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Cole Stoots

The Humanities for the Public Good

To many, the purpose of the humanities, and to a lesser extent the arts, is shrouded in mystery and a cloud of heavy skepticism. Many do not see the value and skills that these various programs and ways of thinking bring to people's lives, both personal and professional. In the age of the computer, I acknowledge that an understanding of STEM fields and the natural and social sciences are incredibly helpful. The ability to analyze raw data and see patterns and make sense of the world around you is, in fact, invaluable in many different areas and aspects of life. However, when one is only able to see the world through the lens of a biochemist, mathematician, or physicist your view becomes limited. You become stagnant and your ideas become stale. You begin to see the same things all the time and never learn anything new. You begin to lack the creativity and imagination that you wielded at the beginning of your career, causing you to hit walls and mental roadblocks. I speak from experience.

Before changing to a humanities based education, I was deep in the field of natural science. I was studying the physics of motion, the biochemical pathways of life and was learning to see the world as something that, while mysterious and never ending, can be broken down for answers and explanations to the favorite question of many scientists: 'How?' While I loved the knowledge and the understanding of the world, both macro- and microscopic, it gave me, I was forced to admit to myself a hard truth. I did not enjoy my life as a biochemistry major. After some deep introspection, I realized that the humanities, specifically English, was the right fit for me. During this time of constant self-assessment and doubt, I kept asking myself how I would do this. I was obsessed over what I would do with my life if I wasn't studying science and how I

would get to that place. It was during this time that I realized that the way of thinking that I had conditioned myself to automatically turn to was not the natural way I thought and saw the world. While I truly did enjoy learning about the human genome and the structure of atoms, I realized I was more interested in the why rather than the how. I realized that the part of me that wanted to know "why" was being pushed down and was struggling to break free from the cage I had locked it away in. However, after switching to English and the Humanities, I began to allow myself to ask "why" rather than "how." I'm being taught to see the world as something that is beautiful, rather than something that can be rendered down for knowledge. Some may ask what difference will thinking this way make? In response, I say "more than any one person can comprehend."

When thinking about the use of the humanities in one's personal or day-to-day life, you have to look at the specific education one is receiving. The various disciplines have different values, meaning that most skills and techniques are specific to what you are studying. This is the same in the natural and social sciences. While there is much overlap in the basic, ground-level knowledge, such as mathematics and basic chemistry, in the natural sciences, the specialized knowledge of an evolutionary biologist and an inorganic chemist are very different. Overall, as previously stated, the humanities teach people to see the world around you differently than those with a background in the natural and social sciences. In addition to this, a general skill that students of the humanities acquire during their education is how to research. While you might say that those in the natural and social sciences also learn how to research, I have to disagree. As someone who has experienced both the sciences and humanities, I can safely say that what is considered to be research for the two fields is extremely different. The sciences, in my personal opinion, do not research. They experiment. The research typically done by a student in the humanities is more akin to hunting. They have to hunt down answers to the questions they have

in internet databases, stacks of books, and the halls of dusty, old archives. Having this skill is invaluable in today's society. When facts and answers are hidden, it is those with an education based in the humanities that typically find them and share them with the world.

In a professional aspect, being educated in the humanities provides you with a way of thinking that not many other people in the room will have with the modern focus on science and technology. You are able to provide a unique and different perspective to a diverse array of problems and in some cases are able to provide a solution. The scope of one's knowledge when educated with the humanities is also wider than those educated in the natural and social sciences. The very nature of humanities is far more interconnected than that of the sciences. While many of the specializations in the sciences tend to overlap at the base level, take genetics and microbiology for example, the farther you go in a specific field the less you interact with information outside of your field. While this happens quite frequently in the natural and social sciences, it happens far less in the humanities. By learning one thing, for example the literary theory known as Feminism which touches on linguistics, philosophy, politcal science and numerous other literary theories such as Marxism and Gender Theory. You are constantly being exposed to many other fields and types of thinking within the humanities. While the well of knowledge runs deeper for many in the natural and social sciences, those in the humanities cast a wide net, catching pieces and parts of many different things and ways of thinking that require hard work to comprehend and accurately use.

In addition to the numerous useful aspects that are taught to those in the humanities, there is additional benefit when it comes to these programs. Students are able to express themselves freely and artistically. While almost anyone can read and write a paper, it takes the soul of a poet in order to truly make the words on a piece of paper come to life. There are so

many people who have art in their soul. They can make the mind drown in the agony of sorrow or crackle with the warmth of a loving hearth. By allowing for these students to have a place to explore their creativity and artistic talents, while still teaching them things that will allow them to make society a better and more innovative place, we allow for joy to flow into the world. These are the people that will go on to creative fantasy worlds or books of poetry or even world-changing non-profit organizations. The funding of the humanities is an investment in the human race. By giving people the space to create and learn in the way that fits them best, we allow society to move forward and heal from all of the horrible and damaging things we have collectively experienced during our lifetimes.

Travis Fletcher

Oedipus Hitchcock

Alfred Hitchcock was one of the most legendary and influential film directors in the history of cinema. Over the course of his sixty year professional career in the film industry, he would earn the moniker "The Master of Suspense" for his many critically acclaimed suspense thrillers. As his career progressed alongside revolutionary film innovations such as the addition of spoken dialogue to moving pictures and the development of color photographic film, fans and scholars alike began to take notice of the many recurring themes that were common across the 57 films he directed. One such common theme across his many films involves complex mother-son relationships. Some of his most popular and highly-acclaimed films offer significant evidence that the son of that film has an Oedipus Complex. While such a trend would be worthy of scholarly investigation on its own, the work of his many biographers has brought to light Hitchcock's childhood and relationship with his own mother and revealed that he may have possessed such a complex himself. Four films in particular, *Notorious, Strangers on a Train, Psycho,* and *The Birds* all feature a prominent character who shows significant evidence they possess an Oedipus Complex, and the appearance of this theme across these three films is a reflection of Alfred Hitchcock's life and relationship with his mother.

The Oedipus Complex is defined as the presence of sexual urges or desires by a son towards his mother, and the simultaneous feelings of conflict, competition, or violent thoughts or actions by that same son towards his father. Sigmund Freud introduced this theory in 1899 in *Interpretations of Dreams* as part of his field of psychoanalysis, and attributed this phenomenon

exclusively to children as a healthy and normal part of their prepubescent sexual development. (Nagera) However, as scientific progress in the field of psychology was made over the following decades, Freud's Oedipus Complex was shown to be at the very least unprovable and at most entirely false. Despite this, psychoanalysis, the literary lens that includes Freud's ideas, has persisted as a method of analyzing media for new understandings about the cognition of characters and the dynamics of their relationships, and is useful for contextualizing Hitchcock's work against his real life relationship with his mother.

In *Notorious*, Alexander Sebastian is shown to possess an Oedipus Complex towards his mother, Madame Anne Sebastian. During the film, Sebastian is shown living with his mother. While it is not necessarily exceptional that Madame Anne lives with her son in her elderly state, what is notable is that the only mother in the entire film is only ever a few rooms away from her son, by her son's choice. Sebastian could at any time remove his mother from his home, but instead allows her to remain close by. While this could simply be care for a loved one, it is more likely Sebastian's lasting romantic desires directed towards his mother as a part of his Oedipus Complex that cause him to keep his mother so close by. Later on in the film, Sebastian's wife of a few weeks, Alicia Huberman, discovers a damning Nazi secret that threatens Sebastian's position in the party as well as his life. Rather than make any decision himself, he immediately runs to his mother for advice, who decides that Alice must be killed. This crucial scene clearly switches the dynamic of this mother-son relationship from ordinary to Oedipal. Sebastian's subservience and willingness to allow his mother control over his life, despite otherwise being shown to be an independent and high ranking member of the Nazi party, is a clear sign that his love for her goes beyond the ordinary mother-son relationship. It is well established in the film that Alicia Huberman is Sebastian's sweetheart from many years ago. His love for her is so

profound that he proposes to her mere days after meeting her again in the film and forgives her for kissing another man at a party after they are married. Despite this, he not only allows the decision of her fate to be made by his mother, he immediately agrees with her decision that death by poisoning is the only option because doing so allows his mother to take back sole possession of being the woman in his life. Sebastian subconsciously desires his mother because, according to Freudian theory, she was the source of his first sexual desires as a child. Because of these subconscious desires Sebastian allows her to live in his home, is subservient to her, and is willing to kill his wife so his mother can return to being the source of his affection. He clearly possesses an Oedipus Complex towards his mother that continues to affect his adult life.

In *Strangers on a Train*, Bruno Antony has an Oedipus Complex towards his mother, Mrs. Antony. When Bruno meets the other main character of the film, Guy Haines, Bruno is wearing a tie with his name on the clip, saying "Oh I suppose you think it's corny, but my mother gave it to me so I have to wear it to please her." (2:55) For Bruno, such an item of significant sentimental value functions much like a wedding ring does. By necessitating an explanation of where and from whom the named tie clip came from, Bruno is outwardly showing who is the significant female in his life, which makes sense in the context of the scene because the following conversation revolves around Bruno's proposed solution to Guy's impending divorce. Whereas a wedding ring represents a marriage to a woman who is a romantic and sexual partner, Bruno replaces that symbol with a clip tie with his name on it from his mother, therefore placing his mother in the symbolic position of a wife and thus a romantic and sexual partner. Later on the film, Bruno is seen getting his nails done by his mother and placing his mouth in her hand. The scene is shot with tight frames that show Bruno and his mother sitting very close together in an intimate way. The choices Hitchcock made when shooting this scene are further evidence that the

relationship between Bruno and his mother is Oedipal. Bruno is also notable for showing the other side of the Oedipus Complex not often seen in Hitchcock films. Bruno directs his aggression towards his father. This is plainly clear all throughout the film, as the plot revolves around Bruno's plot to have his father murdered. In the context of Bruno's Oedipus Complex, his desire to murder his father results from his desire to be the sole source of romantic and sexual affection in his mother's life. If Bruno can successfully remove his father from the situation, he can take his place. One potential critique of this analysis arises when Bruno is shown being cruel to his mother, particularly when he laughs in her face at the sight of one of her paintings. (17:10) However, there are multiple explanations as to why Bruno might be so combative towards his mother. Firstly, Bruno is a classic example of a psychopath. His irregular behavior could easily be chalked up to his unstable mental state. Secondly, Bruno is cruel to everyone in the film, so his aggression towards his mother is not out of place for his behavior across the rest of the film. Third and finally, Bruno's Oedipus Complex is far opposite the post World War Two societal norms of the society he inhabits. His violent tendencies towards his father and romantic urges towards his mother can never be truly realized because of the rules the society Bruno lives is that prevent such things from happening. Thus, the resulting conflict between his desires and their impossibility causes cognitive dissonance, a more modern psychological term that defines the mental discomfort the holding of two conflicting desires causes. In Bruno's case, these are the desires of his Oedipus Complex and his desire to conform to societal norms, and this dissonance might cause him to lash out at his mother despite his romantic and sexual feelings towards her. Regardless of why he lashes out, it is still more than clear that Bruno possesses an Oedipus Complex.

In *Psycho*, Norman Bates has an Oedipus Complex towards his mother, Norma Bates. *Psycho* is notable among Hitchcock's filmography because the Oedipus Complex is an integral plot point that takes a definitive center stage with a thorough explanation at the end by a psychiatrist. Norman Bates lived with his mother alone following the death of his father, and her authoritarian nature coupled with their isolated living style led Norman to become attached to his mother in a way that is atypical of a normal mother-son relationship. Ten years before the events of *Psycho*, Norman's mother begins a relationship with a man and Norman kills both the man and his mother. These slayings are excellent evidence that Norman possesses an Oedipus Complex. The man Norman's mother is seeing takes the place of Norman's deceased father within his Oedipus Complex. While true that Norman never explicitly shows any aggression or violence towards his real father who passed away, the man his mother begins to see fills the same role by becoming romantically involved with his mother. Norman's slaying of his mother's new source for affection and sex shows that he is jealous and ultimately wants to regain that position with his mother. By murdering her new man, he is able to resolve the anger, jealousy, and frustration of losing his mother's full attention and affection, as well as open up the opportunity to replace him and again become the only man in his mother's life. These actions additionally show that Norman had sexual and romantic feelings towards his mother, as they were his primary motivation in killing her new partner. Had he not possessed such feelings for his mother, he would not have arrived at the decision to kill her new love interest. Despite his sexual and romantic urges towards his mother, Norman killed her as well. Norman's mother betrayed Norman by bringing another man into their isolated lives, which likely led to feelings of resentment, anger, and violence towards her. However, perhaps the most compelling motivation for Norman to slay his mother was the realization that his Oedipus Complex could not be

realized while she was alive. Like other characters who possess an Oedipus Complex, Norman likely felt cognitive dissonance due to the conflict between his sexual desires towards his mother and the societal norms in place that prevented such a relationship from occurring. Cognitive dissonance is unpleasant and the human mind will try to resolve it however it may be possible, and Norman was able to accomplish just that by killing his mother, thus ending the potential of such a relationship ever occurring. By removing the source of his mental conflict, his mother whom he was so romantically and sexually attracted to, he was initially able to resolve his cognitive dissonance. However, following these killings, Norman Bates developed dissociative identity disorder and began living both as himself and his mother. Despite eliminating the cognitive dissonance that resulted from the conflict of his sexual urges and the societal norms that prevented him from acting on them, Norman's desires never truly went away and thus his mother manifested as a second personality to allow some sort of outlet for his romantic and sexual desires towards his now deceased mother.

Long before Norman's condition is fully explained in the film, one of the first scenes to feature the killer shows him having dinner with a guest at his motel after having a loud argument with his mother, saying to the guest afterwards "A boy's best friend is his mother." While during a first viewing the scene may seem ordinary, a second viewing or reflection with the context of Norman's dissociative identity disorder shows that Norman's attachment to his mother is entirely by choice. Norman's mother is truly dead, but he continues to live under her influence as a second personality that also exists within his head, meaning that in reality he has control over both himself and the "mother" he acts out. Because he has control over the actions and thoughts of this second personality, the actions of that personality and the interactions between it and his true self, meaning his "mother" and Norman, are perpetrated based on what he desires. If

Norman truly desired to seek out relationships with other women, he would be able to because the only thing stopping him from doing so is his own manifestation of his mother. Even if the psychiatrist is to be believed at the end of the film, and his interpretation that the "mother" side of Norman is entirely separate from him and without of his control, the presence of this personality as manifested is evidence enough that Norman invites and desires the motherly presence he lost when he killed his mother, and that presence is romantic and sexual in nature. Following this conversation, the guest is murdered in the shower by a shadowy figure that is later revealed to be Norman Bates motivated by the fact that he feels sexually attracted to the guest and his "mother" is jealous. Norman's mother persona, not his actual mother, is interfering with his ability to form healthy romantic relationships with women, and the distinction of the persona over the presence of a true mother is highly significant in revealing what motivations and desires Norman has. Despite the interpretation of the psychiatrist that Norman's mother persona is entirely separate from Norman, that persona regardless comes from the same physical brain as Norman and is thus reflective of him. Here, his "mother" persona which he created is the driving force in eliminating any threat to the perceived relationship between Norman and his mother. Norman created the mother persona to reflect what he desires, and what he desires is a sexual relationship with his mother as a part of his Oedipus Complex. Thus, because Norman is now in control of this mother persona, it behaves in ways that he would like, and one such way is being jealous of other females who Norman might become romantically or sexually involved with. Norman is in full control of his mother persona, unlike his actual mother who betrayed him by seeing another man. His clear jealousy and the behavior of his mother persona make it clear that Norman Bates possessed an Oedipus Complex towards his mother.

Finally, in *The Birds* Mitch Brenner possesses an Oedipus Complex towards his mother, Lydia Brenner. In this film, Mitch works in San Francisco but always leaves the city on weekends to return to his mother and younger sister in his hometown of Bodega Bay according to his neighbor in San Francisco. While visiting one's widowed mother and sister does not in itself necessitate an Oedipus Complex, both the regularity of Mitch's visits and the surrounding context of Mitch's failed relationships up to that point in the film lend credence to the fact that Mitch's relationship with his mother is much closer than a normal mother-son relationship. The regularity with which Mitch's neighbor says Mithc visits his mother, every single weekend without fail, suggests that perhaps these meetings are less out of the kindness of Mitch's heart and his care for his mother and more due to his mother's obsessive nature. This nature is shown when Lydia meets the main character, Melanie Daniels, who is in Bodega Bay to see Mitch. Upon their introduction to one another, Lydia gives Melanie clearly suspicious looks and has to be persuaded by her son to allow Melanie to come to dinner that night. In this scene, Mitch is trying to break away from the close relationship he has with his mother and branch out to have a new woman in his life, and his mother is pushing against this. According to the definition of the Oedipus Complex as outlined by Freud, the sexual and romantic urges towards one's mother should be outgrown by the time puberty has begun. However, up to this point in Hitchcock's filmography even adult men have shown significant evidence that they possessed an Oedipus Complex that remained from their youth. In *The Birds*, Mitch Brenner ends this trend by spending the film trying to break away from his Oedipal urges to form a sexual relationship with Melanie, and his mother is the continued force preventing this from happening, rather than Mitch perpetrating the continuance of such an Oedipal relationship entirely by choice as Norman Bates did in *Psycho* or Alexander Sebastian did in *Notorious*. Further evidence that Mitch's mother is

perpetrating their Oedipal relationship is provided through Annie Hayworth, a Bodega Bay local who reveals to Melanie that she tried to have a relationship with Mitch before Lydia got in the way and prevented the relationship from occurring. Annie and Mitch's failed relationship is direct evidence that Mitch desires to form meaningful romantic and sexual relationships with women and his mother is preventing him by interfering with his relationships. Mitch has outgrown the fact that his mother was the first woman in his life, but his widowed mother has not and works to maintain the status quo through preventing him from forming meaningful relationships and making him come see her every single weekend. However, this film is different from Hitchcock's other works not only because Mitch wishes to move on from his Oedipus Complex, but also because he succeeds thanks to his mother's growth. Following more than one bird attack, Lydia opens up to Melanie about her fears regarding losing Mitch and being left alone with no husband. This transparency is much more intimate and welcoming than the previous interactions between Melanie and Lydia, and is the first sign that Lydia is willing to allow Melanie into Mitch's life. The greatest sign that Mitch, Lydia, and Melanie are all moving towards a healthier, more socially normative relationship together comes at the very end of the film when the trio drive off into the sunset together. The symbolism in this scene is clear: Mitch is moving away from Bodega Bay, covered in birds and representing the place where he returns on the weekends to appease his mother and maintain their Oedipal relationship, and towards the setting sun and San Francisco, where he spends his work weeks and where the relationships people form are more socially normal. For Lydia, the symbolism is similar. Lydia is moving on from the town where her son was so close to her, and where Annie and all the other relationships she stomped out on the behalf of her son were, and towards a future where any woman Mitch

desires can form some sort of truce that allows Mitch to be romantically and sexually healthy while remaining less intimately involved with his mother.

The great unifier of these films is their director, Alfred Hitchcock, and his personal life shows that his interest in the Oedipus Complex may have been personal. Donald Spoto, writer of many biographies, writes in *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock* about Hitchcock's youth and close relationship with his mother, saying that every evening "Alfred was made to stand at the foot of his mother's bed and answer her detailed questions about the business of the day with detailed replies." (Spoto 18) The parallel between Mitch Brenner's routine visits to Bodega Bay and Hitchcock's visits to his mothers bedside is clear. In both cases, the son is forced into a routine and intimate setting with his mother to continue to perpetrate their relationship. Significant also is the location of Hitchcock's "debriefings," not at a dinner table or in a living room, but at her bedside, a far more intimate and romantic setting. Spoto himself clearly articulates that this ritual and setting "imprisons rather than frees" Hitchcock, the imprisonment being an imprisonment into his mother's life at a level that might not be considered normal by societal standards. Spoto would go one to outline how their relationship developed following the death of Hitchcock's father, saying that his mother demanded "more contact with the child who remained at home." (Spoto 37) The fact that Hitchcock's mother increased her clingy and intimate behavior immediately following the death of her husband shows that for her, Alfred fulfilled a similar role to a husband. When his mother lost her husband, who provides a romantic relationship and sex, she replaced his absence with her son, coorelating the romance and sex with Alfred and thus laying the groundwork for an Oedipus Compex. Much like Alexander Sebastian, Alfred's mother would be greatly involved in his life well into his adulthood, showing just how deeply these feelings ran.

Considering the fifty plus year career of Alfred Hitchcock, the theme of the Oedipus Complex across his films shows that his interest was deep and long lived in the topic. While an excellent point that not all of his films featured such a theme, many more than just *Notorious*, *Strangers on a Train*, *Psycho,* and *The Birds* feature enough evidence that they deserve further analysis. Considering that the most positive and progressive example of an Oedipus Complex came last among these and very closely to the end of his career, perhaps Hitchcock used his films as a way to work through the problems he had with his own obsessive mother and the cognitive dissonance he felt due to his conflicting feelings of romantic or sexual attachment he felt towards his mother and the societal norms in place that prevented him from acting on them, even after the death of his father.

