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Volume 7, Spring 2024

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Editors' Note

Welcome to the seventh volume of the Muhlenberg Academic Review! We are honored and delighted to present this journal to you as a product of the Gamma Iota chapter of the Sigma Tau Delta intercollegiate English honor society. This journal would not have been possible without the help of a wide array of people deserving of recognition: my fellow Editors-in-Chief, Zev Lonner & Amy Swartz, senior editors Harry Glicklin, Gabi Hirshfield, & Nicole Tahmoosh, layout editor Sarah Wedeking, and our social media/business manager Anna Holmwood. Our sincerest gratitude is also with the student contributors to this journal: everyone who submitted a piece, our contributing editors who vetted every piece sent to us, and our copy editors who edited every piece featured in this journal. We also thank our faculty advisors, Beatrice Bradley & Joshua Barsczewski during the fall, and Linda Miller during the spring. Their continued support and guidance were invaluable to this process.

This year, we received a diverse range of essay submissions; included in this journal, you will find essays surrounding music, anthropology, dance, art history, and more. Each essay selected underwent a rigorous vetting process, starting with our contributing editors providing feedback on every piece submitted, our Editors-in-Chief making final decisions, and our copy editors polishing and perfecting the pieces as they are published here today. We believe each essay to be a wonderful example of the incredible writing and work being done at Muhlenberg by our peers across all disciplines.

These essays were selected not only for their incredible rhetoric, prose, and writing ability, but for their unique subject matters and fresh perspectives. In this collection, you will find thoughtful ruminations on the nature of sexual representation of teenagers in television, a compelling argument against the rhetoric of war and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, an in-depth history of the Riot Grrls movement as it pertains to the history of gender and musical performance, and even a fascinating anthropological account of a Lehigh Valley landmark. All of these pieces—and their equally fantastic counterparts included beside them—demonstrate the ingenuity and creativity happening all across Muhlenberg's campus. We commend these writers for their incredible work, and thank them immensely for being willing to share it with us.

Thank you for your support of this journal and your support of everyone who worked extremely hard to create this. We hope you enjoy this year's volume of the Muhlenberg Academic Review.

Cheers,
Emma McKinley
Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Muhlenberg Academic Review

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This is a reminder to Muhlenberg undergrads that this journal is meant to showcase your work. If you would like to submit an essay or other piece of academic writing to the journal, deadlines occur in February of the Spring semester. For more specifics and submission guidelines, please visit our website at mar.bergbuilds.domains.

The editorial board has chosen, in support of the journal's interdisciplinary nature, to translate the formatting and citation styles used by the authors as best as possible into the magazine without alteration to editorial consistency.

We have marked each piece according to its citation style.

Fresh Meat Productions

A Performance Festival Rooted in Trans-Activism and Social Justice

Kerry Kaufman
Class of 2024

Abstract:

This essay highlights the importance of transgender choreographer Sean Dorsey's interdisciplinary performance festival, Fresh Meat Productions, within the greater struggle to acquire acceptance of trans individuals within society. Through historical analysis of the LGBTQ+ community in San Francisco from the 1950s through the present moment, this essay explores the politics and implications of transgender representation that led to Dorsey's creation of Fresh Meat Productions. By outlining the history of how the movement for transgender rights became positioned behind the gay and lesbian rights movements, the argument is made that Fresh Meat Productions is a necessary intervention in the liberation of trans people. This essay purports that Sean Dorsey's work brings positive, institutional representation of transgender people to both the dance world and the world at large.

The San Francisco Bay Area has historically been known for its abundance of gay and queer culture dating back as early as the 1930s, and the city has continued to hold this reputation into the current moment. Many queer people who live in San Francisco have moved there in hopes of finding supportive communities, and one person who moved from Vancouver for this purpose is modern dance choreographer Sean Dorsey. Dorsey, a transgender man, moved to the Bay Area in 2002 in search of other trans dancers and choreographers to work with. When he became aware that he was essentially the only person with his particular identity markers looking to make modern dance in the area, he realized that his prior background in activism and organizing could support his efforts in dance and the performing arts.

