing students for useful lives in a rapidly changing society that has taken a place in the global community.” Its repeated calls for self-sufficiency and independence, rhetoric adopted from American education, imply a


growing understanding of how American education had manipulated Indigenous culture, epistemologies, and ways of life."

Schools would slowly come to be run almost completely by Micronesians, as it was planned by the Solomon Report to withdraw American teachers and administrators once the Indigenous were “properly equipped” to educate the next generation. The Micronesians would go on to struggle with the same questions that the American educational planners did, such as how much English should be incorporated, how much focus should be given to technical skills, and how to integrate island culture appropriately." What is key, though, is that Micronesians were making these decisions for themselves. However, it is also important to note that the Micronesians in power were educated in Western institutions, explaining why there was not a return to traditional education. It is also inaccurate to suggest that Micronesian schools became fully independent from foreign influence. For example, the largest colleges throughout the region were accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, an organization based in Northern California. The reality remains that the fundamental ideologies and philosophies guiding curriculum development and administration of schools continued to be heavily influenced by Americans.

80 “A Truly Micronesian School: The Palauan Modekngei Learning Center.”
81 “A Truly Micronesian School: The Palauan Modekngei Learning Center.”
82 Kupferman, Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific, 94.
Conclusion

Education has had a pervasive influence on Western culture and, as an extension of colonialism, the entire world. An uncritical acceptance of its powers to “civilize” or “progress” non-Western populations betrays a Eurocentric worldview that fails to acknowledge the validity of other epistemologies. Equipped with more expansive definitions, one can see that Micronesians indeed had their own methods of education and American administrators’ failure to recognize them stemmed from their own preconceptions. These led Americans to impose Western-style schools as an extension of “economic development” in order to mold Micronesians’ cultures, identities, and epistemologies so as to be conducive to political and strategic goals that emerged from a tense global setting. Micronesians had considerable incentive to adopt American education, though, as an imposed capitalist economy meant that government positions served as paths to social, political, and economic advancement. Although the schools considerably transformed and detracted from Indigenous culture, the value of American education became ingrained in the Micronesian conscience. However, Micronesians did use the powers conferred by education to recognize the effects of Western education and advocate for independence.

The ongoing desire for American and Western education in Micronesia is a fitting, yet somewhat paradoxical conclusion to our story. Carl Heine, a Marshall Islander, captured the Indigenous understanding of the complex nature of colonial education in his novel from 1974: “As a Micronesian, I am colonized… The Americans may someday leave Micronesia, but they will long be remembered, for despite all their shortcomings in governing Micronesia, they made possible a new phenomenon in Micronesia, the ‘liberation of the
The pervading nature of education, with its ability to transform identities and definitions of knowledge itself, is demonstrated in the modern reality that the effects of colonial education still impact everyday life in Micronesia and continue to raise questions of Indigenous identity. The ways in which it has fundamentally transformed Micronesia are a testament to its power to produce indelible change as well as the fact that colonial impositions extend far beyond the apparent departure of the colonizer.

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