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Isabel Chasney

Hiding Behind A Screen: Hate Speech and Social Media in the West

On January 6, 2021, American citizens were glued to their television screens watching as a monstrous crowd of President Donald Trump's supporters battled police lines to invade the Capitol building. Violence erupted on the lawn of one of America's greatest symbols of democracy. The mob's rage was over the results of a free and fair election. In a matter of hours, America had solidified its position as the laughingstock of the international community. Where did the riot begin? At the White House, where the one-term President told supporters he would march with them to accost Congress with claims of voter fraud. Trump's actions and the reaction of his supporters have been years in the making. Hostile online interactions, often engineered by Trump himself, have created a divided political atmosphere. His tweets claiming the 2020 election was unlawful spurned a violent turn of events. However, this is not a one-time incident; It reflects on the larger issue of increasingly inaccurate and derogatory social media interactions occurring in the West. Political extremists on both sides of the spectrum have found solid footing in the form of tweets and Reddit threads. Solutions to the growing trend of extremist interactions have yet to be implemented, but they do exist. The US, UK, and Europe must address the rise of hate speech occurring on social media within their respective countries; turning a blind eye to the growing polarization of the electorate on the internet will have violent and disastrous consequences.

The turn of the 21st century introduced rapid technological growth at a level previously unknown to citizens and their governments. One technological marvel was social media, a name encompassing various platforms that allow for rapid communication with citizens across the

globe in the form of both audio and visual posts. These tech developments transformed the

interrelationship between the sender, the message, and the receiver.[1] With very little barriers and

fact-checking, information can spread like wildfire. A tweet or Facebook status have replaced

paper and broadcast headlines as the most common source of news information.[2] Because of this,

online propaganda has become a dangerous and valuable tool for spreading extremist ideologies.

Research has shown that terrorists rely on the internet to radicalize their audience.[3] Members of

the Alt-Right and far-left have also found themselves to be the victims of rabid propaganda

meant to reinforce previously held beliefs. However, despite the popularity of social media as a

news source, mainstream media always catches up and retains its popularity, especially in

countries like the UK.[4] While still victims of rabid online radicalization, it is up to the

mainstream media to turn the tide and provide accurate information that reflects the views of the

majority of the country's citizens.

Former UK Prime Minister David Cameron famously stated, 'Twitter is not Britain'.[5] His

comment was in response to social media's misleading representation of recent elections in

which platforms seemed to demonstrate clear favorites that ended up not being nearly as popular

in real life. For instance, when Jeremy Corbyn became Labour leader, he received 270,000

Twitter mentions, 90% of which were positive. Yet, in his first poll, he scored negative three, a

lower first poll than any party leader since the 1980s.[6] The internet was not a reflection of the

actual opinions held by the UK's populations. Critics of social media in Britain claim its users

are living in an 'era of emoji politics', stating that identity and emotion have suffocated debate

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[1] Aly, Anne, Stuart Keith Macdonald, Lee Jarvis, and Thomas M. Chen. *Violent Extremism Online: New Perspectives on Terrorism and the Internet*. (London, 2015), 29.4.
[2] Ibid, 46.6.
[3] Ibid, 36.8.
[4] Heffernan, Richard, Colin Hay, Meg Russell, and Philip Cowley. *Developments in British Politics. 10*. (Basingstoke, 2016), 184.
[5] Ibid, 201.
[6] Ibid.

and rationality.[7] They believe that social media users are on a witch hunt to criminalize the

opinions of others.[8] What events contributed to shifts in opinion from the British public? When

Britain's two-party system broke down at the turn of the 21st century, populism broke through.[9]

Parties like the UK Independence Party (UKIP), whose message revolved around retaining moral

principles, grew more prevalent in the UK.[10] As a party more aligned with the far-right, UKIP

has garnered political support by supporting Brexit, or the UK's removal from the European

Union. The election of Jeremy Corbyn in 2015 signaled that the left was also looking to enhance

its political narrative, straying from the values of Tony Blair's New Labour.[11] In the 1990s, Blair

had attempted to revitalize the Labour party by removing itself from socialist ideas in exchange

for promoting the free market as a way of encouraging the British electorate to support this

rebranded left-leaning party. But as the 21st century dawned, the UK's politicians realized they

needed new methods of engagement, much like how American politicians were connecting with

voters through different platforms. However, British politicians' interactions with social media

are vastly different from their American counterparts. While US candidates use social media for

outreach and fundraising, candidates for the premiership use online platforms to broadcast their

message.[12] This is largely due to shorter and less expensive campaigns in Britain. However, the

mainstream media reigns supreme in the UK. Nonetheless, it is clear that like their American

counterparts, the British government needs to address the rise in hate speech within its borders.

  Of the western countries, the United States was the first to adopt new technologies. This

also made them the first to have to try and manage the rapid growth of online hate speech.

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[7] Heffernan, Richard, Colin Hay, Meg Russell, and Philip Cowley. *Developments in British Politics. 10*. (Basingstoke, 2016), 199.
[8] Ibid, 201.
[9] Heffernan, Richard, Colin Hay, Meg Russell, and Philip Cowley. *Developments in British Politics. 10*. (Basingstoke, 2016), 94.
[10] Ibid, 82.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid, 195.

Although both conservatives and liberals can have extremist ideals, the Alt-Right is particularly guilty in its use of engineering hateful comments on the internet to mobilize its supporters. It would be unreasonable to address hate speech without discussing the impact of US President Donald Trump. He is famously known for his less-than-kind words to prominent left-leaning politicians. Following his election success, there was a notable increase in racially and religiously motivated hate crimes.[13] His negative commentary generated thousands of hateful comments from his supporters towards his progressive targets. Trump's base was composed of alienated white men without college educations; they had been led astray by the American dream, and their anger was targeted towards black people they disliked, women who were more successful, non-white and immigrant competitors for jobs, and numerous other individuals who were loathed by the Republican's supporters.[14] America's xenophobia had found footing in the dark corners of the internet and was finally leeching into the limelight. Trump's victory represented a growing trend of fascist America and nationalist populist backlash towards globalization.[15] The online media had contributed to a polarized electorate. When America's government was trapped in a deadlock, it was Trump and his army of Twitter followers that finally broke through. But rather than seeing a resurgence in democracy, online clashes continued. After numerous violent interactions, both on and offline, the US appeared to be failing its status as one of the world's top democracies.

Meanwhile, European governments struggled to adapt to US rules and regulations surrounding free speech online. Technology was introduced later in Europe, meaning European governments are still learning how to manage derogatory comments on the internet.[16] Few

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[13] Weinberg, Leonard. *Fascism, Populism and American Democracy*. (London, 2018), 230.5.
[14] Weinberg, Leonard. *Fascism, Populism and American Democracy*. (London, 2018), 18.6.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ziccardi, Giovanni. *Online Political Hate Speech in Europe : The Rise of New Extremisms*. (Northampton, 2020), 2.

understood how to manage these concerns. Political hate speech was manifested from other

continents, especially North America.[17] But now, it has stretched its wings and flown across the

pond, making hate speech a global problem. Recently, there has been an increase in violent tone

from previously quiet parties.[18] Various European countries have been hotbeds for online hate

speech directed at minorities. In Germany, immigrants are the targets of angry comments, while

in France, sexist remarks make up the majority of internet hate speech; both sexism and

anti-immigrant sentiments are prevalent in Italy.[19] In Switzerland, violent comments were made

towards African immigrants and leftist politicians and elections.[20] Commentators of vicious

remarks are often resentful of progressive policies and an influx of migrants. An increase in the

number of female elected representatives has disgruntled members of the far-right, leading to a

slew of hateful comments directed at prominent female politicians in Italy and France.[21] Women

and immigrants have been the primary targets in most European countries. In general, political

hate speech stems from extreme parties targeting left and center-left politicians, or towards

women without distinction of party.[22] There is little legislation to prevent these attacks from

occurring. International frameworks claim that freedom of expression is "fundamental" but not

"absolute."[23] Europe's governments often find themselves adhering to American policies

regarding the internet because most Europeans' data is stored and monitored in the US.[24]

However, unlike their North American allies, Europe does not have strong ties to complete

freedom of speech as outlined in the first amendment of the US Constitution. It would be unfair

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[17] Ziccardi, Giovanni. *Online Political Hate Speech in Europe : The Rise of New Extremisms*. (Northampton, 2020), 4.
[18] Ibid, 6.
[19] Ibid, 9.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid, 6.
[22] Ziccardi, Giovanni. *Online Political Hate Speech in Europe : The Rise of New Extremisms*. (Northampton, 2020), 6.
[23] Ibid, 11.
[24] Ibid, 5.

to expect European countries to abide by the same free speech requirements. As such, the European community must create its own methods for monitoring negative comments on social media.

Although right-leaning groups are known for their nationalist tendencies, the far-left has little concern for borders in their ongoing media accusations. Social media has recently become embroiled in an environment of "cancel culture" claims. "Cancel culture" occurs when a marginalized group withdraws support from a powerful figure accused of saying something highly problematic.[25] Although this tactic is most commonly used against celebrities, it has political roots. "Cancel culture" is associated with the far-left and their supposed obsession with political correctness. Previously overlooked groups now have the power to accuse otherwise untouchable public figures. Although originally intended to hold celebrities and politicians accountable, "cancel culture" has morphed into an untamable beast that rips apart reputations with no regard for repentance. There is a hunger for ideological purity without any understanding of minimal transgressions.[26] Internet crusaders see no use for forgiveness, often judging apologies critically and without remorse. Twitter's single-post system allowed for ideological rigidity and a lack of nuance because users are limited in their ability to fully articulate opinions.[27] Digital practices that once mobilized organizations and grassroots protests across the globe quickly tumbled into disarray as individuals hiding behind usernames launched intense assaults against unwitting public figures.[28] Social media went from being supportive of

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[25] Ng, Eve. "No Grand Pronouncements Here...: Reflections on Cancel Culture and Digital Media Participation." *Television & New Media* 21, no. 6 (2020),623.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ng, Eve. "No Grand Pronouncements Here...: Reflections on Cancel Culture and Digital Media Participation." *Television & New Media* 21, no. 6 (2020), 623.
[28] Ibid, 621.

democracy to derailing it.[29] With a lack of barriers and compassion for human error, the internet continues to breed anger instead of patience.

Hate speech may be less common than peaceful political discourse, but it is far more visible.[30] Governments want tech companies to start removing hate speech from their platforms, but doing so raises numerous questions regarding what constitutes hate speech. First and foremost, legislators of all jurisdictions need to think critically about what kind of language should be prohibited.[31] The laws must walk a line between protecting free speech while banning comments that foster threats. If Europe wishes to solve its hate speech problem, it requires a distinctly European solution.[32] Relying on the American model is unlikely to yield positive results when both regions have distinctly different views on free speech. To understand online hatred in Europe, one needs to be knowledgeable about the social and historical context of the past 100 years.[33] For a century, European tradition has sought to fight race-based hate, homophobic hate, religious hate, and hate that is discriminatory, dehumanizing, and demeaning towards the victim.[34] Relying on US doctrine to solve the issue of hate speech is unreliable. Although all western nations are struggling to manage the increase of derogatory language, each is fighting a different battle rooted in each nations' past struggles with bigotry. Scholars have argued that the best way to tone down political hate speech is through the politicians themselves. While they can stoke the flames of political resentment, they can also successfully diffuse the rage of their followers. As individuals in positions of authority, politicians cannot afford to

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[29] Ng, Eve. "No Grand Pronouncements Here...: Reflections on Cancel Culture and Digital Media Participation." *Television & New Media* 21, no. 6 (2020), 622.
[30] Ziccardi, Giovanni. *Online Political Hate Speech in Europe : The Rise of New Extremisms*. (Northampton, 2020), 7.
[31] Ibid, 22.
[32] Ibid, 5.
[33] Ibid, 25.
[34] Ibid, 26.

remain silent.[35] Education through politicians, new legislation, and technological developments can all mitigate hate speech online.[36] If left unchecked, hate speech will seriously impact the public sphere.

The dangerous impacts of hate speech have not remained just within the political ring. Interactions as simple as restaurant reviews, comments on sports events, and remarks towards singers, actors, and showmen have become habitually aggressive.[37] Continuous use of derogatory language, particularly when left unchecked, will only end in violent encounters, especially towards marginalized communities. From an increase in populist views in Britain, to Alt-Right groups and the rise of Donald Trump in the US, to a growing number of sexist, anti-immigrant rhetoric in Europe, hate speech continues to leave its mark across the once-proud democracies of the West. Without lawful action, engaged politicians, and aid from tech companies, it is unlikely that the use of hateful commentary will ever dissipate on social media. Taming this beast will require a coordinated effort unique to each region with attention paid to existing policies and history. Leaving social media unchecked will result in more violence, even worse than that which took place on the lawn of the US Capitol.

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[35] Ziccardi, Giovanni. *Online Political Hate Speech in Europe : The Rise of New Extremisms*. (Northampton, 2020), 23.
[36] Ibid, 25.
[37] Ibid, 7.

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Isabel Chasney

Moral Perfectionism, the Puritans, and Poe: How Puritanism Impacted American Gothic

Literature

"The devil is more desirous to regain poor New England, than any one American spot of

ground," quotes Cotton Mather in his 1694 speech to the General Assembly of the province of

the Massachusetts-Bay. His words inspire terror, but they also reflect the horrors felt by the

pilgrims when gazing upon their new frontier. They feared not only the devil, but that which lay

in the unknown, especially the people who did not look or think like them. The colonizers of the

Americas arrived not only with guns and smallpox blankets, but with the supposed knowledge

that indigenous peoples were devil worshippers. The only way to save oneself from hell was to

repent, pray, and repeat. Known as the Puritans, this religious following transported their

extreme Christian upbringing across the pond and into the Massachusetts Bay Colony. They

believed that the only way to survive the unethical apocalypse of the New World was to rely

steadfastly on faith; a faith they hoped would land them in heaven. From this idea of a great

paradise and crowning ethics came the understanding that if there existed a heaven with all the

good things in existence, then there also existed a dark underbelly filled with all that the Puritans

feared: lack of religious zeal, immodesty, and no moral constraints. It is these dark undertones that have found their way into American literature, a genre simply called American gothic: "Before the term "Gothic romance" was coined, the original English settlers imposed an apocalyptic and horrific worldview on the new land" (Ringel). Shaped by the unknown of the New World coupled with the Americans' success of the Revolutionary War, the citizens of the US found themselves enamored with the land of opportunity and simultaneously frightened by it. Writers would attempt to capture these feelings and lay them to rest on the page, creating terrifying stories of moral ambiguity, unethical technology, and outright murder. Famous authors of the period included the melancholy Edgar Allen Poe and the critical Nathaniel Hawthorne. Although the Puritans had fallen out of favor during the 18th century and split into multiple other religious sects, their beliefs are not so easily ignored. Their quest for moral perfectionism resulted not in forgiveness but in fear and division, a terrifying prospect for those witnessing America's faults from outside the religious cocoon. From this guilty conscience came critical writing highlighting the flaws of a restrictive society and unquestionable religious zeal. Researchers studying literature in the context of historical religions, called postsecularism, investigate the grasp the Puritans' faith has over American culture, specifically literature. Nineteenth century writers including Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe explored concepts of morality, madness, sin, and shame in their dark stories that characterized the early gothic era, all themes that were derived from America's Puritan past.

Historical theory in literature explores the time period in which a piece was written, the author's background, and the social and cultural context of specific works. When investigating a particular piece of literature, historical theorists will instead point out the impact of specific events. A subset of historicism, postsecular criticism, is defined as "a style of historicism that

reconsiders its primary archive's position in newly complicated narratives of secularization"
(Kraayenbrink). Postsecular criticism studies the lasting impacts of religion on culture, politics,
and society as a whole. In the case of American gothic literature, Postsecularists have examined
how puritanism continued to influence creativity in writing in New England especially, and how
this translated into literary principles such as morals and ethics. Postsecular theory does not only
investigate the impacts of religion from the past; it also explores the remnants of strict religious
beliefs and those who are non-religious: "In postsecular literature religion, nonreligious
spirituality, and secularism converge and diverge and are transformed around questions of human
meaning, transcendence and immanence, pain and joy, and the reality and unreality of life"
(Corrigan). While the time period in which a piece of literature is constructed plays a role in its
creation, so too does the religious and cultural background. These aspects can determine a code
of ethics and the dire consequences for characters who breach them.

It is no secret that some of the first European settlers in America adhered to an incredibly
rigid religious following. These newly arrived missionaries saw themselves as the "new
Israelites" (Ringel) and sought to transplant their European faith to this new land. Believers were
fed a strict diet of repetitive scripture and prayer, deep rooted fear of hedonism, and the
conviction that all were sinners destined for hell from birth. Such faithful discipline sunk into
nearly all facets of American culture, from the perpetuation of racism and slavery to the concept
of "manifest destiny" to reserving Sunday as the sabbath. Even today, some stores in the United
States need a liquor license to sell or serve alcoholic beverages on the so-called Lord's day, a
reminder of a Puritan past that legislators cannot quite shake. Although the Puritans had first
arrived in the 1600s, their religious beliefs held American society in a tight fist, dictating the
concept of morality for centuries to come.

The Puritans believed that they could control the land and resources of the Americas, chopping down trees, displacing the Native populations, and slowly marching West in an effort to tame nature. Their view that North America was an apocalyptic wasteland filled with sin gave them motivation to continue expanding and uprooting pre-existing cultures. Religion was the sole barrier between the European settlers and a vast unknown filled with sin. They believed survival came from turning their backs to pleasure and embracing a malevolent God that would turn his back on humanity if they stepped out of line. If they followed a strict religious code, they would be granted entrance into heaven. Instead of creating a well-mannered community of spiritual, god-fearing leaders, the Puritans are associated with some very corrupt moments in early American history, most notably the Salem Witch Trials of the 1600s. Their distrust of the indigenous peoples around them and lack of understanding of the land they now controlled led to a plague of madness that drove the Puritans to kill anyone rumored to be associated with the devil. This most famous witch hunt is something that continues to influence popular culture centuries down the line.

Many works of gothic literature were written at a time when religion, specifically puritanism, was being heavily criticized. This is largely due to continued instances of inequality, both systemic and cultural, in the United States. Citizens were feeling guilty and morally bound by the constraints of the current system. The early 19th century was also a time of technological advancement, opening up the door for questions of medical ethos that are pondered even today. Gothic literature was coming to fruition at a time of crossroads for the young country; religion had elicited strict rules for morality and ethics, but there were still serious abuses carried out against minority populations. Although they had occurred long ago, people still saw the impacts of events like the Salem Witch Trials on their country and their individual communities. To

explain their conflicting religious beliefs and morals, many writers penned stories featuring dark and disturbed characters that would encourage readers to reckon with their own feelings of moral obligation.

Gothic literature, like many things in the United States, had its roots in Europe, beginning with the age of the Enlightenment. However, while American gothic drew its inspiration from the fear of their unknown, supposedly supernatural environment, European gothic featured stories of corruption and exploitation by the upper class (Ringel). European authors were able to draw upon centuries old historical experiences, ranging from the Middle Ages to the Inquisition (Ringel). Americans had no such "ancient history" for themselves, and instead turned to inspiration from that which they feared: the devil. When the Puritans arrived in New England, they were frightened by the indigenous peoples and their customs, equating their spirituality to witchcraft and their society to that of devil-worshippers. Although clearly rooted in racism rather than religion, this belief system took off within the United States, inspiring early American gothic tales featuring supernatural elements drawn from rumors and associations with the Native peoples. Eventually, gothic writing and gothic romances became less about the horrors associated with the untameable west and more about critically examining the impact of puritanism on American society. Threads of the Puritan's morally corrupt beliefs have been woven into the words of writers like Nathanial Hawthorne and Edgar Allen Poe.

Nathanial Hawthorne, one of America's great authors, was both fascinated and horrified by the Puritans and their flawed moral code. Hawthorne had a peculiar connection to the Salem Witch Trials; an ancestor of his had been an infamously brutal judge. Seeking to distance himself from this poor association, Hawthorne changed the spelling of his last name from "Hathorne" to "Hawthorne." However, it is clear in his writing that the concept of witchcraft continued to

follow him. Although one of his most notable works was *The Scarlet Letter* among other well-received romance novels of the period, Hawthorne had numerous short stories that examined the macabre. His exploration of the concepts of sin and the unfettered search for a moral utopia culminated in the tales, *Young Goodman Brown* and *The Birth-Mark*.

The former tells the story of Goodman Brown, a pious Puritan with a strong faith and trustworthy neighbors. He ventures into the forest one night, leaving behind his wife, Faith, to attend a meeting. During his travels, he meets a man with a staff, the devil in disguise, who attempts to help Goodman Brown reach the meeting quickly. Goodman Brown refuses, and continues to hide in the woods, watching as community members he held in high esteem are revealed to be witches and devil worshippers, including his wife, Faith, who he fails to save during the meeting. Upon returning to the village the next day, Goodman Brown is bitter with the realization that his neighbors were all sinners in disguise, a bitterness that follows him to the grave (Hawthorne). Of the many gothic stories, this one has perhaps the most direct relationship to puritanism, given that the characters themselves are practitioners. Goodman Brown believes he comes from a pious community full of faithful servants. With names like Goodman Brown and Faith, the characters are essentially labeled as pure from the start. Hawthorne uses irony to convey the clear divide between good and bad in Goodman Brown's mind. He demonstrates to the readers that ethics can be surface level: "Among them, quivering to-and-fro, between gloom and splendor, appeared faces that would be seen, next day, at the council-board of the province, and other which, Sabbath after Sabbath, looked devoutly heavenward, and benignantly over the crowded pews, from the holiest pulpits in the land" (Hawthorne). However, the farther Goodman Brown ventures into the forest, the more he witnesses his once pious neighbors gladly turning their backs on religion. The knowledge that all were sinners causes Goodman Brown to sink into

depression, showing that the morals and faith he held close to his heart had been fruitless: "A stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate man, did he become, from the night of that fearful dream" (Hawthorne). His disgust at the townspeople's sins reflects a wider understanding of Puritan beliefs which Hawthorne sought to investigate. The idea that all are sinners leaves behind the feeling of distrust and hopelessness, something many were grappling with in the United States in the early 19th century. When religion fails, what is there to cling to? Goodman Brown finds himself engulfed in feelings of shame and otherness upon the realization that the morals of his community did not exist at all.