Noticing a swell of transgender performers making art and coming to San Francisco in the early 2000s, Dorsey noted that none of these performers were being put on "the nation's stages" or given funding by the government due to the negative politics surrounding trans people (Dorsey 2023). Although San Francisco has served as a haven for some queer folks, transgender individuals have not always been shown the same acceptance as the gay and lesbian communities. Since there was a lack of space for transgender performances and art to be shown, Dorsey brought together a group of artists and activists to create Fresh Meat Productions in 2002. He "wanted there to be a dance-focused, multi-disciplinary performance festival that reflected [the trans] community and showcased the very highest level of artistry" (Beete 2018). Thus, on June 25th and 26th of 2002, Dorsey and fifteen other trans and queer performers put on Fresh Meat Productions' first *Fresh Meat Festival* at the ODC Theater in San Francisco as part of the National Queer Arts Festival (Dorsey 2023).

As a queer cabaret that prioritized featuring and including trans artists and queer artists of color, the festival was the first of its kind, and it was met with high praise and reviews. The positive representation of trans and queer people through performance is important to Sean Dorsey and was somewhat of a new concept for San Francisco and the United States as a whole. Not only was this festival held at a time where, essentially, the only media representation of transgender people was negative and in the context of tragedy. The festival was held in a city where the existence of drag performers became divisive within the historic fight for queer (more specifically gay) liberation which positioned the fight for trans rights to trail behind in the progress that gays and lesbians had made for their rights by this point in time.

Prior to the queer liberation movements of the 1960s and 70s, there was a lack of distinction between sexuality and gender. Historically, those two concepts had "long been intertwined in both medical and cultural discourse," and homosexuality had been defined as a form of "gender inversion" (Hillman 2011, 156). However, with the advent of Christine Jorgensen receiving the first "sex-change" surgery in 1952, she "marked the beginning of public awareness of transsexuality." With that, more public discourse on the differences between gender and sexuality was started, and the role of drag queens began to be interrogated (Hillman 2011, 158). Drag existed in San Francisco since the 1930s and has historically been tied to the experience of homosexuals. Based in the Bay Area, one of the first gay rights organizations in the country, the Society for Individual Rights (S.I.R), frequently had drag performers at their events in the 1950s and 1960s. Given that the S.I.R. was largely made up of gay, cisgender white men, the organization aligned its priorities with the values of that demographic at large. Therefore, the drag queens who were poor, persons of color, and from the inner city were seen as a problem. They were not permitted to join the organization, as their cross-dressing practices were frequently practiced in public, outside of special events.

To contextualize the feelings white, cisgender gay men held regarding drag at the time: In 1967, 170 members of S.I.R were surveyed about their opinions on drag queens, and while a little under half were in support of them, the majority held beliefs similar to those of one member who wrote "'...drag as a comedy in stage productions… is acceptable to the majority of our community. However, the homosexual who dresses as a woman for solicitation or to declare his femininity should be rejected by S.I.R.'" (Hillman 2011, 164). The sentiment that drag queens, for the specific purpose of entertainment, are acceptable. Yet, those who dress in drag for personal reasons (or who are trans) are not acceptable continued to be a belief that the S.I.R organization centered itself around.

Because of the negative and confusing optics that drag queens brought to queer liberation movements in the 1960s and 1970s, many gay activists of the time made quite a point to distinguish the difference between gender and sexuality. The gay rights movement was primarily wrapped up in respectability politics that centered on dressing 'straight' and in alignment with the gender one was assigned at birth in order to gain the respect of the cis-heteronormative hegemon and acceptance into its domain. For some "gay activists, drag furthered stereotypes of effeminate homosexuality that liberationists were trying to combat" (Hillman 2011, 169). Some thought that the existence and inclusion of drag queens would mean the public would take the cause for gay rights less seriously. Due to these strong beliefs, a significant amount of gays and lesbians saw gender-variant people (outside of drag spaces) as a threat to their mission. This "threat"led to the exclusion of gender queer people which has contributed to the fight for trans rights falling significantly behind compared to the movement for homosexual rights. Susan Stryker, trans theorist and

anthropologist, has noted that "the field of transgender studies has taken shape over the past decade in the shadow of queer theory" (Stryker 2004, 214). The historical separation of homosexual and genderqueer identities has created a lag in the development of sound theory and the representation of the trans community.

In part, due to the suppression of genderqueer identities within the gay and lesbian communities to align with the mainstream gay liberation movement, the stories that were being told about the transgender community and its members were largely centered around themes of tragedy and suffering. By the 1990s and early 2000s, the movement for trans rights was brought further into public light with the creation of films that told sad and stereotypical stories about transgender people. When Sean Dorsey put on the first Fresh Meat Festival, those were the only kinds of stories that would sell to people outside the genderqueer community regarding trans folks' lives. Released in 1999, the film *Boys Don't Cry* told the true story of a transgender man who was murdered when his identity was uncovered after fleeing home. At the time, this film "marked a massive breakthrough in the representation of gender-variant bodies" (Halberstam 2018, 100). This representation was one of the first times a story of transmasculinity was depicted accurately in the media or a performance made for a broad audience.

However, *Boys Don't Cry* is a brutal story and representation of the experience of being transgender, showcasing the worst-case scenario of what life can look like for a trans person. However, this was the first time many trans men saw themselves accurately depicted in any sort of media. Although the representation was grim, the film began to help affirm the existence of trans men in our society. While *Boys Don't Cry* served this purpose and showed some of the many barriers that transgender individuals face, it did not necessarily age well as more research and activist work has been done on and for the trans community since the movie's release. Many queer activists today have accused the movie makers of profiting "off the representation of violence against trans people'' (Halberstam 2018, 101). What once was groundbreaking and necessary has become an example of how the public viewed transgender people at the time: tragic, weak, and in need of help or sympathy. Therefore, in 2002, positive reflections of trans people in the arts and media were desperately needed. The popular narrative was quite dark, and examples of art centered around trans joy and humanity did not explicitly exist in broader society yet. Unfortunately, sympathy needed to be garnered around tragic trans stories before the public could digest any joy concerning people who are transgender.

Sean Dorsey created Fresh Meat Productions because of his experiences with representation, or lack thereof, for transgender individuals in the arts, specifically in dance. He grew up an activist and came to dance late, partly because he did

not see anyone like him doing what he wanted to do. In an interview with the National Endowment for the Arts, Dorsey mentioned that "as a transgender and queer person, I didn't see anyone like me in dance. Ever. So how could I see my future there?" (Beete 2018). The idea and reality of struggling to see a future for yourself because you do not see yourself reflected anywhere in a positive light drives Dorsey to continue his work personally and with the creation of Fresh Meat Productions.

In 2002, Sean Dorsey began the work of creating positive examples for trans and queer people in art and dance so others could see a future in the art form(s). In a *Bay Area Reporter* article released five days before the premiere of the first Fresh Meat Festival, Dorsey mentioned that "Fresh Meat … responds to the lack of true representation many of us have experienced in traditional queer productions that claim to be inclusive. We're proud to prioritize presenting the work of artists of color and/including transgender artists" (Szymanski 2002). And with the intersectional nature of this performance festival, the review in the *Bay Area Reporter* called it "a show that transformed audiences into members of the groovy revolution" was a poignant one (Szymanski 2002). Dorsey believes that creating and sharing dance is a powerful tool for social change, as dance "goes right to your heart [, it] bypasses the brain" (Beete 2018). Depicting intersectional trans identities for an audience through dance helps connect people on the soul level before they get the chance to intellectualize the experiences. Showing transgender performers dancing helps humanize the demographic as the experience of being affected and feeling emotions while watching them perform is defined by the experience of being human before any other identity marker or category; few things are more human than feeling our emotions and sharing them with others. By sitting in the audience of the *Fresh Meat Festival*, one is brought into a space of activism because the act of being and living authentically as a transgender person and/or supporting those who are is a political act of resistance in a society that has historically and is currently trying to write trans people out of existence.