One of Hawthorne's other well-known short stories, *The Birth-Mark*, did not directly correlate to religion, but rather pointed out the flaws in medical ethics and perfectionism. The tale begins with Aylmer, a mediocre scientist, who is married to the beautiful Georgiana, a nearly perfect young woman with one flaw: a small handprint-shaped birthmark on her left cheek. Aylmer becomes obsessed with this mark, refusing to even look at Georgiana because of it. He believes if he can remove it, that Georgiana will be perfect in every way, and so he begins experimenting to find a cure. Eventually, he believes he has found the perfect formula, and gives it to Georgiana. The mark begins to fade, but as it disappears, Georgiana slowly dies in the process. Aylmer has removed the birthmark, but at the cost of his wife's life, leaving him with nothing except a brief moment of success (Hawthorne). The message of the story seems clear; perfectionism is unattainable, and the consequences of searching for it are drastic. At the end of the piece, Hawthorne scolds Aylmer for his inability to discern right from wrong (Miller). This story is as much about medical ethics as it is Puritan morals, for just as Aylmer sought physical perfectionism, religious followers were bent on achieving their own version of utopian morals. However, much like Aylmer, Hawthorne argues that some need a lesson in their own

understanding of right and wrong: "The momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of Time, and living once for all in Eternity, to find the perfect Future in the present" (Hawthorne). Once again, he explores the concept of sin, in this case arguing that the morals some seek are not very moral after all.

Edgar Allen Poe, perhaps the most famous American gothic author, is known for his dark, depressing prose and rhythmic writing style. His story structure varied from that of Hawthorne before him; instead, Poe would take a look at his character's motivations and implement the use of the unreliable narrator. Many of his characters find themselves on the brink of insanity, allowing the reader to look at their collapsing morals as a message of the dangers of a world with no ethics and the curse of madness. Poe was baptized in the Episcopal church, a denomination rooted in the Anglican faith via the Puritan settlers ("Edgar Allan Poe and Religion"). This reflects a strict introduction into the religious realm for young Poe. His upbringing was one of conflicting morals, with Poe amassing a great deal of debt during his college years ("Edgar Allan Poe"). Although Poe's work may not initially be associated with the Puritans, his writing is of distinctly American influences. The Puritans were idealists, a trait that has stuck with the American people. Their search for a utopia has remained part of America's vision. Poe included this idealist concept in his writing:

> The strange visions of Poe are deeply rooted in the life of the American people and may be traced back to the Puritans, who have left us the heritage. Poe's haunting melancholy and his strain of terror and horror is not satisfactorily accounted for by any influences, nor by a mind that was alcoholic or abnormal, nor by any influence of English or European literature (Darnall).

F.M. Darnell, in his essay titled "The Americanism of Edgar Allan Poe" points out that Poe's writing has been significantly influenced by his environment, and the macabre details in his many tragic tales are manifested from the fears of the American psyche. The terror of the unknown and dreadful concept of hell and sin can drive one mad, as represented by numerous narrators of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous works.

The poem, *The Raven*, is characterized as being part of the gothic romance genre. The speaker is mourning the loss of his lover, Lenore. He is disturbed by a persistent tapping, coming from the door, and later from the window. When he opens the shutters, a raven flies in and lands above his chamber door. To the narrator's surprise, when he asks the name of the raven, the raven responds with the word, "nevermore." Delirious, the man begins speaking and pleading with the raven, talking about the loss of his love. The raven's constant refrain, "nevermore," leads the narrator to lose hope, realizing that he will never be reunited with Lenore. The raven hovers over the narrator much as his heartbreak hangs over his head: "And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor; And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted—nevermore!" (Poe 106-108). At one point during the story, the narrator asks the raven if he will ever see Lenore in heaven, to which the raven replies, "nevermore." Although not a direct connection to puritanism, this dialogue hints at the narrator's despair and his coming to the conclusion that there was going to be no reunion between himself and Lenore: "'Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!' / Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."'"(Poe 89-90). His sadness is not only a byproduct of his lost love, but of a greater cultural phenomenon as individuals grappled with the idea of an afterlife. This fear of the unknown drove many to question the relevance of religion, and because the Puritans had such strict rules for who could enter heaven and who could not, it is not surprising that people would

worry about what lay in store for them after death. Not only is *The Raven* a premier example of American gothic literature, but it brings to light the Puritan idea of heaven and hell.

While Poe's books often contained themes of heartbreak, they also frequently involved the descent into madness of the main characters. *The Tell-Tale Heart* is one such masterpiece. The narrator of the story begins by clarifying that first, his sanity is intact, and second, he killed an old man because he feared his blue eye. With an alarming calmness, the narrator explains how he stalked the old man by frequently sneaking into his bed chambers at night and acting perfectly normal during the day before finally deciding to strike. When he wakes the old man while hidden in his room, the narrator claims to hear the man's heartbeat. In a moment of panic, he kills him, dismembering his body and hiding it beneath the floorboards. Alarmed by the old man's shout, the neighbors called the police, who promptly arrived at the residence where the narrator had just cleaned the crime scene. He leads them through the house, explaining that nothing was out of the ordinary. When they arrive in the old man's chambers, the narrator is feeling confident. Then, he hears a heart beating from beneath the floorboards. The narrator is convinced the dead man's heartbeat will give him away, and when he can no longer handle the pounding, he admits his guilt to the police, convinced that they too can hear the heartbeat: "But anything better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! —and now—again!—hark! louder! louder! louder! *louder!*" (Poe). Poe expertly uses his unreliable narrator to explain the tale of the old man's murder, much to the dismay of the reader who from the beginning is aware that the narrator is in a state of psychosis. However, although the story is one of madness, it also explores the burden of guilt. Despite his insanity, the narrator cannot ignore the guilt that trails him following the murder. The phantom beating of the dead man's heart reveals that the murderer struggles under

the weight of this most punishable sin. Although guilt is part of the human experience, it is also culturally connected to the United States. The Puritans especially grappled with the guilt of their sins, struggling to maintain their morals while remaining adverse to pleasure of any kind. While the Puritans' religious beliefs faded over the years, the same cannot be said of guilt attributed to moral failings. This fascination with madness and guilt, the devil and sin, wound up dominating the American gothic literature scene, especially in the case of Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

Hawthorne and Poe's writing, despite falling within the same genre, represent very different gothic tones. Hawthorne tackled the subjects of the devil, morals, and religion in *Young Goodman Brown*, and he addressed the moral failings of unfettered scientific testing in *The Birth-Mark*. Meanwhile, Edgar Allan Poe examined the terrible effects of heartbreak and hell in his work, *The Raven*, and later explored madness, murder, and guilt through the eyes of his narrator in *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Each of these authors has also explored a variety of other genres and characters, yet these stories are among their most famous works. However, despite each pulling influence from the American environment, most notably the Puritans, their stories include different characters battling different demons.

Hawthorne's Goodman Brown is naive and innocent at the beginning of his story. He has not yet had to face the worst of his fears. Similarly, the scientist Aylmer fails to address the potential outcomes of his untested experiment, and it is only at the end of the story that he must face the repercussions of his choices. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Poe's characters have witnessed tragedy and are facing the machinations of madness associated with either guilt or forlornness. Hawthorne's characters represent the before and after of dealing with evil manifestations. He includes themes of the devil, curiosity, and the unattainability of perfection, all derived from the messages of the Puritans who sought to rid the Americas of the devils and

yet still remained enamored with the dark underbelly of their new world. Poe's characters on the other hand have already faced great trauma or committed a serious crime. In his stories, both narrators are grappling with death, one the loss of true love and the other committing the heinous crime himself. The Puritans were driven by a deep fear of sin and battled guilt daily because of it. They lived within very strict moral constraints, and those who broke them often faced dire consequences. This is represented by both of Poe's characters, who faced the crime of murder and the misfortune of loneliness. The stories of these two authors and the characters that inhabit them represent the wide range of topics explored by gothic literature. Despite their differences, each has tackled subjects the American public themselves have struggled to articulate since the time of the Puritans. Understanding hell and guilt are two themes that are included in both Poe's pieces and Hawthorne's short stories. Although American gothic tales seek to build suspense and fear in different ways, they share similar undertones that shape cultural ideas and consciousness in regards to religion.

Although overzealous religion has long impacted American culture beginning with colonization, the argument can be made that there were factors outside the realm of Puritan beliefs that influenced gothic literature. For example, gothic writing began overseas in Europe and eventually made its way to the Americas where it grew into its own genre with tales of the unknown and the supernatural. Writers such as Mary Shelley, Horace Walpole, and Ann Radcliffe can be credited for being some of the first to weave tales of suspense and horror onto a page. However, they were influenced by early scientific exploration, winding castle corridors, and social oppression. American gothic literature on the other hand was influenced by anything ranging from captivity narratives, to slavery, to westward expansion. Each of these topics was influenced in some manner by the Puritans. The idea that indigenous peoples were to be feared,

the weight of slavery's clear moral wrongness, and the concept of building an ever-expanding

utopia were all topics planted in North America by the Puritans. Their push for moral perfection

started an avalanche.

The tropes of gothic literature and its history and relationship to Puritan culture in

America would have no importance if not for the abundance of readers who continue to flock to

the stories of writers like Poe and Hawthorne. Gothic fiction, despite its tragic characters and

often less-than-happy endings, has developed a cult following. In the Victorian times, it reflected

a shift from the early romantic period to a much darker cultural analysis. Yet, centuries later,

gothic fiction continues to captivate audiences, as shown by the production of popular horror

movies and tv shows. But what is it that drives readers and watchers to seek out that which

terrifies them? It is a need to attempt to see real life problems and fears through a different lens:

"And regardless of plot twists or historical pastiches, they're preoccupied with contemporary

problems; the essential horror of the irreconcilable world" (Valentine). Characters of gothic

fiction, regardless of the supernatural elements, are often battling themes that are reminiscent of

the ones ordinary people grapple with daily: guilt, sin, loneliness, and fear. In the case of early

Puritans, this fear was derived from concerns over the New Frontier, most notably its indigenous

inhabitants. Later, as more writers began penning gothic novels and poems, they took the

remnants of this fear and concern over modesty and purity and applied it to literature, crafting

tales featuring narrators who have either seen or committed serious atrocities. In the end, the

horror for audiences comes not from what the characters have done, but their responses to it. For

fans of Poe's works, it is his characters' descents into madness over guilt and a lack of an

afterlife that is most alarming. For readers of Hawthorne's pieces, it is the dread of Aylmer's

scientific concoction and its consequences and Goodman Brown's anger and isolation upon

witnessing the devil in those he loved most that scares them. These fearful messages have captured audiences around the globe, but only because they are derived from themes that terrify readers in real life as well.

"This obsession with guilty feeling as a source of creativity in novels persists in American literature long after the Puritans fade away, and becomes a cultural form through which to criticize the naiveté of Enlightenment faith in the rational innocence of American citizens," states Taylor Kraayenbrink in their thesis on "sinful feelings" felt by the Puritans and expressed culturally through their writings at the time. Although the era of the Puritans has long since passed, their fear and guilt reverberate through generations of artists. Their history is as deeply intertwined in the American psyche as that of the revolutionaries and the romantics. The Puritans represent the darker underbelly of a country that has committed its fair share of atrocities, and they cause modern literary theorists to unravel the web of religious guilt that has impacted writing from the late 1700s and beyond.

Writers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries grappled with the feelings of guilt first brought to the Americas by the Puritans. Their inability to completely subdue sin manifested itself in American culture decades down the line, as the country continued to find its footing culturally, legislatively, and religiously. American gothic would not have existed without the historical impact of the Puritans. Their customs, successes, and failings have resulted in the creation of both supernatural and everyday horrors. Gothic writers were able to explore the depths of depravity alongside the gullibility of the average American. The finished product was a critique of both religion and American history as a whole. However, the impact of American gothic doesn't end there. These dark tales of moral failings opened the floodgates for conversations regarding racism, sexism, the mistreatment of indigenous peoples, and both

religion and government's role in these inequities. American gothic not only transformed the world of literature, but also caused many to question cultural influences in the process. " New England and indeed the United States can be figured as a haunted house, with madwomen screaming in the attic, the bones of Indians under the foundation, and African enslaved people in the basement, their skeletons in the closets" (Ringel). A place made for tales of the supernatural, the devil, and sin. These elements mixed with a judgemental Puritan past created the perfect environment for American gothic literature to thrive; horror and moral criticism all wrapped into one.

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Gavin Robison

The War Powers Act:

Congress's Attempt to Regulate Military Intervention

The War Powers Act (WPA) was a piece of legislation that passed in a unique era in American history when it came to the deployment of American Forces to foreign countries. The Act was passed in 1973 during the height of the Cold War which saw the United States and the Soviet Union vied for global supremacy. The Cold War was not a traditional war however, and was mainly fought through proxy conflicts rather than open war. This was with the goal of either promoting their own ideology or preventing a government from taking shape that was sympathetic to the other. This unique situation caused the United States to involve itself either indirectly, by way of supplying things such as weapons or money, or directly intervening, with American military power being used, in many countries.

As the Commander-in-Chief of the military and the main conduit through which American foreign policy flows, Cold War interventions were authorized primarily by the President. Without authorization from Congress, the President could commit American troops to combat zones throughout the world. While Congress retains Constitutional power to declare war, this was circumvented by Presidents never formally declaring war on another nation. This was

used multiple times during the mid-twentieth century in countries such as Lebanon and most notably Vietnam.

While American intervention in Vietnam was somewhat supported by Congress through the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the President still had a massive impact on how the war was being waged. This was especially the case after the war began to escalate further under Presidents Johnson and Nixon. The case was especially made when Nixon ordered the bombing of Cambodia, a country neighboring Vietnam, ostensibly to attack Vietnamese supply routes that ran through the country without asking for authorization from Congress. These actions were unpopular as Vietnam was already beginning to become extremely unpopular, and the idea of escalation was unthinkable to most Americans.

These actions caused Congress to think about a way to limit the President's war making power, which Congress knew it would not be easy. Since George Washington's time, the President has taken the lead on foreign policy. When writing a law regarding what the President could and could not do concerning the deployment of troops Congress knew that it would be a difficult process. This is because they wanted to limit the President's ability to unilaterally deploy American troops without a declaration of war, but still wanted to allow the President to respond to threats quickly in case of a national security emergency. The main idea behind trying to limit this in the eyes of Congress and the American public was to prevent "future Vietnams."[38]

Following the proposal for a bill limiting the power of the President to pursue foreign wars came up there was general support for the bill in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Initially however the two chambers of Congress had different ideas for what the bill might entail. For example, in the House version of the bill the President was given broad powers

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[38] "The War Powers Act." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed April 21st, 2022.
https://www.britannica.com/topic/War-Powers-Act

on on deciding when it was acceptable to militarily intervene without a declaration of war with author Louis Fisher stating,"It directed the President 'in every possible instance' to consult with Congress before sending forces into hostilities or situations in which hostilities might be imminent."[39] Meanwhile in the Senate stricter guidelines identified only three instances where the President could use military force without the consent of Congress.[40]

The House and the Senate were able to put aside their differences in order to have a collaborative bill. This final bill was sponsored by Representative Clement Zablockj, a Democrat from Wyoming's 14th District on May 3rd, 1973.[41] In it provisions were made over a broad range of issues in order to limit the President's war making powers. The first thing that the bill imposes is the fact that the President must consult with Congress before deploying American forces into hostile environments or environments where hostilities may occur and that when they are deployed Congress must be consulted regularly until forces are withdrawn.[42] The idea behind this is to try to make sure that the President is authorized by Congress to deploy troops and to not be able to do so unilaterally.

The next section of the bill deals with reporting when American forces are deployed without a declaration of war. When this occurs, the President is forced to give Congress information such as why forces have been deployed, the amount that are deployed, and the scope and likely duration for their deployment.[43] Additionally the President must report to Congress at

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[39] Lois Fisher. "Presidential War Power: Second Edition Revised." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Page 146.

[40] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg146.

[41] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.

[42] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.

[43] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.

least every 6 months regarding the status of American military operations.[44] These limitations ensure Congressional oversight when it comes to non-war declared military operations.

Arguably the most important thing mandated by Congress in the War Powers Act is the time length for military operations. According to the War Powers Act, if the President uses the military in any situation without Congressional approval, 60 days are given with which to accomplish whatever it is US forces have been deployed to deal with. After that length of time the President must either remove US forces from their operation zones, or request that Congress either make a declaration of war or give authorization for use of military forces.[45] This gives the President some time to deal with emergency threats to the country while also being limited in the amount of time that those operations can go on without some form of Congressional approval.

With these provisions in place the Act was officially passed on October 12th of 1973. However when the bill came to President Nixon for signing, it was vetoed by the President. In his rationale to Congress Nixon stated that,"The only way in which the constitutional powers of a branch of the government can be altered is by amending the Constitution-and any attempt to make such alterations by legislation alone is clearly without force."[46] Within his veto and the statement which accompanied it, it was clear that Nixon was pushing back on Congressional attempts to limit the powers of the President.

With the President's veto power being exercised, Congress had to return to the issue once again. Despite the Presidential veto however, there was still widespread support for the bill in both branches of Congress. Spearheaded by the Democrats in the House, the Act returned to Congress on November 7th in a Congressional attempt to overturn the President's veto. In a close

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[44] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.
[45] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.
[46] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 147.

vote in the House at a vote of 284 to 135 and a comfortable majority in the Senate with a vote of

75 to 18, President Nixon's veto was overturned and the War Powers Act officially became law.[47]

While the War Powers Act was introduced with the idea that it would limit the powers of

the President to unilaterally make war without the consent of Congress, it is often thought that

the Act failed in its purpose from the moment it was passed. Senator Thomas Eagleton, who was

an early supporter of the bill, would eventually come to be an extremely harsh critic of it after it

was passed. After its passing he referred to it as a,"total, complete distortion of the war powers

concept."[48] Specifically noted by many critics was the fact that the President would be able to

essentially commit the United States to a military engagement for 90 days without congressional

approval which many argued seemed to go against the entire spirit of what many desired the War

Powers Act to be. Senator Eagleton again succinctly summarized what many detractors of the

bill thought when he stated that the Act,"../has been horribly bastardized to the point of being a

menace."[49]

What is especially puzzling is the fact that within the bill itself there are no details on the

enforcement of its provisions. For example in Section 5, subsection b, the Act states,"Within

sixty calendar days after a report is submitted or is required to be submitted pursuant to section

4(a)(1), whichever is earlier, the President shall terminate any use of United States Armed Forces

with respect to which such report was submitted (or required to be submitted), unless the

Congress (1) has declared war or has enacted a specific authorization for such use of United

States Armed Forces, (2) has extended by law such sixty-day period, or (3) is physically unable

to meet as a result of an armed attack upon the United States."[50] While Congress does say that

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[47] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 147.
[48] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 147.
[49] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 147.
[50] U.S. House. 93rd Congress, 287th Session. H.J.Res.542 - War Powers Resolution. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973.

the President must withdraw American forces, Congress is silent on what will happen if the withdrawal does not take place. Will Congress freeze military funding until troops are returned? Can the President be threatened with impeachment in an effort to attempt to force them to withdraw troops? It is not clear as the War Powers Act is silent on this issue, which is another very clear weakness of the law.

Even with these issues the War Powers Act has remained unchanged since it was passed in 1973. Despite this there were two efforts to amend the act in 1983 and 1995 respectively. The attempted amendment in 1983 would have rewritten the Act to no longer allow Congress to disapprove of military commitments by concurrent resolution.[51] Following this the attempted amendment in 1995 would have essentially removed most all provisions of the War Powers Act except for the clauses regarding Congressional consultation and reporting provisions.[52] What is interesting is that these amendments do not seek to change the issues that many have had with the War Powers Act. Rather they instead work against the original spirit of the Act and would give the President more legal ability to conduct military operations unilaterally.

Despite its issues, Presidents have mostly abided by the War Power Acts since its inception. The most notable examples of the President coming to Congress to receive authorization have mostly been longer term military engagements where it was clear that it could not have been done within the time frame. This includes operations in Lebanon in 1983, Iraq in 1991 and 2003, and Afghanistan in 2001.[53] However there were other military operations where Congressional authorization was not received such as in El Salvador in 1981, Kosovo in 1999, and Libya in 2011.[54]

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[51] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 151.
[52] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 151.
[53] Fisher. "Presidential War Power." Kansas: (University Press of Kansas, 2004). Pg 151.
[54] "War Powers Resolution of 1973." *Nixon Presidential Library*. Accessed April 22nd, 2022. https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/news/war-powers-resolution-1973#:~:text=The%20War%20Powers%20Resolution%20of,the%20executive%20branch%27s%20power%20when

The War Powers Act is one of the most peculiar pieces of legislation in American history. It was a piece of legislation whose main goal was to restrict the power of the President to intervene unilaterally in foreign conflicts without the consent of Congress. However the final bill was considered unsatisfying and at times counterproductive to the spirit of what the Act was originally intended to accomplish. While many Presidents have abided by the Act and reported to Congress when American personnel have been deployed overseas, there have still been many times where the President has unilaterally deployed troops since the Act was adopted. This has given the War Powers Act a mixed historical reputation on its effectiveness.

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0Powers%20Resolution%20of,the%20executive%20branch%27s%20power%20when

Paige Leitner

A Period Drama: History and Social Class Representation Within *Downton Abbey*

Downton Abbey, a serial television show centered around a prominent, upper-class family living in a fictional Yorkshire estate in Great Britain during the early 1900s, showcases a wide array of historical tragedies. Historical accuracy is important to the elements of the show's plot and characters. These events shape the plot and the characters, which in turn creates a show that is historically accurate to members of high society in England during the early twentieth century. These events add a larger context to the framework of *Downton Abbey,* allowing a more complex meaning to be incorporated into the show's plot and characters by adding elements of realism as the show perpetuates and portrays accurate historical events. Alongside the historical significance of *Downton Abbey,* an understanding of the social hierarchy within a culture helps propel this interpretation of the show. Social classes and the social hierarchy of early 1900s Great Britain are crucial to relating the show to real life. Karl Marx's ideas on the embeddedness of a social hierarchy within a culture are evident as the characters in the show adhere to these social rules. A historical look at the show reveals through events like the Titanic sinking, World War I, and the Spanish flu that those events help make the show an accurate portrayal of the life of an upper-class family in Great Britain in the early 1900s who intrinsically adhere to the societal hierarchy regarding social class.

While there are many different theoretical approaches to literature, historicism is a unique theory in the way that it incorporates historical events into the study of literary texts. The

purpose of historicism, to showcase historical events accurately, impacts the experience that audience members have with that piece of artwork, television series, movie, or work of literature. In an article titled "Rethinking Friedrich Meinecke's Historicism," Troy Paddock emphasizes the way an argument can be approached by looking at the historical, political, and cultural context of the argument (Paddock 98). Paddock argues that Friedrich Meinecke's use of historical elements in his works both allowed for limitations and benefits to his arguments. While these arguments for the historical and cultural significance of a piece demonstrated Meinecke's deeply rooted comparison in the impacts those forces had on a work of literature, Troy Paddock explains this and how it impacted Meinecke's arguments (100). The relevance of these outside contexts proved to hold substance in the analysis and understanding of historical events (101). This approach to looking at literature through a historical lens places those works into the cultural context of the time they were written and promotes a greater understanding of the history of literature.

Similar to many other works, the television series *Downton Abbey* can be looked at through this historical lens. *Downton Abbey,* a series with six seasons, focuses heavily on the relationship between the Crawley family and the world around them, and their household staff. This period piece, taking place in Great Britain from the years 1912 to 1926 includes many historical events that accurately depict the period in which the show takes place. The main family, the Crawley family, is an upper-class family, living in a grand fictional estate in Yorkshire. This English family is important within their community and therefore must stay up to date with the current events in England. Active social figures during this time needed to make statements to the public, provide financial support to their community, and volunteer to aid their country, and in some ways can be compared to celebrities today. Also illustrated throughout the

show is the importance of the social hierarchy of England in the early twentieth century. This social hierarchy is demonstrated through the show's characters. The head of the family and father of the three Crawley children is Robert Crawley who is also known as the Earl of Grantham. This title placed a lot of responsibility on Robert and the rest of the family. Through its characters and historical events of the time, knowledge of these historical events is an essential part of the understanding of *Downton Abbey.*

From the beginning of the show, a clear picture of the importance of historical context is laid out to allow the audience to understand the environment in which the show takes place. Within the first episode, a major historical event is explained in relation to the Crawley family. In the first episode, telegrams and newspapers are delivered to the Downton estate, explaining that the Titanic has sunk. The family and the servants of the estate start the episode by going about their normal routine until they receive news about the sunken ship. Alongside this, the head of the household and father to the three Downton daughters is Lord Grantham. Lord Grantham receives a telegram informing him that his cousin and his cousin's son were both aboard the ship and both passed away. This news shocks the whole estate, bringing the everyday happenings of the family to a halt. Without either of these family members, the Crawley family quickly realizes that they will have no heir to the estate without them. Lord Grantham and his wife, Cora, had three daughters, none of whom were permitted to inherit a family estate ("Episode 1").

This loss of the heir of the Downton estate meant big changes for the Crawley family. The suffering of the loss of these family members meant the Crawleys were going to have to manufacture a new heir to the estate by marrying off their daughters to find a suitable heir. Despite the high social status of the two members of the Crawley family aboard the Titanic, both members of the family were not able to survive the crash. Bruno Frey, David Savage, and Benno

Torgler in their article titled "Behavior under Extreme Conditions: The Titanic Disaster" writes that it was predicted that first-class, prime-age, British men would have priority in surviving the tragedy, but this was proven to be false (213). In this case, *Downton Abbey* also proves this to be false in the way that both members of the Crawley family who passed away because of the shipwreck, were prime-age, upper class, British men. As mentioned within the first episode of the show, Lord Grantham questions whether members of the upper class staying on the primary deck of the ship were able to be removed first. The head Butler informs him that this is not true and that women and children were given priority when evacuating ("Episode 1"). These class distinctions, while only mentioned briefly within this first episode, reflect the importance of social standing and the social hierarchy of British people during the early 1900s.

While providing a fictional and accurate account of the sinking of the Titanic's effect on the general public of British citizens in the early twentieth century, *Downton Abbey* also recounts how this event would have been perceived by a family who lost a family member in that event. Much to the Earl and Lady Grantham's surprise upon learning about the sinking of the ship, they could not believe that their family members were not guaranteed passage on a lifeboat. These lifeboats, which were in very short supply, were passengers' only real chance of survival (Frey et al. 2010). Similar to what Bruno Frey, David Savage, and Benno Torgler mention in their article, the social status of these passengers mattered (215). First class passengers had better access to information regarding what was happening with the ship and had better access to the lifeboats of the ship (Frey et al. 215). However, as the Crawleys begin to learn more about the situation, they become increasingly concerned and realize their position in society did not make much of a difference for their family members aboard the Titanic. This level of emotion that is shown to the audience allows for a connection to be made between the characters and the audience right away.

This event occurring in the first episode of the first season indicates to the viewer that the show is going to accurately portray real historical events on a fictional scale. This representation of real events by fictional characters gives audience members an idea of how an upper class family might have lived in a grand estate in Yorkshire in the early twentieth century. This particular historical event is able to resonate since it was a heartbreaking historical tragedy that impacted the whole world. The presence of these events in the show creates an impression in the lives of the characters and reflects the impact that they could have on a non-fictional family during this time.

Following the sinking of the Titanic, the first World War begins throughout the course of the second season and affects the lives of everyone in *Downton Abbey.* With the commencement of the first World War, the Crawley family quickly learns that they have an important role to play as members of upper society. Members of the Downton estate, both family members and staff members volunteer to serve time in the army, study to become nurses, or offered up part of the estate to act as a make-shift hospital for injured soldiers. The Crawley family makes many strides to help aid their country during this time. The Earl of Grantham volunteers to aid the military and the second eldest daughter, Sybil becomes a nurse to help wounded veterans ("Episode 8"). Knowing the historical context of this show is important to get an understanding of what the characters are going through. The show continues to revolve around the current events and historical situations of the time.

Once the war begins, members of the Downton estate volunteer to step up in their country's time of need. Two members of the staff, William and Thomas, enlist in the army, accompanied by Matthew Crawley, the heir to the Downton fortune. The portrayal of these men volunteering in the war reflects a broader context of young men in Great Britain during the years

1914-1918. The family and staff's desire to aid their country in a time of need by serving in the war is not strictly supported by the men of the estate, but also by the Earl's youngest daughter, Sybil. Sybil decides to train to become a nurse while the Downton estate turns into a make-shift hospital (---. Season 2 24:50-25:19).

Stephen Greenblatt emphasizes paying attention to the characterizations of historical events within literary pieces to hone in on ideas of historical accuracy and influence within those pieces (Bawer 8). Bruce Bawer's analysis in his work "The Case of Stephen Greenblatt," brings in the analysis that Greenblatt focused on, which was to utilize the "identity-creation, social roles, and, ultimately, individuals' ways of dealing with the power structures of the societies in which they live" to better understand literature (Bawer 6). Within this article, Bawer's acknowledgment of Greenblatt's use of historical context is almost like a rewriting of history to fit a story (Bawer 10). While Bawer's article mainly focuses on Stephen Greenblatt's analysis of Shakespeare's works of literature, Bawer makes connections between that analysis and other forms of literature. Bawer notices that Greenblatt's use of this historical viewpoint is a starting point for Greenblatt to be able to make connections from those historical events to all sorts of other areas of study like religion, psychology, anthropology, and many more (11). Similar to how *Downton Abbey* implores concepts connected to history like the ranking of social classes.

These social roles and power structures are directly related to the history and culture of the time. *Downton Abbey* incorporates events like World War I and intertwines them with the social structures to depict these characters in a real way. As members of the Downton staff and the Crawley family volunteer to serve in the British army during World War I, the social ranking between the members of the Crawley family and the servant class is upheld. Despite serving in the war and fighting for the same cause, William and Thomas (both butlers for the Crawleys) and

Matthew Crawley are regarded in their distinctive social classes while serving and when they return from the war ("Episode 6"). These concepts relating to the social class disparities between members of the Downton estate can be contextualized with Karl Marx's ideas of the social hierarchy and the ways in which the social hierarchy is upheld on an individual level. Despite both parties doing what they can for their country during wartime, the extra value is placed on and kept by members of the wealthy class (Barry 69). This state of "permanent subordination" is maintained through the family and staff's endorsement, whether consciously or unconsciously, of this social hierarchy (69).

Similar to how the sinking of the Titanic and World War I impacted the overall context of *Downton Abbey*, the Spanish flu is another historical event that takes place throughout the show, not only impacting the context of the show but also the Crawley family directly. As this disease spreads all through Europe, the Crawley family is hit hard by this historical event. A few members of their family become infected with the disease, leaving them in a bed-ridden ghostly state. As the disease rages on, not only members of the Crawley family are affected but also other community members. Matthew Crawley, who by season two of the show when the Spanish flu takes place, is now to become the heir of the Downton Estate. Matthew's fiance, Lavinia, and the mother of the Crawley family, Cora, both become infected with the Spanish flu and are bed-ridden for days. In addition to Cora and Lavinia, the head butler Carson also becomes infected with a mild version of the Spanish flu ("Episode 8").

Similar to many other families living through the Spanish flu in Great Britain roughly in 1918, Cora and Lavinia were both completely immobile and could not perform their typical duties. Both these women received medical treatment from the community doctor, but unfortunately, the severity of their sickness caused complications. Lavinia's condition only

worsened and eventually led to her death. Cora and Carson both were able to recover over multiple days. While two out of three members within the show were able to recover, *Downton Abbey's* portrayal of the disease reflects the seriousness of the epidemic as it spread across Europe in 1918 ("Episode 8"). The high mortality rate and infection rate historically are illustrated in the show through its prevalence in the lives of the Crawley family, particularly through the disease's impact on young, healthy people (Walsh). The fatalism of the Spanish flu, according to Bryan Walsh in his article titled "A Brief History Of: Flu Pandemics" triggered a massive response in young people, ultimately leading to millions of deaths. In *Downton Abbey,* three people in the Downton estate alone were impacted by the disease, either by becoming ill or dying because of the flu. As the flu rampaged throughout the world, the unpredictability of the disease is partially what caused so many deaths because many did not anticipate its' severity (Walsh).

Similar to how contributors to the historicist theory like Stephen Greenblatt focus on the ways that culture and socio historical events apply to Shakespearean plays, the same can be done for *Downton Abbey.* The treatment of Spanish flu patients in the show demonstrates the cultural beliefs surrounding western medicine during the early 1900s. Greenblatt focused heavily on how cultural boundaries affected the art and literature pieces that became products of their time. Within *Downton Abbey,* these cultural boundaries are associated directly with the Crawley's position in the upper echelon of society. The emergence of the Spanish flu meant that thousands of people were getting sick simultaneously. Upper Class society members had the means and the power to summon the community's most highly esteemed doctors and surgeons to attend to their health concerns before those of the lower classes (Magnus 1198). These cultural boundaries, as Greenblatt states, are indicative of the culture and therefore are reflected in a particular piece of

literature (Bawer 4). The cultural boundaries and general social understanding that upper-class society members receive the best and most timely services reflect how the hierarchy of social class affected the population of Great Britain in the early 1900s.

Within this cultural context, as the importance of the social hierarchy is recognized within period pieces reflecting this period, these socio historic elements coexist and intertwine in unique ways. Karl Marx, a German philosopher, demonstrates a new way of understanding class differentials within a society. Marxist criticism is heavily influenced by his ideas about the social hierarchy and how that hierarchy impacts people's everyday lives (Barry 125). These ideas about social class are perpetuated in an obvious way throughout the entirety of all seven seasons of *Downton Abbey.* The relationships between the staff and the Crawley family provide a backbone for the show and reinforces the social class culture which was so prominent in early Great Britain. As historical events, like the Spanish flu, continue to rampage, these social classes are upheld. Members of the Crawley family are catered to before other members of the lower class community. During the epidemic, hegemonic concepts are upheld as members of the upper class retain a level of dominance over other classes.

Historical events like the Spanish flu reflect these social classes in ways that demonstrate the lower class has more disparities than those a part of the upper class. Clare Bambra, Paul Norman, and Niall Philip Alan Sean Johnson discuss these disparities in an article titled "Visualising regional inequalities in the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic in England and Wales." Stating that "there were clear social and geographical inequalities in the Spanish flu pandemic with infection and death rates substantially higher in less affluent neighborhoods; amongst the working classes; and in urban areas" (Bambra et al. 608). With this, the influence of the Spanish flu was also impacted by relativeness between the members of the Downton estate, especially

among the servant class who were in contact with other members of the servant class and the Crawley family (608). These lower class neighborhoods having a high chance of getting infected mirror this social hierarchy that Karl Marx emphasizes. The disparities between the classes promote further division between the social classes. Along with the infection and death rates being higher in the working-class sectors, the separation from upper class to lower class was divided even further. Within *Downton Abbey,* this inequality is not depicted. The Crawley family and the Downton staff receive treatment from the village doctor almost immediately. Despite it being late in the evening, the village doctor is called upon to care for the health of the Downton family members ("Episode 8"). These social inequalities resulted in certain members of society receiving medical treatment due to their position in society versus serving members of the community based on need.

As more events like the sinking of the Titanic and the Spanish flu continually get mentioned in *Downton Abbey,* the show's historical accuracy reflects the period and culture of Great Britain during this time. The Spanish flu's impact on the family and the community is indicatory of the effects this disease would have had on a non-fictional upper-class family. Cora Crawley and Lavinia Swire's encounters with the disease reflect the seriousness and deadliness that it had on thousands of people. While these members of high society were able to receive ample treatment, the Crawley's reputations and influence on society is an example of how important social standing was for them at the time ("Episode 8"). The head butler, Carson, while managing to only contract a mild version of the disease is ensured medical care by the family. The Crawley's position in society aided them in gaining the right medical treatment in ample time in comparison to lower classes of society. This historical event showcased the Spanish flu's impact on community life and how it wrecked the lives of many during 1918.

Within all three of these events, *Downton Abbey* can demonstrate the show's historical accuracy and significance. The sinking of the Titanic, World War I, and the Spanish flu are not specific to England in the early twentieth century, but *Downton Abbey* is able to showcase the impact that these events had on upper class British society through the events relatedness to the characters. The sinking of the Titanic impacted the family through association, as two of their family members were on the Titanic and did not survive the shipwreck. The emergence of World War I impacted the Crawley family and the Downton servants. Once England was brought into the war, members of the Crawley family and staff volunteered to help aid in the war efforts. Matthew Crawley, William, and Thomas all served in the war. The youngest Crawley daughter, Sybil, trained to become a nurse and tended to the wounded war veterans. Lastly, the Downton estate turned into a hospital where wounded soldiers were able to receive medical treatment after being injured in the war. In addition to these two other events, the Spanish flu also impacted the Crawley family by infecting multiple family members and a staff member. Lavinia, Cora, and Carson were all impacted by the disease and were treated accordingly by the village doctor due to their high position in society (Fellowes 2010).

In conclusion, the historical events that make up the show *Downton Abbey* showcase the show's relevance in early twentieth century Great Britain. As the show moves through these fictional characters' lives from 1912 to 1926. These three events, the sinking of the Titanic, World War I, and the Spanish flu, are all examples of how *Downton Abbey* incorporates the plot and characters of the show into a larger framework that is historically accurate. Intertwined with these historical events are also the societal elements that impact the Crawley family's place in society. Through events like the Spanish flu, the Crawley family, and a beloved member of their staff, are able to receive access to healthcare immediately after they become infected. In World

War I, despite members of the Crawley family and members of the staff sharing the same

battlefield, once they return from war they are still treated in ways that reflect their social class.

Marxist theorists and historians alike acknowledge these social class disparities within these

historical events. In the show, during events such as the sinking of the Titanic, the Crawley

family makes assumptions about their family's position in society and how that should have

affected their cousins in trying to escape the sinking ship. Upon learning that their family

members did not receive treatment according to their social class in getting off the ship, the Earl

and Lady Grantham were saddened and confused. These emotions add a level of realism to the

characters, indicating to the audience that there is a historical significance that lies within the plot

of the show. Using a historical lens to look at *Downton Abbey* reveals through events like the

Titanic sinking, World War I, and the Spanish flu that those events help make the show an

accurate representation of the lives of an upper-class family in Great Britain in the early 1900s

who fundamentally comply with the societal hierarchy regarding the social classes of the time.

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Melissa Risser

<p style="text-align:center">Persevering in a Male-Dominant Structure: Hegemony as Seen in *Circe*</p>

It is clear in today's society that the binary between men and women has changed—at least in some countries. However, it is still very much there. People still stick to the ideas that men are the strong, heroic figures that are meant to support their families. They do the heavy lifting, they are the ones encouraged to learn and challenge themselves, and they are the ones trusted with certain tasks. Women, though, are seen as weak, emotional, and incompetent. Some women are still hesitant to give themselves any rights, clinging to traditional patterns to avoid conflict. The United States' government is made up of mostly men, and we have yet to see a woman elected to be the president. Sometimes these divisions between men and women are hidden—taken to be the norm. Other times they are blatant, and tensions rise when one is told what they can and cannot do. It is embarrassing to put oneself out of their comfort zone, only to be ridiculed and belittled. To think, these little things make us mad because, in our time, these are the big factors keeping women a level below men in society's hierarchy. And when one reads about the past, witnesses the inequalities through literature, we are still able to connect to the women who were mistreated ages ago. Not much has changed at all, and it keeps all people and genders at odds with each other. The male dominance in society oppresses and Others women, so their only option is to break away from the existing structure and create a new life for themselves.

What often is not taken into consideration is how the power structure came to be in the first place. Determining this does not excuse the actions of certain men, and it does not permit

hegemony—the ruling system—to exist. However, it does allow people to see why it happened and that not all men are a part of that power, which is important. Male dominance is what created the structure, and it stems from anxiety—over both the unknown and of performing to the specifications of masculinity. Their anxiety due to gender performance—a concept coined by Judith Butler—originates from the idea that they have to fit into their gender standards (as is the case of most people). In terms of masculine characteristics, men are meant to be strong, powerful, stoic, and emotionally suppressive. Emotions do not "disappear," as K. F. Michael states in "Men, feminism, and men's contradictory experiences of power," but they are "[dampened] because they might restrict our ability and desire to control ourselves or dominate the human beings around us on whom we depend for love and friendship" (148). This is why men may refrain themselves from crying, refuse to be openly expressive, or reject help from others. Doing any of the given examples hurts their image of masculinity. They are meant to be in control. If they slip their hold on that control (on their masculinity), then they relinquish it to someone else, giving them power over themselves. However, not all men act so stoically. They express their emotions and allow themselves to hand over the reins. In other words, they do not exert dominance over people at every opportunity. These men are typically more open to feminist ideas and help to promote it, even at the price of harming their masculine images. The power structure, though, is held in place by the men who assume their masculine roles. Michael emphasizes that "They have power because they describe and embody real relations of power between men and women *and* among men: Patriarchy exists as a system not simply of men's power over women but also of hierarchies of power among different groups of men and between different masculinities" (144-5). So it is clear that society's structure of hegemonic masculinity hurts not only women, but other men, too. It is in place to give power only to those who fit the

picture and to keep those who are considered weak where they belong. It is important to realize the struggle that men have so that they are not unjustly hated for being born a male.

When considering male anxiety in terms of the unknown, this anxiety is linked to the mysterious womb. It is needless to say that men and women are physically different. But men did not always know about the womb as it is understood today, and they definitely did not know how childbirth worked. According to Isobel Whitcomb, "Until very recently, doctors and scientists considered women, medically speaking, basically the same as men" and that the male physique was the "default setting" ("7 Sexist Ideas That Once Plagued Science"). This idea originates from the story that Eve was created from Adam. Not only was the woman created after the man, but she was made from his rib. One can already infer why men feel that they have control over women. But their physical differences are what unsettled men, for those with secrets have power over others. They did not understand how the womb worked, so they were left to guess everything the womb entailed. This led to many ridiculous theories, like the beliefs that a womb could wander, that women should not exert too much energy because they could damage the womb, or that women's mental illnesses could be cured through sex (Whitcomb). The mysterious organ scared men, and everyone knows what happens whenever someone or something is scared. They react. Men kept women on a tight leash, punished them or passed them off if they acted out of line, and played up their role as the ruling power.