With the success of Fresh Meat Productions' first festival in the early 2000s, there were both needs and demands for the work that Sean Dorsey started to continue. Following its debut, the Fresh Meat Festival became an annual event, and Fresh Meat Productions has grown into its own non-profit organization. Due to the abundance of positive community feedback surrounding the festival, Dorsey and his collaborators were able to turn it "into a year-round arts organization that could invest in and nurture the burgeoning transgender arts community, provide mentorship, training, and leadership, and build a transgender artist movement." Also, Fresh Meat Productions is "the first and only organization of [their] kind in the nation," and their "programs will reach over 15,000 people" (Dorsey 2023). As

an organization, they do fantastic work providing funding to trans artists, creating advocacy programs within the arts and dance, and generally bringing the positive, institutional representation of transgender people to the dance world and beyond. Fresh Meat Production is an example to others that it is possible to be transgender and have a future in dance and performance.

Sean Dorsey's work, which both rectifies and builds upon the history of queer activism and advocacy in San Francisco through creating Fresh Meat Productions, was, and is, incredibly important. Being the first and only organization and festival of its kind, a lot of the work to represent transgender dancers in a helpful, progressive light still falls on Dorsey and his team. The fact that there are no other organizations in the country that tackle these specific issues is evidence of the movement for transgender rights being situated behind the movement for gay and lesbian rights. In the past few years, over two decades after the Fresh Meat Festival's debut, United States legislators are escalating their work on rolling back queer rights across the country. Still, the rights of transgender individuals are currently the most heavily targeted. Trans folks are being called dangerous, predatorial, mutants, and mentally ill in the media and by U.S. elected officials. Now more than ever, we need more organizations like Fresh Meat Productions that humanize the trans experience. Sean Dorsey began to address the lack of representation of trans people in dance and the arts by creating his festival and organization in 2002, and he is continually doing so. Over twenty years later, the mission statement on Fresh Meat Productions' website expresses that the organization works to "create and commission new work, present performing arts programs, conduct education and engagement, and advocate for intersectional justice and equity in the Arts" (Dorsey 2024). However, if the fight for the rights of transgender people is to progress further, we need even more spaces and conversations like the ones Dorsey has started and created around positive representation and imagining futures that are genuinely inclusive of transgender people.

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English

Sexpectations:
The harmful effects of sex scenes in shows for teens

Marie Tohill
Class of 2025

Abstract:

This paper discusses the psychologically harmful expectations perpetuated by sexual content in television dramas produced for young adult audiences. Previous research indicates that sex scenes in television intended for teenagers lead to unrealistic notions of sex among their audiences . In response, this paper analyzes two popular television dramas broadcasted on The CW: *Riverdale* (2017-2023) and *Gossip Girl* (2007-2012). By deconstructing specific sexual content in these programs and samples of fan reception, this paper expands upon previous studies, adding textual analysis and applying existing theories to Gen Z audiences. Analysis of these two television programs results in the conclusion that sex scenes in dramatic television for teens are not viable sexual educators, despite teens turning to television as a way to learn about sex. Additionally, the paper provides analysis of the comedic Netflix original series *Never Have I Ever* (2020-2023). The findings indicate that genre impacts portrayal of sex on television, and comedy's affordance to include narratives of confusion, hesitation, and humor in sexual content allows comedic television to provide teens with more realistic and psychologically beneficial sexual content than dramatic programs.

MLA Style

After a long day of investigating how to protect the trailer park where he lives from being bought by his friend's mobster father, Jughead sits on the couch with his girlfriend, Betty. The dark living room is saturated with gloomy tones of navy, orange, and brown. Betty commiserates with him as he is currently on probation from his gang, the Southside Serpents. High school sophomore Betty assures Jughead that she can handle his darkness. "I know. I know you can," replies Jughead breathily. After telling Jughead that she is going to head home, he puts his hand on her thigh, telling her to stay. A sultry female voice floods the scene, singing, "I'm not ready to leave, I've got so much more to do," as Betty begins to straddle Jughead, kissing him. He impulsively unzips her dress, leading Betty to tell him to wait, only to say, "I just want you, all of you, tonight" ("Chapter Twenty Five").