It is clear that plenty of men are very anxious within their own structure. If one crack in their masculine facade is seen or if some unknown power comes along, then they are left scrambling to tighten their grip on what they consider to be theirs. They have a lot to lose, especially when someone—particularly a woman—fights to be on the same level that they were placed on. Madeline Miller's *Circe* gives readers insight into this issue. In this retelling of the

famous Greek epic *Odysseus*, Circe is one of four new powerful beings—a witch. In the hierarchy of this world, the Olympian gods are in the top tier. The male titans slightly below. Then comes the demigods, the heroes, the talented mortals, and the common mortals last. The witches are new and need to be added in, so they are seen as a threat to the gods and titans. Their magic is mysterious and no one knows its bounds. This is especially true when Aeëtes (Circe's youngest brother) tells their father (Helios and most powerful of the titans) that he and his siblings have a new kind of magic and that Circe was the one to turn Glaucos into a god and Scylla into a beast (66). Helios and Zeus almost immediately meet to discuss the new beings at hand. Together, they decide that three of the witches were not a threat. The brothers were in their own kingdoms and agreed to be watched over. Pasiphaë could not be a threat because of her marriage to a son of Zeus. However, because Circe had admitted to using her powers on others, she was to be exiled (73-4). Notice that the male witches received the least amount of restrictions compared to the female witches. They were allowed to rule over their kingdoms and basically do whatever they pleased as long as they did not revolt against the ruling powers. Pasiphaë is sure to be "'held to her proper place'" due to her marriage (73). So, assuming she was not married to a son of Zeus, it is implied that she would have had more restrictions placed on her. But because she is more liked by the other immortals compared to Circe, she would most likely have just been married off, anyways. Circe, however, is very much different from the others. She has always been the odd one out and disliked by her family, ever since her father foresaw her marrying a human prince—a very low position in this world (6). Combining their contempt for her with the fact that she acted against the gods, she is seen as a true threat. They exiled her to be alone on an island, away from those she could overthrow.

One may argue that this has nothing to do with the power struggle between men and women. They may say that Circe's punishment was deserved because she used her magic while the others did not. However, I say that this does illustrate male oppression over women. The titans and gods had a clear image of what the new magic could do thanks to Circe's acts. Instead of exiling them all to different islands, the men were able to keep their kingdoms. They were allowed to continue ruling with a very weak rule that they would be watched. Circe even acknowledged that Aeëtes could easily hide his magic from their father by creating a veil (73). But their sisters had more restrictions put on them. One directly linked to Zeus to be kept in line, and the other completely cut off from the rest. The gods and titans were anxious about the mysterious power, but also nervous that women had access to it, as well. And since women are wild things to be tamed, Circe and her sister were hegemonized.

There is more behind it, too. Aeëtes and Perses were born into power just by being males. They understood the structure of their world and how to play the system to keep themselves in power. Aeëtes explains it like this: "'That is how it works, Circe. I tell Father that my sorcery was an accident, he pretends to believe me, and Zeus pretends to believe him, and so the world is balanced'" (76). Much like rubbing elbows in the business world, the men all know that they have a role to play in order to rise to power and maintain that position. They must lie and pretend to respect each other and follow their orders. They turn a blind eye here and there. The women can catch onto this game, however, so long as they are well-liked and informed of this game. Circe was not and was punished for her disobedience. Pasiphaë, though, was able to play the game fairly well, but at a much higher cost. When she tells Circe about the structure of the world, she ridicules Circe's desire to be accepted and cared for by their family. She tells her that she fell right into the ideology of it, which allowed everyone to kick her around (146). Circe

obeyed every rule hoping that she would gain Helios' favor, but it never happened. Pasiphaë reveals:

> The only thing that makes them listen is power. It is not enough to be an uncle's favorite, to please some god in bed. It is not enough even to be beautiful, for when you go to them, and kneel and say, 'I have been good, will you help me?' they wrinkle their brows. Oh, sweetheart, it cannot be done. Oh, darling, you must learn to live with it. And have you asked Helios? You know I do nothing without his word… They take what they want, and in return they give you only your own shackles. (146)

Pasiphaë makes it evident that she is sick of the patriarchy, but accepts that that is the way it is and that she has no power to stop it. She plays right along with the men, even if it hurts her. She has hurt her sister, the same as everyone else has. Circe never understood the way of things. She thought that so long as she did what the others wanted her to do—as long as she rolled over in submission—that they would eventually start to treat her differently. Pasiphaë argues that no man is going to change. They will always treat them as dirt, kick them around, and carry on as they always have. In "Shakespeare's Sister" (from *A Room of One's Own*), Virginia Woolf says, "'Wife-beating,' I read, 'was a recognised right of man, and was practiced without shame by high as well as low… the daughter who refused to marry the gentleman of her parents' choice was liable to be locked up, beaten and flung about the room'" (2265). The beating of women was viewed as a right that men had. No one could stop him because he was able to do it. To argue would go against his word and, if the one to do it was a woman, she would get the same punishment. Pasiphaë never stepped in to help her sister because of two reasons. First, her sister would never learn if she helped her. Circe needed to see for herself the cruel ways of their world and the men within it. Second, if she did help, Pasiphaë would have lost everything that kept her

safe. The others would see that she, too, was a defiant girl with no respect for anyone. She would be treated exactly like her sister, beaten and shamed. This is what causes women to antagonize each other. If it is not one getting the attention or beatings, then it is the other. Men use their power and dominance to do whatever they want to whomever they want. It does not matter whom they beat or for what reasons, so long as they can get away with it. And in most cases, they do.

Pasiphaë then moves on to tell Circe that Aeëtes, Circe's closest sibling, never actually cared for her. In Circe's eyes, her relationship with Aeëtes was the same as the relationship Pasiphaë had with Perses. However, Pasiphaë retaliates with, "'You know nothing of Perses. Do you know how I had to keep him happy? The things I had to do?'" (147). Miller never reveals what exactly Pasiphaë had to do, but it is very easy to assume. He probably beat and ridiculed her, and this is hardly the worst of what he did. He more than likely raped and used her for his own entertainment (since Greek gods and goddesses had no issues with incest) because, like Woolf said, he could. It would remind her of her place in their relationship and in their world. As painful as it probably was, it was better than the treatment Circe was given. At least Pasiphaë had some control, some power and recognition. No one questioned whether she was a daughter of The Great Helios. Again, if she did not do the things she did, then she would have ended up like Circe or Woolf's imagined Judith, sister of Shakespeare. Judith had a talent like Shakespeare, and was unable to practice or hone that talent. She was not allowed to act. She would have killed herself, unrecognized for her talents, because "a highly gifted girl who had tried to use her gift for poetry would have been so thwarted and hindered by other people, so tortured and pulled asunder by her own contrary instincts, that she must have lost her health and sanity to a certainty" (2269). A woman, even related to a man as talented as Shakespeare, would be denied

to act on her talents simply because of her gender. Pasiphaë is a little different, but the same idea applies. She, too, had to go along with the way of the world to survive. In order to have some control and freedom, she had to do as the men said. She had to marry a king. But, after playing her part, she is out from under her brother's rule. She is married to someone who is lower than her—mortal. She can control him with her magic, and he cannot do anything about it or he would die. But the means to get there are the same that Judith could not bear to do or live with, and they are the same that Circe was blind to.

But, Circe's talents were repressed, too. Not just her talents, but her entire being. When she transformed Glaucos and Scylla with her magic, she went to her father to confess that she was the one to do both (62). She fully expected to be punished. Instead, Helios insisted that she could not have done it, for those flowers that grew from a titan's blood were powerless. "'Zeus and I made sure of that'" (62). The very idea that the flowers could still have power even after their efforts to nullify it is incredulous to Helios. And Circe, known to be a simple nymph at this point, claimed that she was able to use it and turn a mortal immortal and a well-respected nymph into a monster. This is an entirely different image that she is presenting of herself, and it is a powerful and terrifying one. If she could do these things, then what is to stop her from overpowering him or any of the other gods or titans? They treated her wrongly, after all, and she created a monster out of mere jealousy. However, instead of seeing her as a threat, he brushes her aside. He tells her, "'You had a premonition, which is common in my children… It was Glaucos' fate to be changed at that moment. The herbs did nothing'" (62). He disregards that she could have more power than he first thought, and even goes so far as to call her common. She is nothing special, and therefore could not have done anything as great as turning a man immortal. Glaucos only transformed because the great and powerful Fates said it would happen. During

this conversation between the father and daughter, the men surrounding Helios laugh at her. She is just another woman causing a scene, hoping for more attention. Jessica D. McCall says in "Woman or Warrior," "Because patriarchal societies have objectified women as Other, specific traits… have come to signify the feminine. Feminine denotes the weaker, more unstable side of humanity, a… set of emotions that require masculine virtues to balance them out" ("Woman or Warrior?" 1). In other words, women are weak and unstable compared to their male counterparts. They are below men in society because they are not as level-headed, as powerful, or as capable as men. To apply this idea to Circe, her confession to have been the one to transform Glaucos and Scylla is seen as a normal outburst from a woman seeking attention. She is considered too weak to have been able to do such a thing, so she is disregarded. If the men were to entertain the idea, then it would only cause the situation to get out of hand. To keep that from happening, they deny her talents, her identity, and tell her to sit somewhere and be quiet.

The only way they could believe her is if a man were to tell them that what she said was true, which is exactly what Aeëtes does. Men are the only logical and stable beings, after all, so they know what they are talking about. Once he told Helios that she was the cause of the transformation, Helios saw her as a threat and sought a solution to keep her from acting out again. Men in power do not take women seriously. They only care about the image they give them. If they grovel at their feet and praise everything they do, then they appear to be powerful and masculine. Just as Woolf and Michael (and even Pasiphaë) have suggested, men only care about power and how they can gain and maintain it. Everything and everyone else is simply a tool to be used for their gain.

Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on how one looks at it), Circe eventually did learn the ways of men. She, blinded by her love for mortals and by her naivete, aided some lost

sailors. She fed them and gave them comfort. They complimented her, praised her, and thanked her for her help. But as soon as she revealed that she was alone, they raped her (186-8). Circe, as Pasiphaë told her, was considered tame. She lowered herself before her father, she praised her brother, and she did know of the things that happened to lone nymphs. But, she thought that if she treated them with kindness that they would worship her and and be grateful for what they were given. Instead, the sailors saw someone they could overpower for their own gain. This was Circe's first real awakening to the hegemonic world. She turned these men into pigs and did the same to all the other sailors that came to her island. She protected herself and the other nymphs on her island. Instead of backing down, she began to fight back.

It is ironic that Circe is able to practice the very magic that resulted in her exile on the island she was exiled to. With limited resources, she learned to grow what she needed for her witchcraft. The reason for this is because the island acts as her cave—her space away from the world of male-dominance. In Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's "The Parables of the Cave" (from *The Madwoman in the Attic*), they explain that a cave is a woman's space due to its womb-like shape (93). This space allows women to have their own power, rather the power to freely do what they want. As in Circe's case, the cave allows women to hone their skills, discover themselves, and transform into a truer version of themselves (95). Gilbert and Gubar also state that "[the cave] is intimately connected with both [Mary Shelley's] own artistic authority and her own power of self-creation. A male poet or instructor may guide her to this place, but, as she herself realizes, she and she alone can effectively reconstruct the scattered truth of the Sibyl's leaves" (96-7). What this means is that though a woman may need a man's guiding hand to reach a space for themselves, they have the power to discover and create once in that space. As one can infer, this makes sense considering that the world belongs to the men due to

the structure of society. They would know how to get to the entrance of the cave seeing as they know the world in a way that women do not. This is true of Circe and her father, who is the one to lead her to her island—her space away from overbearing men—at the start of her exile (77). However, this space away from everyone else allowed her to focus on and grow into herself. It is on this island that she experienced the truth of men and the world. It is here that she was able to hone her skill as a witch and learned to transform others on command. It is also here that she gave birth to her son, a choice that she made for herself (239). Though it was a difficult journey, having him was a decision that she made. No one else told her to do it, and no one else was able to stop her (not even Athena, who tried to convince Circe to kill him). She became a mother because she wanted to, and this allowed her to create a new aspect of herself.

During her time on her island, Circe's experiences transformed her into a strong and powerful woman. She protected herself from sailors. She learned about the world and about companionship from Odysseus. She became a mother, strong yet caring. It is also because of her son that she was willing to risk her own well-being for. Once Telegonus told her that he wanted to sail to Ithaca to visit his father, she was determined to protect him at all costs. She went to the bottom of the ocean to retrieve a very poisonous barb from the tail of Trygon, a very old and revered being. Trygon's only condition was that she must prick herself on the barb and suffer the poison for eternity, which, for her son, she was more than willing to do (280). She was able to obtain the deadliest object in the world, while her Aeëtes tried and refused to suffer through that pain (279). This shows that powerful men, despite all their attempts to appear strong and unstoppable, choose themselves before anything or anyone else. Meanwhile, due to the fact that she had suffered in the world already and also due to her maternal instincts, Circe was willing to suffer through more if it meant that her son would survive his journey to a world he was

unprepared for. A world that Circe is tired of enduring. Trygon, in response to her lament, said, "'*Then, child, make another* [world]'" (283). This phrase is very important, for Circe repeats it to herself later right before confronting her father on page 358. She demanded that he end her exile and blackmailed him to do it after he refused. She, sick of the world and the entitlement to power that most of the men she ever encountered had, gave her father no choice but to agree to her request. She gave herself power by standing up to him, but also by telling him, "'I will do as I please, and when you count your children, leave me out'" (361). With this one statement, Circe put herself into a position of power. She cut herself from the world of gods and titans, from her family, to live with a family of her own choosing. Both of these scenes in particular demonstrate for readers how much Circe grew in her time on her island—within her cave—and how powerful she is compared to men in a position of power. One could consider her to be even more powerful than them, for she grew from her crouched and obedient form to stand before her father, king of the titans, and demand her freedom from him and his world.

Just like Michael explained, the lines blur between men in power with those who are not. The world is not men versus women because some men suffer in the structure, too, just as women transform other women into beasts out of jealousy. In this story, Telemachus, Odysseus' first son and Circe's lover, is an example of a man that blurs this. Telemachus is very different from his father, especially in their views of power and recognition. Odysseus is a hero that everyone knows. He was the mastermind behind the Trojan Horse, he blinded a cyclops, and killed all the men who invaded his home during his absence. He is a very famous hero. However, his son was never able to live up to his father's name. Circe teases with the title "Telemachus the Just," to which he replies, "'That's what they call you if you're so boring they can't think of something better'" (341). He is far simpler than his father. He was never able to do anything

about his mother's suitors. He never left Ithaca to travel and be a hero like his father. Then, when Athena came to offer him fame like his father had, he denied it even after she tried to convince him of all he would lose (352). He did not want the fame and power that his father had. Telemachus just wanted to stay with his mother and Circe and enjoy a peaceful life away from power-hungry men like the suitors. He never tried to overpower Circe. He simply aided her when she needed it and supported her strength and power. Men in power would have stopped her immediately, like her father and Zeus did, due to their anxiety of being overpowered. But, to a man who does not want to be in that position, she is not a threat.

Moreover, women can give themselves the power to escape from oppressive structures so long as they have a space to allow themselves to grow and transform. The world is dominated by men in positions of power, and it leads to the suppression of women and even other men. Finding spaces for themselves is hard for women, but not impossible. Likewise, it is hard to meet men on equal footing, but it, too, can be achieved. Women have suffered through hegemony their whole lives and are capable of persevering through the hardships for themselves. They fight to have the same power that men are inherently born into. Though, not all men suppress women and their talents and identities. These are the men who also live in the shadow of dominant men. They support women and help them to stand on the same level as men—to destroy the hierarchy that keeps them separated.

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Chayenne Powers

Deconstructing "anyone lived in a pretty how town"

E.E. Cummings is known for his experimentation with form, syntax, and punctuation, and his poem "anyone lived in a pretty how town" is no exception. With such experimentation, comes a slew of problems in the discovery of a meaning. Such exploration of syntax leads to problems of the connection of what the words mean and how they are interpreted. In such, the wider purpose of the poem becomes unstable and contradicts itself. Thus, the reader is left without any true understanding of the work or even the projection of what reality is intended to be.

E.E. Cummings' piece, "anyone lived in a pretty how town" attempts to explore the reality of humanity's existence. Throughout the piece, the player is able to identify milestone markers that the characters reach, such as marriage, having children, and death. In the routine life that is set up for each individual in the piece, there becomes a loss of identity and ultimately a death which makes the player wonder what precisely the purpose of it is—of life. Is it ultimately that human's little routines and momentary happiness that matter? Our sense of community? Or is the meaning that all is meaningless? That one's existence is just another part of a world that keeps moving, with or without you?

A binary is created in such terms. A French philosopher, Jacques Derrida emphasizes the unstable nature of such a concept. When faced with a word, that word is all you have. The thing that the word represents is not in the word, but a separate concept that is used in relation to the word, but such is unstable because the idea is abstract. With such a concept, the reader of the word can play with the meaning and defer what the word is to some other abstract idea. Derrida

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uses the word "différance" to represent this idea of deferring and differing. With the introduction to binaries, or words that mean the opposite, the player of words is left to try and compare and contrast how they are different, however in order to show how they are opposites, there needs to be an explanation as to how they are different. If one word is the absence of another—the complete opposite that other word—suddenly that original word cannot exist because it relies on something that is also reliant on its opposite, or the complete absence of itself. The meaning that is created is not actually there because what a word is in relation to another is unidentifiable. Thusly, in Cummings' poem, filled with binaries, the player is left in a sea of absence trying to find being to no avail.

On a surface level, the reader of the text is immediately confronted with confusing phrases and direct opposites being shunted out, as if to be simply picked up and understood. The second line of the poem plants a paradoxical occurrence straight away. "(with up so floating many bells down)" is a line that seems to imply, from the first line, that "anyone in this pretty how town" (lines, 2, 1), is floating upwards—perhaps because things are great. The usage of "up" here makes a lack of sense because of the nature surrounding gravity. Things, The town is described as pretty, so the connotation of the piece so far is good. However, to quickly transition that with "…many bells down" (2), the reader is left confused. In some regards, it could be positive, as if a bell is ringing, signifying something good, like a newspaper or dinner or someone entering your shop. It could be cause for alarm as well, as bells ringing is meant to catch a person's attention. It could also be sorrowful, as if a funeral. Given the current tone of the piece, one would assume it is the former. However, the latter is not entirely farfetched, given the theme of the piece is in relation to life and death and the meaning surrounding that. With so many possibilities given the vagueness of the statement, and even being unsure of what going up

could me (it could also be a negative thing, as it is just an observational trend without any further context), the reader is left with différance, but the actual meaning of the phrase just cannot be found, only loosely assumed.

On another occasion, Cummings directly used the phrase, "sun moon…" (8). These are binaries, as the sun is associated with daytime, and the moon with night, and both day and night are opposites. There is no clear intended meaning in such a phrase, or little understanding as to why they come up in the poem, and the only inference able to be made is that of an assumed meaning the reader can potentially try to make at the end of the poem regarding the passage of time, day switching into night. However, if day is the absence of night, then night is the absence of day, but neither can exist without the other. There is not actually a change occurring because there is not actually any difference between the two signified words here. On some accords, the moon and sun still exist at the same time, and it is daytime in one place on the planet and nighttime in another, leaving the interpretation about the passage of time possibly foundationless.

In a very similar manner, Cummings uses the same kind of word binary for the same effect. "…sleep wake" (19) is, once again, direct opposites. Similar to "sun moon…" (8), we're left with the notion of a potential meaning found in the passage of time through the sun setting and rising—but this time, it is more blatantly going to sleep and waking up. The only way this conclusion is come to is through not only comparing the two lines together, creating a codependency on one another, but waking and sleeping only has no actual correlation to the sun rising and setting. Napping exists throughout the day, and even perhaps many people sleep at night rather than during the day. This is also to assume that, once again, the fact is ignored that daytime and nighttime are a matter of location and not, rather, a stable occurrence across the globe. The player must utilize the concept of différance to try and find some meaning in what

night and day means in relation to one and other, but because of the nature of supplementing meaning to the words used to try and understand what Cummings intends by the usage of night and day.

In connection to the idea of binaries, Cummings places words that are barely able to be understood through différance. "Women and men(both dong and ding)" (33) is a line with two examples of binary opposition. Firstly, women and men are often seen as binaries. In defining what a woman is, the player would need to explain how a woman is not a man. But if woman is the absence of man, then man is also the absence of woman, and thus becomes nothing. In relation to this, the reader is given a second binary right away, "dong and ding", which does not ring any bells. Perhaps it is in relation to the bells and a representation of sounds the bell makes. If that is the case, they are not even in opposition to each other. On the other hand, it seems to be an analogy directly related to the case of "women and men" in which it is a binary that falls apart. Regardless of deferring the words' meaning to other concepts, the idea of "dong" and "ding" seem to not represent any concept at all. There is no abstract idea tied to either of these words, and thus meaning of them at all is completely made up based on other words with just as unsupported concepts. Their inclusion into the piece adds nothing to any part of the story and any part to the meaning the player can try and derive from the piece.

"anyone lived in a pretty how town" follows "anyone". This "anyone" is intended to be a name, but whether it refers to an individual or actually anyone, on the broader scheme of population, is genuinely unknown. Such ambiguousness of a term leads to an immediate sense of false equivocation. The use of "anyone" is immediately more confusing in the first stanza because anyone is now perceived as a male-identifying individual. "he sang his didn't he danced his did" (4). The phrasing now immediately makes the reader think that "anyone" is an

individual, and yet, it does nothing to actually establish this. Throughout history, humanity has often been described as "man". Even in the sense of the Abrahamic God, who is defined as without a gender, is still defined as "He" and "Father". This lends credibility to the fact that the speaker, and conversely how Cummings wishes to portray his ideals, and the already established ambiguity, there is no reason for the "anyone" to be an individual still. It could perhaps be the metaphorical "anyone", and thus, humanity as a whole.

Through the progression of the piece, the reader is introduced to another character, "noone", who is described as someone who "…loved him more by more" (12), among other actions, is described as a "she". "she laughed his joy she cried his grief" (14), for example. The usage of this term, "noone", leads to the same equivocation errors as "anyone" had. Not only is it unknown if it is an individual, despite evidence that it is, but it also leads the reader to the thought that this person is rather does not exist at all. It could be nobody, in the same vein that it could be anybody. On the same vein, the player is left confused about the spelling. "noone" is an incorrect spelling of "no one", two separate words. In such, the player must wonder if it is because "no one" specifies the absence of "one", which cannot be a binary to "anyone" because "anyone" implies the existence of more than one. Another problem is that "noone" can make sense regarding pattern searching behaviors of humans. Throughout the poem, the characters are "anyone" and "everyone", so "noone" allows for cognition cohesion, despite not even existing as a word, let alone an actual concept. To add, "noone" being purposely and continuously misspelled lends the player to some credibility in grasping onto the thought that "noone" is also an individual name, not a mere conceptual example of a lack of person.

Such a distinction between being "any" and "none" creates a binary on multiple accounts. Not only are "any" and "none" opposites in quantitative value, but the way Cummings presents

these two representations of people, regardless of individuals or populace representation, are immediately thrown into the well-known binary of male and female, as stated with Cummings' use of pronouns towards the two entities. However, in presenting "anyone" and "noone" as only two distinct parties in gender only, it is erasing the opposites they are in being either "any" or "none". One cannot have nothing, while having anything. One cannot be no one, while also being anyone. In the same regard, representing the binaries of gender without using gendered terms of identification (outside of the sparse use of pronouns), Cummings is equating them to the broader understanding of humanity, which starkly denies the necessity of gendering the vague entities anyways. If using "anyone" and "noone" is a purposely ill-defined label to create a more comprehensive and inclusive view of humanity, the restrictive gender binary being utilized in the same piece is only further confusing the meaning of the piece.

In the relationship between "anyone" and "noone", "noone" did not care for anyone, by one interpretation. "Women and men(both little and small) / cared for anyone not at all" (5-6). Since "noone" is identified as a female, they are included in this statement. It can read, 'noone cared for anyone not at all', if "noone" is counted as an individual female, per one interpretation. If the line is taken more literally, nobody cares for anyone. As it stands, the broader interpretation of the equivocal mistake, provides a more grandiose negative connotation about humanity as a whole. Perhaps the reality of the situation is people only care for themselves. Such an argument, especially with the layered meaning of individuals versus population provides an argumentation error or becomes fallacious. Taking the instance of one woman not caring for one man and writing it in such a manner where it can be interpreted as a metaphor for the entirety of humanity is a hasty generalization.

A general life marker of the piece is "anyone" and "noone" having children together, or one would assume if "anyone" and "noone" partook in the same milestone as the rest of the town. If not their children, children of the town in general were mentioned twice with some seemingly special importance. There is a paradoxical statement placed at the hands of the readers to shift through. "and down they forgot as up they grew" (10), is very similar to the first paradoxical statement of the poem that appeared in line two. The child went "down", but yet "forgot as they grew", and grew is typically associated with going up, being an opposite to down. In relation to the idea of "forget" in line 10, the player is faced with the same idea in line 23, but rather this time, Cummings creates another binary. "how children are apt to forget to remember" (23) is immediately confusing to the player who must decide if the children are doing the action of forgetting or rather remembering. If the children are forgetting to remember, then they must have just forgotten, however because they *can* remember and are only in the process of forgetting, they must not be forgetting at all in the present. Having both instances in the same phrase lacks clarity and leaves the reader trying to decide on a meaning that does not quite exist.

The poem progresses the story of "anyone" and their eventual life together with "noone".[55] Following the poem's story line, "one day anyone died i guess / (and noone stooped to kiss his face)" (25-26) gives the opposite impression, that anyone died with somebody, who is identified as "noone". It is contradictory. Due to the nature of "anyone" and "noone" having the connotation of a populace, in one interpretation, but once again, being individualized to only two individuals, compounds the meaning in paradox and leaves the player without any ground for certainty.

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[55] At a literal sense, anyone then grows old and dies alone, without anyone. Explain that Cummings. Please.

Cummings' poem does not shy away from the discussion of life and death, giving a philosophical take on the purpose of existence. A reader, given the scheme of the poem, might walk away with some meaning of reality through humanity's existence, and yet it does not. On one, and a much more positive, interpretation, the reader is lead with the idea of life being fulfilling through the trials and tribulations of man, and the little joys that exist in life. For example, the reader is explicitly shown, "she laughed his joy she cried his grief" (14). Once again, this is "noone", in reference. Beyond the interpretation that "noone" would share their emotion with "anyone", the reader is also given the interpretation of an individual sharing their life and experiences with another. They had children and watched them grow up, "they sowed their isn't they reaped their same /… // children guessed…" (7, 9), and eventually died, watching other townsfolk marry and do the same, "someones married their everyones / laughed their cryings and did their dance" (17-18). The routine of the town's life is simple, and therefore probably content, leading to the idea that life is comforting in that manner. On the other hand, the lack of individuality shown just means that everyone is simply another anyone and there is nothing inherently unique about any individual's experience.

There is a more monotonous look however, than the little joys of life, and that is the sterility of the story being told in the poem. "busy folk buried them side by side" (27), which gives the impression that the other townspeople cared enough to stop being busy and bury "anyone" and "noone", the lovers, together. However, tied to the fact that the townsfolk are more or less already doing the same things in life, the reader is left with the idea that life is everyone needing to do "…their dance" (18). Dance is a word that has a positive, fun connotation, and yet it still gives way to routine. This is not the first time a couple has died, it sure will not be the last.

On the note of death, the reader is left with the idea of humanity versus nature, or humanity in nature, in the grand scheme of meaning. By an original accord, "anyone lived in a little how town" absolutely provides that beautiful reminder of life being shared with another and being fulfilled, even if it might, at the worst, end up monotonous and routine. However, the end of the poem, after "anyone" passes away, "noone" soon follows, the reader is forced to think back. Throughout the poem, Cummings throws in gentle, beautiful reminders about nature as a whole. In the usage of lines like, "summer autumn winter spring" (3) and "sun moon stars rain" (8), it's intrinsically reinforced in the reader's mind how close all of humanity is to nature, on top of the idea of time passing. How life is a large cycle. Existence moves on without any regard to one specific individual's existence, and man's own existence moves on even with the removal of another's existence, as noted by the busy townspeople continuing to do "…their dance" (18).

Women and men(both dong and ding)

summer autumn winter spring

reaped their sowing and went their came

sun moon stars rain (33-36).

After their passing, the repetition of everyone reaping their sowing and the cycle of the season shows that time is still passing, and people are still doing the same things in life. Every individual in this piece, whether it be to identify them as individuals, or as a representation of humanity, are depersonalized. As stated, people are "anyone", "noone", and even quoted to be "someones" and "everyones" (17). Cummings is taking a vacuum to the human connection. As a reader, you bear no connection to any one person because the multifaceted layers of equivocation that happen with one proclaimed person. As pointed out before, Cummings spends a lot of time

making sure that every name is erased. Any point in the poem where a name could stand in for an individual, there is only absence. There is a specific point in which "noone" is misspelled to look closer to a name, but rather it is still not a *name.* It is a title used to conceptualize the lack of personhood that any one abstract idea of person in this poem could have. There are no descriptions of people, only loose relationships that loses its foundations to the tides of difference. There is only focus on the social constructs, such as marriage, when people are alive, but after, the player is left as a mere watcher of "Women and men…" (33) left to their devices. The plater is left with abstract ideas about the poem, and in turn, how humans fit into the metaphysical world. The focus becomes, in that last stanza, not on the people, but on nature. "summer autumn winter spring / … / sun moon stars rain" (34, 36). As stated, it keeps moving ever forward, and as time moves forward, and even people forget, there is a disregard for life itself. It is a cycle the same thing and watching people forget, leaving the reader with a genuine feeling of Nihilism.

The interpretation of the poem being nihilistic is a prime example of différance, in which the other side of the coin was enjoyment in life, with positive connotation in people's "dances" and general happiness. Because of these two separate conclusions that can spark from the same details, the same word choices, and the same constant paradoxes of word choice, the meaning of the piece is left undecided. It is impossible to choose which meaning of the text most accurately reflects that of reality. Cumming's poem lacks substance in relation to reality. Throughout the piece, readers are left without any true epistemological perception of the world, and thus the piece itself falls in on itself.

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Isaiah Shiley

A Psychoanalytic Critique of the Song "Hurt"

Music has been a part of human culture for thousands of years, and has been used to worship deities, tell stories, and convey emotions. The emotions of a song and the mental states they reflect can be identified using psychoanalytic criticism. Psychoanalytic critics look at how a piece of literature reflects the author's mind. This practice originated from psychologist Sigmund Freud, who used the practice to deal with unconscious emotions in his patients. My paper applies this literary theory to the song "Hurt." "Hurt" is a song on Nine Inch Nails's second album *The Downward Spiral*. Johnny Cash recorded a cover of "Hurt" for his 2002 album *American IV: The Man Comes around.* In this essay, I will explore how the two versions of "Hurt" differ and what these differences say about the mental conditions of the artists using psychoanalytic literary theory.

To begin, I will delve into how Nine Inch Nails's lyrics hint towards the songwriter, Trent Reznor, having depression. One way the lyrics allude towards Reznor's depression is through the lyrics about drug use, for depression is often a gateway into drug use (*Depression and Addiction*). According to this article, those who are depressed often find themselves abusing drugs. An example of this is "The needle tears a hole / the old familiar sting" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt."). This is referencing an injectable drug, possibly heroin, and he likely is or was addicted to said drug if the pain of the needle is old and familiar. Another example of drug use in the song is, "Try to kill it all away / but I remember everything" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt.") These lyrics could be inferring that Reznor tried to kill the pain away with drugs. Again, the substance is likely heroin or some form of opiate, as opiates are very effective and addictive painkillers and

are often used intravenously. Reznor "remembering everything" is him coming down from his high, and he likely used these drugs to escape reality and its problems. Coming down from his high would cause him to remember these woes once again. The allusions to drugs and drug use reflect a mind that suffered from depression.

The lyrics further reinforce the idea that Trent Reznor suffered from depression through references to suicide and suicidal thoughts, as these are symptoms of depression (*Depression and Addiction*). One example is the line "Try to kill it all away / but I remember everything" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt."). While this line could reference drugs, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, it could also mean he attempted suicide, but he was unsuccessful. In his mind, suicide would have solved his problems, but he remembers everything because he survived. This lyric and others may be used more than once, but that is part of the psychoanalytic process. Each lyric could have multiple meanings, and it is important to explore all of these meanings when trying to psychoanalyze an artist. Another reference to suicide is heard when Reznor addresses his "sweetest friend." Because this person is mentioned twice during the song's chorus, the song appears to be a suicide note intended for said friend. If the song is a suicide note to his friend, then Reznor truly did think about taking his own life. The final reference to suicide is found in the lyrics "You could have it all / my empire of dirt" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt.") This lyric could also be addressing the aforementioned friend, and Reznor wishes to leave this friend his possessions after he commits suicide. Reznor deciding who he would give his worldly possessions behind effectively reflects a suicidal and depressed mind, as people experiencing depression often give away their possessions before attempting suicide. These suicidal lyrics allude to Reznor suffering from depression.

The lyrics conveying worthlessness are the third and final way the lyrics support the idea that Trent Reznor battled depression. The first example of worthlessness in the lyrics is, "You could have it all / my empire of dirt" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt."). He does not believe his life has any value; it amounts to dirt for him. According to the National Institute of Mental Health's website, worthlessness is a sign of depression (*Depression*). The following lines also convey his feelings of worthlessness, and these lines are, "I will let you down / I will make you hurt" ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt."). Reznor only believes he is capable of letting his friend down. This lack of confidence likely stems from his abysmal self worth. The feelings of worthlessness portrayed in the lyrics is the third and final way the lyrics of "Hurt" hint towards Trent Reznor suffering from depression.

The lyrics of a song often convey most of a song's emotions, but the way lyrics are delivered can also reflect a singer's mental state. Trent Reznor's vocal style in this song continues to reflect a depressed mind. During most of the song, Reznor sings in a breathy and quiet voice; it is almost like he is whispering the lyrics. According to dualdiagnosis.org, one symptom of depression is a lack of energy, and these vocals certainly lack the energy found in other Nine Inch Nails's songs (*Depression and Addiction*). The vocal style also reflects the theme of suicide found in the lyrics. Reznor could be singing in this manner because he has attempted suicide, and he is using his last bit of life to sing this song. Finally, Reznor's vocal delivery for this song could also be alluding to worthlessness. For example, when he sings the line "What have I become?", his voice is barely audible above the instruments ("Nine Inch Nails – Hurt."). This could be Reznor showing that his opinion, his voice, is not worth being heard, and this is reflective of his lack of self worth. Vocal delivery and lyrics work convergently towards psychoanalyzing Trent Reznor.

The lyrics and their delivery both help us see into the singer's mind, and the instruments of a song can help us see even further. While the instruments of a song are usually played by someone other than the singer, they can work together with the lyrics to convey thoughts and emotions. The instrumentation of "Hurt" continues to support the idea that Trent Reznor suffered from depression. One example of this is found at the conclusion of the song. As the lyrics end, the guitar is distorted and eventually gives audio feedback. This feedback is reminiscent of the sound an electrocardiogram monitor makes when someone dies. Because of the references to suicide in the songs lyrics, this could mean the singer passed away at the end of the song. The ending is not the only part of the song to feature distortion, as the song's guitar is distorted in other parts of the song. This distortion could be representative of his distorted view of the world, which is a sign of psychotic depression (*Depression*). Psychotic depression is depression that features psychotic symptoms such as delusions and hallucinations, and the distorted guitar is symbolic of auditory hallucinations (*Depression*). Finally, it is important to note that all instruments in the song are performed by Trent Reznor, excluding the drums. This means that Reznor was able to convey his possible depression in an effective way. He did not have to try and relay his ideas to a bandmate; he chose to include the feedback and distortion deliberately. This means using the timbre of the guitar as a tool to psychoanalyze Reznor is justified. The instruments found on "Hurt" continue to hint towards Trent Reznor suffering from depression.

Seven years after Nine Inch Nails released "Hurt", the famous country musician Johnny Cash released a cover of the song, and his cover was in a significantly different style than the original. One lyric was changed, an acoustic guitar was used instead of an electric guitar, and Cash delivered the vocals in a different way. With all of these changes, it is no surprise that the

Cash cover says different things about Cash's mental state. The cover of "Hurt" reflects the regret Johnny Cash felt in his old age when psychoanalyzed.

While the lyrics remain the same, except for one insignificant change, they can be interpreted in different ways. The lyrics of "Hurt" can be used to psychoanalyze Johnny Cash because Cash chose this song to cover solely on the lyrics, which likely means he felt some kind of attachment to the lyrics. This is discussed in a Rolling Stones interview of producer Rick Rubin, who was Johnny Cash's producer. Rubin said, "Because of the way the Nine Inch Nails song sounds, I think it was hard for him to hear it. So I sent him the lyrics, and I said, 'Just read the lyrics. If you like the lyrics, then we'll find a way to do it that suits you'" (Grow). This means he chose to cover the song based on the lyrics used, and not how the song actually sounded. Because Cash felt a connection with the lyrics, they can be used to reflect his regret in old age.

The Johnny Cash cover of "Hurt" reflects the regret Johnny Cash felt in his old age. To get a deeper understanding of his regrets, I will be psychoanalyzing the lyrics for allusions to regrets from inaction and regrets from action. To do this, I will be using the research James Tobin has done on the psychology of regret, and I will use his book *Psychology of Regret* specifically. Regrets from inaction stem from failing to do something or missing an opportunity, and regrets from action stem from an action such as drug use (Tobin). Additionally, regret itself originates from a person's three ideas of self: the ideal self, the ought self, and the actual self (Tobin). The ideal self is the person someone wants to be, the ought self is the person someone believes they are capable of being, and the actual self is who someone is in real life. Regret comes when the ideal self and ought self are different from the actual self. Cash's cover of "Hurt" reflects the differences in self one may feel when they are older.

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For example, the line "My empire of dirt" could be how Cash feels about his own life ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). Everything he did and achieved, which included thirteen Grammy Awards and nine Country Music Association Awards, only amounted to dirt in his mind (*Johnny Cash*). This could be both regret from inaction or regret from action. The article titled *Johnny Cash's Dark California Days* will provide information regarding Cash's actions and inactions, as the article explores much of Cash's life. Returning to the line "My empire of dirt," I infer Cash regrets the actions that led to his dirt empire, like drugs, and the things he did not do that would have made his life better, such as fixing his first marriage (*Johnny Cash's Dark California Days)*. Another example is when he asks his "sweetest friend" what he has become ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). Cash's sweetest friend was likely his wife June, who passed away before the song was covered. He could be confiding in his wife about the drug addiction he battled in his early life. He regrets the times in his life where he made bad decisions. These regrets include amphetamine abuse, getting arrested for drugs, and starting a fire while inebriated (*Johnny Cash's Dark California days*). He was regretting the times he let others down with his poor decisions. An additional example is the lyric, "Full of broken thoughts / I cannot repair" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). These broken thoughts could be symbolic of goals he can never achieve. He regrets not going after these goals in his youth, but now he cannot satisfy these goals due to his age. He cannot repair his thoughts as he has no time, which could be cause for regret. This is an example of regret from inaction.

There are more lyrics that further hint towards Johnny Cash feeling regret in old age. The first example is, "Everyone I know / goes away, in the end" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). With Cash's advanced age, the lyric implies that he is out living the people he once knew. He may regret the actions that caused him to live longer than the people he loved. His wife June Carter

was one of these people he outlived. This line could also be him regretting decisions which caused people to walk out of his life. Drug use was one action that caused Cash to lose his first wife and the four daughters they had (*Johnny Cash's Dark California days)*. The next lyrical example references behaviors Cash likely regrets in his old age. The lines are, "The needle tears a hole / The old familiar sting" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). Johnny Cash most definitely regrets the drugs he did throughout his life. These drugs led him to be arrested, lose publicity, and lose his family (*Johnny Cash's dark California days*). The final example is in the lyrics "Beneath the stains of time / The feelings disappear." He acknowledges that his past is stained, and these stains could be a symbol of regret. By remembering and regretting the poor decisions he made in the past, his feelings of happiness and contentment may be disappearing. While the lyrics are not from Cash, they can be used to psychoanalyze him because he covered the song solely on its lyrics.

Cash uses a different vocal style than Trent Reznor did, allowing me to psychoanalyze him using his vocal style. There are times when Cash's voice sounds broken. One example is during the lines "If I could start again / A million miles away / I would keep myself / would find a way" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). They could have been cleaned up in the song's post production, but they were not. This leads me to assume that Cash wanted himself to appear broken or breaking in the song. This could be symbolic of him breaking down under the pressures of his regrets. The amount of vocals on the cover can also be used to psychoanalyze Johnny Cash. When he covered the song, he did not add any backing vocalists or use vocal layering. Layering and backing vocalists could have been used to create vocal harmonies, which would have masked the age in his voice. The lack of layering or backing vocalists could be representative of Cash being alone at the end of his life. Using a single voice track could have been used to further

convey a feeling of regret. He could regret the decisions he made that led to him being alone later in life, such as being reckless while on drugs. Finally there is slight distortion added to Cash's voice during the outro of the song. This could be symbolic of his sense of self distorting under the weight of regret. His vision of who he ought to be may be succumbing to the reality of what he actually has become, and the cognitive dissonance that creates is represented by the distortion. The vocal delivery in the Johnny Cash cover of "Hurt" continues to portray Cash suffering from regret.

The vocals are not the only parts of these songs, and the instruments are just as important in presenting the vocalists' mental states. In his cover of "Hurt", Cash does not use much vocal variety, likely due to his age. The timbre of the guitar works to convey the emotions his voice no longer can. An example of this is found in the song's outro. Cash continues to sing in the same manner, but the guitar and piano is louder and more outspoken. When considering the potential regret that the lyrics and vocals present, the increase in volume could be a way to signify increasing feelings of regret. Another example of the instruments reflecting the regret of old age is found over most of the song, with the exception of the outro and chorus. During most of the song, the only instrument is an acoustic guitar. This lone guitar could be Cash showing how alone he feels due to regretful actions, such as drug consumption and adultery. A final example of the instruments conveying regret can be found at the very end of the song. Much like the Nine Inch Nails version of the song, this song ends with the vocals and guitar being distorted. While the vocal distortion could be Cash's sense of self distorting under the weight of regret, the instrumental distortion could be working to convey that same message. On the other hand, this distortion heard could actually be Cash breaking through his regret. If the song is reflective of Johnny Cash's regret, then the distortion at the end could be his regret breaking down. The

distortion is only at the end of the song, and it would make sense that Cash grows past his regret at the end of the song. When considering the other psychoanalytic conclusions drawn from the song though, Cash breaking past his regret seems unlikely. The way the guitar is used throughout the song works to convey that Johnny Cash suffered from regret.

The Johnny Cash cover offers an additional view into the artist's mind; a music video. In the video, a Cash concert and presumably a gift shop are shown as he sings the lyrics, "And you could have it all / My empire of dirt" (JohnnyCashVEVO). In his late life, he is explicitly saying that his accomplishments have amounted to dirt. If he feels this way about the things he spent so much of his life working towards, then he may regret all of the opportunities he subsequently missed. As mentioned previously, Cash could be confiding in his wife about his regrets with the lines, "What have I become? / My sweetest friend" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt."). In the video, images and video clips of Cash with his wife play while he sings these lines (JohnnyCashVEVO). This is further proof that Cash could have told his wife about the regret he faced later in life. The final window into Cash's mind that the video provides is found multiple times throughout the video. Cash is singing at a large table covered in food all by himself. I am led to believe that Cash was expecting more people to be with him in his final days, but he is alone. This loneliness could be due to Cash's age, but also his regretful past actions. The music video Johnny Cash released for the cover provides additional insight and proof towards Cash suffering from regret.

Trent Reznor and Johnny Cash both sang the song "Hurt," and each version of the song reflects the artists' different states of mind. Through the lyrics, his vocals, and the instruments Trent Reznor was able to create a song that reflected his own inner depression. Using the same lyrics, but different vocals and instruments, Johnny Cash was able to make the song reflect the

different types of regret he likely experienced late in his life. "Hurt" is not the only song to be covered in a new way, and made to convey different emotions. In 2015, the band Disturbed covered the Simon and Garfunkel song "The Sound of Silence." Disturbed turned the soft and delicate song into a powerful ballad. Also, the Australian band To The Grave recently covered My Chemical Romance's "The Ghost of You." To The Grave made the punk classic into an anger fueled deathcore song. Disturbed and To The Grave both approached these songs with a different set of life experiences than the original artists, and it shows in their music. Some of the original artists may even think the cover is more powerful than the original song. Trent Reznor actually stated that the Johnny Cash cover was Cash's song now, as Reznor was impacted by the cover (Gabriela). Psychoanalytic criticism can be used to find new and deeper meanings in these songs and their singers in the same way I used psychoanalytic criticism to find new and deeper meanings in "Hurt."

Appendix

[Verse 1]
I hurt myself today
To see if I still feel
I focus on the pain
The only thing that's real
The needle tears a hole
The old familiar sting
Try to kill it all away
But I remember everything

[Chorus]
What have I become?
My sweetest friend
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end

You could have it all
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt

[Verse 2]
I wear this crown of shit[56]
Upon my liar's chair
Full of broken thoughts
I cannot repair
Beneath the stains of time
The feelings disappear
You are someone else
I am still right here

[Chorus]
What have I become?
My sweetest friend
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end

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[56] In the Johnny Cash cover of the song, the lyrics read "I wear this crown of thorns" ("Johnny Cash – Hurt.").

And you could have it all
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt

[Outro]
If I could start again
A million miles away
I would keep myself
I would find a way

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Carolyn Schutte

Changing Horizons: Exploring the Psychological Burden of Statelessness Through Randa

Jarrar's *A Map of Home*

Palestinian refugees in diaspora experience psychological trauma that affects their ability

to function in normal life and in their interpersonal relationships. Negative mental health

outcomes from displacement affect children as well as adults, causing them to be at a higher risk

of developing mental disorders. Waheed Ammar, Nidali's father in Randa Jarrar's *A Map of*

Home, is a Palestinian refugee who experienced this trauma in his young life. Waheed's personal

trauma and the collective pain of the Palestinian community greatly impacts his ability to

function in a healthy way in his family and community. His abusive relationship with his wife

and children is directly correlated to psychological distress that leads to untreated symptoms of

multiple mental disorders. Throughout this paper, I will discuss the common effects the

Palestinian diaspora has on the mental health of those it in diaspora. I will also note the

indications of PTSD and depression that Waheed exhibits in *A Map of Home* and how his trauma

affects his relationship with his family. In the novel, it is clear that the characterization of

Waheed Ammar demonstrates the negative mental health outcomes and psychological effects of

diaspora.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a bloody and complicated struggle that led to the

displacement of the Palestinian people. The Arab-Israeli War and its aftermath demonstrate the

subjectivity of history with painful clarity. Jonathan B. Isacoff notes the way that, when viewed

from the different perspectives of each side of the conflict, the issue takes on completely

different faces. In one view, the problem is Zionism, considered a "late extension of European colonialismimperialism," and the seizure of Palestinian land while, from the opposite perspective, the refusal of the Palestinians to accept the way the United Nations split historical Palestine is the issue (Isacoff 72). Both the Israeli and Palestinian sides held historical claim to the land but proponents of Zionism justified the horrific violence committed by the Israeli army with an incomplete and biased version of history (Isacoff 70). History, when wielded by the dominant political figures of the time, can be a weapon to "incite peoples and formulate narratives" in support of their own agendas and beliefs, Faris G. N. Said reminds us (160). It is critical that one takes the perspective of the historian in mind when searching for the truth.

The history of the Arab-Israeli Conflict is fluid and often unreliable, a critical fact to understand as the way one frames the history of the conflict greatly impacts the perceived solution to the problem today. Two main perspectives dominate the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are older accounts written to establish international sympathy for the Zionist perspective and Israeli side of the conflict and there are "Israeli new historians," made up of sociologists, political scientists, and academic historians, whose intent is to put together a "revised picture of the beginnings of the conflict" (Isacoff 73). New historians highlight Israel's militarism and the role of choice in the war, challenging the Zionist claim that Israel's military advances were only a response to Arab violence (Isacoff 78). These two perspectives on the history of Palestine exist at odds with each other in the debate over the essential problem of the conflict. The future of the conflict depends on the political leaders' ability to avoid bias, explore all histories, and work towards peace. Said holds hope that with the use of both the information and the emotions that can be found in history and with proper distance from the selfish interests of outside forces, both sides of the conflict can join forces "to support the truth, to heal wounds,

and to find a common ground that guarantees a lasting peace" (Said 163). In order to work towards such a harmonious future, historians and political leaders must pay careful attention to the way they portray the conflict since "the way we write the past can have important effects on the politics of the present and the future" (Isacoff 82). Moving forward towards a solution to this ongoing conflict, we must consider all sides of the issue.

While the Arab-Israeli Conflict was hugely impactful for the Arab community, there is variability in the relevance of the Arab-Israeli conflict to the domestic political behavior and attitudes of Arab-Americans. Helena Lindholm Schulz, who writes about the Palestinian diaspora in her book in 2003, explains that the Arab-Israeli War led to the displacement of 700,000 refugees during what they call "al-nakba, the catastrophe," that is, the war of 1948 (Schulz 24). This war caused the largest amount of refugees in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict due to the violence and atrocities of war that took place at the inception of the "state of Israel" (Schulz 24). This war also marks the first major trauma that battered the Palestinian community. This collective trauma became a crucial aspect of what it means to be Palestinian, entrenching itself in the "narrative of Palestinian identity" (Schulz 24). Yet, despite the prominence of the conflict in Palestinian history and present state, the extent to which those of Palestinian descent are affected by the conflict differs greatly. In particular, within the Arab-American community, the Arab-Israeli conflict affects the political decisions of individuals to varying degrees, challenging prevailing ideas of Arab-Americans as "a monolithic bloc intensely mobilized on Middle East issues," according to a national survey conducted by Kenneth D. Wald that demonstrates variability based on the amount that the individual is attached socially, cognitively, and culturally to the Arab-American community (Wald 1). The reason for this could be generational differences. Ragda Kahil expresses in his dissertation on

Palestinian identity in 2015 that there is a distinct presence of hybridity in younger generations in diaspora living in the United States; they live in "two worlds, two cultural systems and two identities" yet never identify as fully Palestinian nor U.S. American (Kahil 4). This experience of second-generation Palestinians is a much different one than that of first-generation Palestinians. But no matter how insulated descendants of Palestinians may be by age or social connections, the generational trauma from the conflict is inescapable.

The psychological effect of displacement is extremely damaging. For Palestinians, this effect is amplified due to the fact that they do not have a country to which they could return. Palestinian refugees live in limbo with no way of securing a passport or legal recognition. Everywhere they are treated as if they do not exist. Schulz explains that this lack of a legal document to demonstrate proof of national identity or citizenship causes Palestinians to experience suspicion and isolation at every turn (Schulz 87). This antagonism increases the psychological burden of recovering from their displacement as they cannot fully settle somewhere new. Waheed Ammar experiences this phenomenon in *A Map of Home*, where, Lynn Darwich and Sirene Harb explain in their 2018 article on intersectionality in the novel, no matter how much Waheed tries, he does not have the "privilege or ability" to integrate into American culture (Darwich 311). Waheed, unable to return to his home country, also finds that his status as an immigrant in the United States compromises his access to an "acceptable standard of living," causing a double traumatic blow (Darwich 307). He faces antagonism and resistance from American loan agents as he tries to secure the funds to build his family a house, to create his own home in a life of homelessness (Jarrar, 242). There are stigmas associated with being a Palestinian refugee in Arab countries as well, where many felt that the Palestinians had "deserted their cause and their homeland and now begged others for help" (Schulz 37). This stigma is yet

another obstacle in the path of Palestinian refugees finding peace and belonging after the loss of their home.

As a displaced people, Palestinians fight to retain their identity and find that their refugee status becomes incorporated into their personal and collective identities. Schulz explains that the Palestinian "self-image" and "self-identity," affected by the loss and injustice the Palestinian community experienced, incorporate victimhood and suffering into their very makeup (Schulz 91). In this way, suffering becomes an embedded and generational component of the collective Palestinian identity. Yet resistance to injustice is also a defining trait of Palestinians and Schulz highlights the way the concept of "struggle" became a "a prime political principle and a main ingredient in Palestinian nation-building" (Schulz 118). The identity of the Palestinian people developed at odds with the catastrophe that led to the collective trauma, and the resilience of the Palestinian community becomes apparent. This concept appears in *A Map of Home* when Waheed names his daughter Nidali, meaning "struggle" (Jarrar 3). This is the first major event in the novel and it highlights the significance of the collective struggle in Palestinian culture and literature.

As troubled as the Palestinian identity is due to its traumatic past, many Palestinians hold tightly to their identities and resist assimilation into the cultures. Christof Schumann discusses the way some in the Arab-American community seek "cultural authenticity" to maintain a stronger connection to their community's identity (Schumann 321). Much of the conflict between Waheed and Nidali in America centers around her desire to engage in typical American teenage pursuits such as attending a rap concert and Waheed's insistence that the only reason they are in America is to take advantage of its educational resources. When Nidali expresses that she wants to make friends, Waheed exclaims, "We are not here to make a friend, we are here to study and

get the best out of America!" (Jarrar 234). Darwich explains that Waheed tends to behave according to structures inherent in Arab cultures while his children begin to assimilate into American normative cultures (Darwich 309). This tension typifies the disconnect that often occurs between first and second generation Palestinians in their connection to their heritage and homeland.

The trauma of displacement due to war has direct consequences for the mental health of those affected. While all resettlement and immigration can be traumatic, fleeing political violence leads to the most negative health outcomes, according to Sanjana Pampati's 2018 article based on a cross-sectional study (Pampati 6). Unsurprisingly, immigration as an escape from persecution or violence in a home country causes more trauma than simply immigrating in pursuit of better circumstances, such as economic or educational opportunities (Pampati 6). The circumstances of one's immigration directly impact mental health outcomes and the study found that the greatest levels of depression and anxiety appeared in refugees who were forced to immigrate due to religious persecution or political violence (Pampati 5). The aforementioned cross-sectional study was completed with a sample that included 275 self-identified Arab adults who lived in Michigan. It studied immigrants, refugees, and American-born individuals separately and found that, while all three groups had high average levels of anxiety and depression, refugees reported greater levels of anxiety and depression than Arab Americans born in the United States or immigrants (Pampati 7). These results indicate that the trauma Palestinian refugees experience outweighs that of most immigrants and increases their vulnerability to developing anxiety and depression.

Many Palestinian refugees relocate to refugee camps and often become refugees multiple times. These circumstances can amplify the trauma of the Palestinian displacement. According to

a study conducted with 224 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) who had to move to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) camps for refugees, "92% of PRS demonstrated mild to severe depression symptoms and 85% demonstrated mild to severe PTSD symptoms" (Osman 3). While one must take the location in refugee camps and the twice-refugeed status of the sample into consideration, these staggering figures indicate the devastating effect these traumatic experiences can have on the psychological health of Palestinian refugees. Concerningly, the researchers in this study found that there were no mental health services available to the refugees in the camps, despite a pressing need for such services (Osman 5). Rouham Yamout found in his study of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in 2012 that the high levels of insecurity in these conditions is directly correlated with the "individual distress" refugees experience and their subsequent quality of life (Yamout 2). Palestinian refugees experience extreme levels of insecurity due to their stateless status and the fact that they are often refugeed multiple times. Waheed Ammar himself was "thrice-refugeed," a traumatic history that forever shaped his sense of home, disrupting it until he truly believed that "There's no telling where home starts and where it ends" (Jarrar 192,193). The intensity of such circumstances has enormous implications for the mental health of the Palestinian refugees.

Refugee children are especially vulnerable to developing life-long mental disorders from the trauma in their young lives. Naomi Wilson conducted a study in a refugee camp in West Bank, a camp that comprised roughly 7,000 people, 60% of whom were under the age of 18. The study utilized a combination of quantitative research methods in the form of a questionnaire and qualitative research methods through semi-structured interviews. They secured the written consent from guardians for the participation of 106 children between the ages of 11-17. This study found that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is present in approximately 90% of

children who live in war zones (Wilson 307). Refugee children are also more likely to develop

common psychological disorders than children who live in similar circumstances that are not

affected by conflict zones (Wilson 316). Further, these children are more affected by medically

unexplained health issues, known as psychosomatic symptoms, with 41% of the participants in

this sample reporting between medium and high levels of such symptoms (Wilson 316). These

results highlight the devastating effects of this collective trauma and the way that the trauma can

bridge generations, trickling down to Palestinian children as they continue to live in a state of

homelessness and stigmatization. The issue of refugee children's psychological health is

incredibly important as there are roughly 250 million children living in countries with war

conflict (Wilson 307). In her book written in 2020, Beverly Heidi Ellis explains that, in order to

reach refugee children in need of mental health services, programs based in schools and models

that utilize collaborative-care are crucial (Ellis 35). To combat the damaging effects of trauma

and ensure that refugee children can have the greatest quality of life possible, refugee camps

must create opportunities for the type of mental health services these children and adults need.

Waheed translated much of his trauma into domestic abuse of his wife and children. He

holds very tightly to a sense of purpose and acceptance and lashes out when he feels this being

threatened. While little is said in *A Map of Home* about specific symptoms that could indicate

PTSD, Waheed's irrational and abusive behavior indicates unhealthy processing of longtime

trauma. Jameel Alghaberi writes in his 2018 article about Palestinian diaspora fiction that

Waheed's dysfunctional relationship with Nidali could be caused by a "fear of losing his

daughter like he has lost his home" (Alghaberi 10). This fear is a direct link to the trauma that

has dogged him throughout his entire life as a Palestinian refugee. While, as readers, we cannot

make valid diagnostic claims about Waheed's mental health, Waheed's behavior in the novel

aligns with some common symptoms of PTSD and depression. Although there is little reference to specific symptoms of PTSD in Waheed, it is clear that Waheed experiences a greater amount of "negative emotions" such as "sadness, anger and a loss of pleasure in things that used to make them happy," a symptom of PTSD according to the American Psychological Association (PTSD: For Patients and Families). Examples of his losing battle to negative feelings permeate the novel and paint a picture of Waheed Ammar's troubled mind.

Waheed has a short and explosive temper throughout the novel and there are several instances of excessive and irrational anger. One jarring example of this volatility is when he describes to his friends a shirt he got in England as the "the most beautiful shirt [he] owns," something that makes him feel proud and confident (Jarrar, 26). When Fairuz accidentally leaves the hot iron on the shirt, burning it, he kicks her and yells "What kind of family is this, what kind of life!" (Jarrar 27). He escalates this small misfortune to a demonstration of everything wrong in his life. This disproportionate response indicates a trauma response. The fact that he received this shirt in England, a colonizing power in the Arab world, implies that perhaps Waheed feels the need to connect to the English world to gain power and, in losing the shirt, he feels that he loses the fleeting power he achieved by associating with the dominant culture. This idea would explain the correlation between his abusive tendencies and his sense of security and identity around his traumatic past. Nidali notes that Waheed seems to change when he is angry, another indication that his emotions and past traumas are overtaking him and impeding his functioning (Jarrar 50). During one abusive episode, Waheed becomes irrationally angry when Nidali makes mistakes in her recitation of the Koran as she prepared for a contest. She questions why he would allow himself to become a "monster" in his anger as he strikes her with a hanger (Jarrar 50). It becomes clear later that Waheed felt a sense of personal connection to the contest, despite his

loose observance of religion and the fact that it was his daughter's achievement to win the contest. It seems that he wraps his sense of worth up in the success of his daughter, indicating that his abusive behavior stems from his desire to retain a sense of power and identity. Waheed's episodes of violent and irrational anger mar his normal personality, changing him into someone Nidali does not recognize. This phenomenon shines a glaring light on the way past trauma interferes with normal functioning in Waheed's life and emphasizes the importance of mental health care to limit this effect.

Waheed demonstrates other unstable behaviors besides his physical abuse of his family. He repeatedly tells Nidali that he wants her to get an education so that she does not grow up to be like his sisters who "all raised babies and cooked and cleaned for their useless husbands" (Jarrar 23). Yet he is perfectly content promoting patriarchal standards within his own home. He expected Fairuz to cook and clean for him and criticized her when he felt she was failing, going so far as to drive her out to the middle of nowhere and abandon her in the desert when she crossed him (Jarrar 63). Yet on his very trip back from that excursion, he tells Nidali "You can be whatever you want," promoting his pseudo-feminist views in direct opposition to the disrespectful way he treats his wife (Jarrar, 65). These contradictions indicate his inability to reconcile certain concerns in his mind, his need to feel powerful in his home and his desire for Nidali to have a better life than that of him and his family. His trauma likely contributed to this fracture in his mind.

When Waheed is in America, he faces many stereotypes of Arab men, including that they are violent and untrustworthy. Nidali calls the police on Waheed for beating her after he receives a note falsely saying that his "daughter sucks dicks" after she is sexually assaulted (Jarrar 248). She reflects that "Cops in America don't like Arabs and they definitely don't like Arabs who hit

their teenage daughters and chase them around with knives" (Jarrar 249). Nidali also experienced

the casual racism in American schools where her social studies teacher described an incident

where a Palestinian man killed his daughter apparently because she was "dating a black kid and

working at a drive-thru" (Jarrar 273). Nidali was then shocked when the teacher asked her to talk

about *her* Palestinian father, as though she needed to defend all Palestinian men because of the

act of one criminal (Jarrar 273). This casual racism pervades American society and creates a

stereotype of Palestinian men as violent and frightening. Linda F. Maloul explains in her article

2019 article that post 9/11 representations of Arab and Palestinian men in Anglo-American

culture perpetuate a mythos of "the Arab Muslim masculine evil: an ahistorical image of Arab

and Muslim men that reduces them to a few negative, sometimes contradictory, characteristics"

(Maloul 185). Yet, as Darwich notes, Waheed's violent behavior perpetuates this stereotype and

his punishment by the "neoliberal framework of state surveillance and discipline," that is, the

police Nidali called, serves to reinforce prevalent "narratives on racialized men and their

propensity for violence" (Darwich 310). This destructive cycle highlights the way Waheed's

trauma-affected negative and disproportionate responses sabotage his ability to assimilate into a

new country and counteract the racist stereotypes he encounters. Although American culture

reinforces an essentialized and racialized negative stereotype of Arab men, *A Map of Home*

challenges this narrative by portraying Waheed as a complex and realistic Arab man (Maloul

191). Although Waheed certainly engages in inexcusable abusive behavior, he is also human and

has good moments and a tragic past that influences his future. The power of a realistic Arab

narrative in accessible literature to fight ignorant stereotypes cannot be underestimated.

      Alongside his more explosive outbursts of anger, Waheed also demonstrates other mental

health disorders found to be prevalent in the Palestinian community. Waheed also shows clear

symptoms of depression, including altered sleep patterns and a loss of interest in his normal activities, after particularly difficult and triggering events in the novel ("Depression"). After he finds out the family will be unable to return to Kuwait due to their Palestinian heritage, Waheed enters a depressive episode wherein he "sulk[s] in a bathrobe, his beard growing, his brow furrowing" saying little and forsaking the things that normally brought him pleasure such as reading his books (Jarrar 192). His sleep patterns change and he begins to stay up all night and go to bed when the rest of his family is rising in the morning (Jarrar 192). It is in these moments of vulnerability that Nidali finds compassion for her father despite his abuse, when she realizes that he is "pretending not to be sad" for the family's sake (Jarrar 192). Waheed's suppression of his emotions in order to protect his loved ones is another tell-tale sign of depression and could indicate that he struggles with sadness more often than is shown in the novel. Waheed Ammar struggles extensively with his lack of a home and much of that struggle appears in his relationship with Nidali, with whom he discusses his own complex idea of home. He says, "'Our people carry the homeland in their souls…you can go wherever you want but you'll always have it in your heart'" (Jarrar, 9). Nidali recognizes the psychological burden of that impermanent home when she says, "It helped to know this when I was little, forced me to have compassion for Baba who, obviously, had an extremely heavy soul to drag around inside such a skinny body" (Jarrar, 9). This comment is a beautiful summation of the heaviness of life-long trauma and depression.

To counteract the psychological burden of alienation from one's home, Palestinian novelists and children of Palestinian parents have taken on the challenge of maintaining the memory of Palestine. Waheed deals with his loss of Palestine by maintaining a tight mental grip on his homeland and obsessively attempting to pass on his memory of Palestine to his daughter,

Nidali, so that the idea of his country will not be lost. Alghaberi explains that these Palestinian writers function to remember and recount the whole of the collective Palestinian experience in order to "save the story of Palestine from oblivion" (Alghaberi 3). Even within the novel, we see Waheed recount the Palestinian experience to Nidali as he tells her that "our people" will always have the "homeland in their souls" as a bedtime story (Jarrar 9). Despite the fact that Nidali did not personally experience the trauma and the story of Palestine, she absorbs the Palestinian experience through the recounting of her father. The writings of Palestinian novelists make up a significant amount of what is known as "victim diasporas" (Alghaberi 3). Alghaberi states the power of these texts beautifully, noting their function in "narrating the personal and collective trauma of people who have been subjugated for decades" and reflecting that "It is filled with anguish and despair, yet it communicates a voice of resilience" (Alghaberi 3). These narratives reinforce the powerful collective identity of Palestinians and allow the unifying ideas of struggle and resilience to be inherited by the next generation. Albakry highlights the uniqueness of this genre of literature within immigrant literature as a whole. Many immigrant texts center around economic pressures that force immigration yet Palestinian literature introduces the dynamic of displacement, a fact that makes the trauma of immigration that much more difficult (Albakry 110). The Palestinian experience as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a traumatizing and unique one and Palestinian literature shoulders the burden of communicating that experience to outsiders and to future generations.

A key aspect of Palestinian collective identity is the idealization of the homeland. In a community that has lost their home country, memories are all that is left for them and holding on to the best version of their home becomes somewhat of a coping mechanism for the crushing loss. Schulz explains that the powerful desire to return to home creates a "fixation" on the land,

not the land as it is now but rather "the homeland in the mind" that must remain "forever as it was" (Schulz 97). Waheed reflects this idealization of the land in his fear of not being able to keep the memory of Palestine as a concept, a worry he addresses by communicating the idea of his country to Nidali (Alghaberi 13). This idea of sharing the memory of Palestine is an important aspect of Palestinian identity. Esra Öztarhan notes in her 2015 article that, in the absence of a physical state, members of the Palestinian community "cling to common memories and histories as their homelands" (Öztarhan 3). The collective memory of Palestine becomes incredibly important as a place of security and belonging for a people who face antagonism and suspicion in every new place they go.

While this memory of the homeland may be extremely important in Palestinian culture, I challenge the idea Öztarhan puts forth that the Palestinian displacement and their loss of home was freeing and therefore a positive event (Öztarhan 4). While the flexibility to explore alternate forms of home may be a silver lining for displaced Palestinians, it is far from sufficient to justify the horrific and traumatizing events that led to the homelessness of thousands of Palestinians and their collective statelessness. However, Waheed himself describes himself as gaining a new home as a result of his displacement. He says that he lost his home but he "gained an education…which later became [his] home" (Jarrar 106). He explains to Nidali that "War is terrible…But good things can come of it too" (Jarrar 106). Despite the many tragedies he has experienced in his life and the weight of statelessness as he brings the memory of his home with him in his heart, Waheed is grateful for the opportunity to find identity and belonging in something other than the homeland.

Exposure to traumatic events such as displacement, or forced immigration, diaspora, and statelessness causes both adults and children affected by this to be more vulnerable to the

development of psychological disorders and less equipped with resiliency resources throughout their lives. Waheed Ammar in *A Map of Home* is a Palestinian refugee and his character demonstrates symptoms of psychological distress in the form of PTSD and depression throughout the novel. As Waheed was young when he lost his home, he reflects the research results that indicate children exposed to war conflict at a young age are at risk of developing mental disorders. Waheed's trauma causes him to struggle with his relationship with his family which is characterized by irrational and abusive outbursts and contradictory statements. Waheed's character also demonstrates the desire of many Palestinians in diaspora to maintain the memory of their home country by imparting it to their children. Waheed discusses Palestine with Nidali often, hoping to carry on the legacy of his home through her memory.

My research indicates that focused effort should be made to address the psychological trauma that Palestinian refugees experience and pass on to their children to ease the psychological burden that these people experience. Mental wellness services that are linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive are incredibly important to allow refugees and immigrants to find healing from their psychological traumas and fully embrace full and happy lives in the community they find themselves in (Ellis). Navigating cultural differences and stigma around mental illness is of utmost importance in this endeavor and Ellis highlights important strategies to combat these difficulties, namely increasing cultural awareness, working with culturally aware individuals to bridge the gap between cultures, and emphasizing cultural humility in all medical care (Ellis 24). Using these methods, mental health professionals can offer Palestinian refugees the opportunity to begin to heal from their collective trauma. My study of Waheed in *A Map of Home* demonstrated the negative effects of leaving psychological distress

untreated and the generational trauma those effects can create. The cycle of pain can and should

be challenged.

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Jenna Farr

Zombies as a metaphor for our Social Anxieties and Fears

The idea of zombies inherently inspires fear. Gray, decomposing skin, missing limbs, eyeballs and decaying teeth as they are lurching and staggering forward, hungry for flesh. By looking back to the 19th century we can see that these creatures are more than just gore and aesthetic horror but also function as a form of social and political commentary. Film and Tv makers have been using these creatures as a metaphor for our social anxieties and fears since the 30's. By taking you through the timeline of how and when zombies came to be in our media I can illustrate how Zombies have been used as a metaphor for racism, globalization, contagion, and more in our media. I will be using the theories of medical humanities and historical criticism to do this. Medical humanities, first established in the 1960s, uses the ideas and tools of literature, social sciences, art, history, and theology to improve the way they think about health and healthcare. Historical Criticism, which began in the 17th century and was rooted in the reformation, is a literary criticism that works in the light of historical evidence or historical context surrounding the text. This includes the historical or social circumstances at the time.

The idea we have of zombies today dates back to 19th century Haitian Voodoo, according to Zachary Crockett and Javier Zarracina for Vox. The Haitian beliefs, largely formed by the west african slaves the French brought over in the 17th century, held that those who died from unnatural caused like murder or suicide would "linger" near their graves. During this time their souls were susceptible to being revived by a witch doctor who could then keep it as a personal slave with no agency. The Haitians called this creature a "zombi" (Crockett and Zarracina). In 1804, Haiti staged a successful rebellion against France and achieved independence. The western

world saw them and their Voodoo as a danger to imperialism. When the US occupied Haiti in 1915, catholic missionaries were sent to dismantle their belief system. This is when William Seabrook learned of the zombi. Seabrook was researching Voodoo in Port-au-Prince and was taken to a sugar company where he was introduced to four "zombies" (Crockett and Zarracina). In his 1929 text "The Magic Island" Seabrook wrote "The supposed zombies continued dumbly at work. They were plodding like brutes, like automatons. The eyes were the worst. … They were in truth like the eyes of a dead man, not blind but staring, unfocused, unseeing". The "zombies" he saw were most likely just slaves who were overworked and living in squalir but Seabrook was ignorant and sensationalized his account, exposing America to the idea of the zombie.

Most people consider George A. Romero's 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*, as the first zombie movie but Victor Halperin's 1932 film *White Zombie* which premiered just a year after *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* gets the real title. In the movie a white couple goes to visit Haiti, where they plan to be married but when a plantation owner falls in love with the woman he goes to a Voodoo master to ask for the woman to be killed and brought back as a zombie and after multiple "zombification" at the hands of the evil haitians, the Voodoo master is pushed off a cliff to his death and the white couple comes out unharmed (Crockett and Zarracina). The film was a box office success and inspired other movies throughout the 1930s and 40s in which Haiti was presented as primitive and order-less, a place where witchcraft and zombies were running rampant out to harm white people. In the article "Between the Living and Undead: How Zombie Cinema Reflects the Social Construction of Risk, the Anxious Self, and Disease Pandemic", Robert Wonser and David Boyns state that "White Zombie" is an important foundation for zombie films because it establishes the genre as a "barometer" for cultural anxiety (3). As the

political landscape of America changed, so did our social anxieties and zombies took on a new metaphor.

World War II brought with it genocide, atomic warfare and the threat of communist dictatorship. The ensuing Cold War reinvigorated America's anxieties over soviet communism and scientific advancements like the space race (Crockett and Zarracina). Zombies were America's way of dealing with these fears. We see espionage and zombies clash in movies like *King of the Zombies* in 1941 where a foeign spy uses zombies to coax war intelligence from a US admiral and in *Revenge of the Zombies* from 1943 where an evil doctor creates nazi zombies to ensure a German victory (Crockett and Zarracina). The comic "Corpses: Coast to Coast" published in 1954 shows how by this time America's fears of radiation and communism began to manifest. In one strip, "gravediggers form a union and go on strike, causing a massive buildup of unburied corpses. A Soviet communist then sends the corpses through an "indoctrination tank" (which mutates them into zombies), and forms a coalition called United World Zombies (U.W.Z.). One by one, U.W.Z. takes over the White House, the United States, Europe, and the world. But the entire uprising is ultimately quelled by an atomic bomb: "Zombie tissue doesn't stand up well to radiation!" the comic's antagonist yells out in the final panels" (Crockett and Zarracina). Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was winning the space race. They launched Sputnik in 1957 and sent the first human to space in 1961. At the cinema during this time we had *Zombies of the Stratosphere* in 1952 which revolved around an evil alien force who stole Soviet space plans in order to switch their orbit position with Earth, in 1959 we had *Plan 9 from Outer Space* and in 1964 we had *The Earth Dies Screaming* which involved bulletproof aliens who used a strange gas to kill humans and then used radio signals to reanimate theri corpses (Crockett and Zarracina). By the 60s we were using Zombies to deal with Civil rights tensions in America.

In 1968 we reached a turning point in cinema with George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*. While it wasn't the first zombie film it is certainly to date the most popular. It was also the first to "usher in a new theme in zombie cinema—that of the survival narrative in the midst of a zombie apocalypse" (Wonser and Boyns 4). The film begins when a young woman named Barabra and her brother Johnny go to lay a wreath on her grandfather's grave. When a zombie stumbles forward towards them, Johnny is done for as Barbara runs for her life into a nearby farmhouse. Her character falls to the side of the overall story as she meets a small group of survivors including our protagonist, a young black man named Ben. Romero quickly establishes Ben as a smart and heroic character who is clearly a capable leader, this doesn't come without pushback though. For the Hollywood Reporter article "The Lingering Horror of the *Night of the Living Dead*", Richard Newby writes that within the farmhouse we see a "microcosm"of American social relations as Ben and Henry Cooper, another survivor, fight for leadership. Henry acts as though because he is a white family man he is the obvious choice for a leader even though we see that he has been hiding out while Ben took steps to board up the windows. Ben and Henry fight the entire time as Henry is too prideful to fully trust a black man. Henry insists the hide in the storm cellar, which Ben retorts is a "death trap", but by the end Ben ends up hiding down there waiting for help as everyone else has died. As Ben hears the sound of the militia here to save the day, only to be shot dead by a white officer. Crockett and Zarracina write "The closing credits of the film are a series of still, grainy images, in which a mob of white Southerners puncture Ben's lifeless body with meat hooks, then pose for photos. As the final shot fixates on a raging fire reminiscent of a Ku Klux Klan ritual, we hear the sound of barking police dogs echo in the distance". The film was released just a few months after the assasination of MLK. In an interview with The Hollywood Reporter in 2016, Romero stated that he chose

Duane Jones to play Ben not because of race but simply because he was the best actor for the part, it is hard to ignore though how clearly the film critiques racism and how racially charged the film becomes simply because our lead is a black man. Duane Jones was the first black man to lead a movie in the horror genre and his image in *Night of the Living Dead* has carried its social message and become a symbol of blackness in horror. In the 50 years since Romero's film it is hard to name other heroic black leads without research. Duane Jones also starred in *Ganja & Hess* (1973) which was later remade in 2014 by Spike Lee as *Da Sweet Blood of Jesus* (Newby). Other examples are the 1991 Wes Craven feature *The People Under the Stairs*, *Tales from the Hood* (1995), *Demon Knight* (1995), *Bones* (2001), *The Transfiguration* (2016), and Jordan Peele's films *Get Out* (2017) and *Us* (2019). Even if unintentional on Romero's part, the shift from Barbara to Ben is historically significant and Duane Jones was very much aware of it as he recalled a story of being followed by teenagers as he rode home with an extra from the film. In a 1987 interview he is quoted as saying "[A]nd then I looked back, one of them started brandishing a tire iron at me. And the paradox and the irony of that I had been walking around brandishing a tire iron at ghouls all day long, and there was somebody brandishing a tire iron at me from a car but in absolute seriousness. And that moment … the total surrealism of the racial nightmare of America being worse than whatever that was we were doing as a metaphor in that film lives with me to this moment." (Newby).

George A. Romero followed up *Night of the Living Dead* with his 1978 film *Dawn of the Dead* which critiqued capitalism overall and came at a time where distribution was still unequal despite the social progress of the 60s. The film critiques mindless consumption as we see zombies roaming through shopping malls, one survivor even comments on how it was an important place in their lives before his group turns around to go shopping as they grab for

watches, tvs, chocolate, and even a mink coat. Before *Dawn of the Dead* Romero made *The Crazies* in 1973 about a military plane that crashed into a small town water supply. As the virus spreads and infects the community, we see the military coming to correct their mistake by killing the people who live there as they prepare to blow up the town. By the beginning of the 80s into the early 2000s most zombie movies were all about contagion.

Over the last several decades our world has seen a number of previously unknown virus outbreaks. "Ebola was detected in Sudan in 1976, AIDS manifested itself in the 1980s, the avian flu broke out in China in the mid-'90s, and SARS sent global shockwaves in 2003" (Crockett and Zarracina). The fear of contagion, like many of our fears before, has become an integral part of our being. In 1986 an article published by the Journal of the American Medical Association on AIDS was titled "Night of the Living Dead II" and in 1992 the World Health Organization published a detailed book on preparing for a pandemic. Our zombie films follow this realistic (albeit dramatic and fear filled) scenario. In the now famous and popular video game turned movie series *Resident Evil*, which first premiered in 1996, a major pharmaceutical company named the "Umbrella Corporation" secretly experiments with bio-organic weapons and creates the "T-virus" - a mutation which brings corpses back to life (Crockett and Zarracina). In the 2002 film *28 Days Later*, a secret organization infects Apes with an unknown rage inducing virus, when they escape from a medical lab the infection spreads throughout the world and results in a dystopian collapse of society. In more recent years more harcore survivalists, who no doubt have very real fears of apocalyptic doom or government downfall, have taken these zombie films very seriously. In 2011 a Harvard neurobiologist named Steven Schlozman released "The Zombie Autopsies: Secret Notebooks from the Apocalypse", in which he presented a "realistic" zombie scenario farcically based on scientific "evidence" (Crockett and Zarracina). The same year the

CDC famously released "Preparedness 101: Zombie Apocalypse", a guide on how to prepare for a widespread pandemic, the director was even quoted as saying "You may laugh now, but if a zombie apocalypse happens you'll be happy you read this" (Crockett and Zarracina). Although clearly trying to help and ward off fears both writers created far more genuine concern.

In 2013 the Kansas Anti Zombie Militia was formed, their spokesperson Alfredo Carbajal said "Can a natural person turn into this monster that many fear? The possibilities are yes, it can happen. We have seen incidents that are very close to it, and we are thinking it is more possible than people think" (Crockett and Zaracina). There are other militias who have followed suit and used it as their justification for their heavy gun use. Their dialogue is reflective of today's latest zombie trend: fear of each other.

In one of the most popular zombie stories of our time, *The Walking Dead* - based on a comic of the same name, we see a post-apocalyptic hellscape where "walkers" aka zombies are the least of our protagonists' groups' problems. *The Walking Dead* premiered in 2010 and is set to end 2022 after 11 seasons on AMC. Over the course of the series our protagonists are constantly in peril of other survivors. They have come up against thugs, armed bandits, cult leaders, biker gangs, rapists, and cannibals. While we get to see some of our villains' backstories and empathize with them and see how they got this way, it shows us that everyone we meet is only interested in their own self preservation, all other life is now considered disposable. The members of our main group are fiercely loyal to each other. For example, we see our main character Rick Grimes rip an attacker's throat out with his teeth after the attacker attempted to rape his son, we also see Carol (a member of Rick's group) kill a woman they recused because she may have been infected and even a young girl who we see had become desentized to the zombies as she posed a threat to the group. We see these characters not only grow but transform

into more violent versions of themselves who can justify their behavior as protecting their own in this new apocalyptic world. Robert Kirkman, the creator of both comic and tv show, said, in the first paperback introduction, "To me the best zombie movies aren't the splatter fests of gore and violence with goofy characters and tongue in cheek antics. Good zombie movies show us how messed up we are, they make us question our station in society… and society's station in the world". Kirman also writes that in *The Walking Dead* his objective is an extension of George A. Romero's work, subdued in that their characters are allowed long periods of quiet safety between catastrophic zombie attacks, which Gerry Canavan cites in his article "We 'Are' the Walking Dead": Race, Time, and Survival in Zombie Narrative". *The Walking Dead* is less about the zombie apocalypse and more about watching Rick Grimes survive, as Kirkman employs the same "waking up from a coma" trope as *28 Days Later*. *The Walking Dead* spinoff *Fear the Walking Dead* focuses, in its first three seasons, on the initial outbreak. Even though we see the initial panic as a mysterious virus infects a community, the news broadcasts of violent individuals, and the military taking over to quarantine, our main focus is on watching our main characters (the Clark family) make sense of their new world and how to survive in it. In just the first 3 seasons we see the Clark family lose one of their own, decide to go their separate ways, and become desensitized to the world around them just like everyone else.

Zombies, by their nature, represent our fear of losing agency. In all zombie cinema, specifically the earliest examples during the era of *White Zombie*, the dominant theme is loss of the individual self. Movies during the World War II era not only show fears of facism and communism but also the loss of independence matched with rampant conformity. Zombies are both undead and without a sense of self, few exceptions being 2013's *Warm Bodies* (a sort of

Romeo and Juliet tale) and the CW's *IZombie* (self aware zombies). Zombies do have some vestiges of their past selves though. Zombies are social and group creatures and as former members of society they are usually dressed in their former attire. In some cases it makes them almost indistinguishable from the uninfected. This makes the distinction between zombie and human a social construct in these fictional worlds. Wonser and Boyns write "While the cause of their disease is frequently unknown, their social position is a hyperbolic version of that described by Talcott Parsons (1951) in his discussion of the "sick role" and by Erving Goffman (1963) in his analysis of "stigma." Stigmatized individuals are ostracized from the rest of society as they are no longer viewed as acceptable members. This stigmatization furthers the out-group process providing little chance for reintegrating zombies, and often leading to their extermination" (8). Much like mentally ill members of our society, the zombie is ostracized. They are the "other", not like us, not "normal", and we punish them for it. Wonser and Boyns define "bare life" as being identified as living but not necessarily having a socially or morally significant life and "recognized life" as being socially recognized and afforded protection under the order of a normative community (8). Having "bare life" without also being "recognized" gives the status of "Homo Sacer", placing one outside of the social order and vulnerable as their lives are seen as valueless which makes them targets without consequence (Wonser and Boyns 8). Examples of this would be animals, prisoners, concentration camp inmates, and indigeous people. Zombies are "Homo Sacer" under this definition. In *The Walking Dead* we see Hershal Green, a farm owner who offers Rick's group sanctuary, and Dale Horvath, a friend of Rick, argue over their beliefs on zombies. Hershal maintains that zombies are simply suspended in their selfhood and Dale believes they are completely non-human. Hershal believes that zombies can be cured and re transformed to their old selves as it is revealed he has been keeping his zombified wife and

others in his barn to wait for a cure. Ultimately both Dale and Hershal come to believe that the only viable course of action on their new world is to kill the zombies, thus reaffirming the definition of zombies as not people and a threat to humanity. In some films like *Dawn of the Dead* and *Zombieland* the infected are hunted for sport and in other films like *28 Days Later* and *Day of the Dead* the infected are warehoused for experimentation. I don't have to reach far to see a parallel between how zombies are treated with how we see minority groups, the mentally ill, the homeless and disenfranchised being treated.

Going back in time to see the start of the zombie in cinema we can see how as history was changing so did the culture surrounding it. The discourse that surrounds historical events is just as important as the events themselves. Pieces of the civil war and cold war are frozen in time within the movies that came out at the time as they are a reflection of not only the events themselves but also how people felt about them. The films that came out at that time can just as easily be studied and analyzed as other archives of the time. These movies standstill in time, watching them is like walking back in time to a room once busy with life. You would see half empty mugs, pens put down, unfinished letters etc. It would be all you have to understand the people, social and political relations at the time. As we go back to study the past we can also see how much has and has not changed. Even in today's zombie media we see metaphors for our fear of the "other" and the instinct to fight against what we don't or won't understand. It is important to understand these films and the themes that surround them as they show us a reflection of ourselves.

Zombies are creatures whose imagery inherently inspires fear. The creatures we have created are more than just guts and gore. Fear of death, loss of agency, the "other", a deadly pandemic and so much more can be read between the lines of zombie cinema and television.

Creatures with roots in racism who became a sort of propaganda have now become like most of our other media: a way to live a scary scenario without actually experiencing it. It is important not to forget their past though as, even in horror films, we should be making progress.

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