This scene from *Riverdale* is Betty and Jughead's first time having sex. The clip of the scene on YouTube yields comments ranging from "if my relationship isn't like Bughead [a combination of the names Betty and Jughead] I don't want it" (@riverdalestrangerthings4987) to "people say bughead was rushed…however it took them almost a season and a half to have sex. They weren't rushing, they were forming a stronger love" (@TheAlorra). These comments point to expectations and ideals being formed among Riverdale's viewers. *Riverdale* is produced for an intended audience of adolescents aged 14 and above (Slaton), yet the show makes a point to include several sex scenes between its high school-aged characters. *Riverdale* is a prime example of how television shows made for young adults often project problematic and unrealistic ideals surrounding sex. Therefore, I argue that sex scenes in television made for young adults negatively impact their viewers' perceptions of sex.

When choosing what television shows to watch, 33.4% of teenagers aged 13 to 18 admit to seeking out shows with sexual content (Bleakley et al.). It is theorized that this motivation is fueled "by the need for information and validation, before or after engaging in relationships and sexual behaviors" (Bleakley et al. 314). However, when looking at the depiction of sex in popular movies, "98% [of sexual encounters] included no reference to contraception, and 89% resulted in no consequences" (O'Hara et al. 984). Moreover, "only 9% of sexual content in movies contained messages promoting sexual health" (O'Hara et al. 984). These statistics provide evidence that the majority of popular movies are not viable sexual educators for teenagers, despite teens turning to them as a way to learn about sex. Applying these theories to popular television, it is especially critical to consider the effects of sex scenes between teenage characters in television made for young adults.

Riverdale's Jughead and Betty consummate their relationship during their sophomore year of high school, when the characters are both between fifteen and sixteen years old. This scene marks both of their first times having sex; however, the

only hint of hesitation is present in Betty's pausing for one minute to confirm that she does, in fact, want "all of [him], tonight" ("Chapter Twenty Five"). Jughead seems to have already assumed this when he asks her to stay for the night and undresses her without asking. The scene fades to black as Betty and Jughead make out on his couch, leaving what happens next up to the audience's imagination. Parallel to the problematic aspects of sexual content in popular movies, the writers of *Riverdale* fail their teenage audience by choosing not to feature their characters discussing contraception or sexual health. They rather choose to offer a watered-down version of sex that leads fans to assume that they are watching an ideal sexual encounter, as evidenced by the comments on the YouTube clip of the scene.

Unrealistic expectations of sex are established not only by Betty and Jughead's first time, but also Veronica and Archie's sexual journey. The other couple at the center of *Riverdale* beat Betty and Jughead to bed, sleeping with each other in the first season of the show. In their first sex scene, the couple sneaks into Veronica's house in the middle of the night, naturally to the tune of "Believer" by Imagine Dragons. Archie asks if Veronica's mom is home, to which she replies yes, but "after mixing her reds and whites… she's no doubt sleeping soundly in the arms of prince Valium" ("Chapter Thirteen"). Still, Veronica assures Archie that they must keep quiet. Soon enough, they are undressing each other in Veronica's childhood bedroom. Moonlight floods through her drapes, allowing the audience to see only Veronica and Archie's undressed silhouettes. The scene fades to black, but not before the camera scans over Veronica's breasts as she tells her boyfriend, "We've had this day with each other from the beginning, Archie" ("Chapter Thirteen").

All of *Riverdale*'s four main characters have sex before turning seventeen years old. Each of the couples' first times are marked by romantic dim lighting, the bodies of actors in their twenties, and a lack of explicit verbal consent. Additionally, both scenes are strikingly similar. The female characters sit on their boyfriends' laps while the male characters caress their girlfriends' bodies. Both women take charge in declaring that it is finally time for them to have sex by uttering highly scripted lines, most likely penned by men ("Full Cast & Crew"). The production of *Riverdale* prioritizes sultry soundtracks and featuring the chiseled bodies of the show's actors, including close-ups of 6-pack abs and large breasts, over realistic depictions of safe sexual practices that would benefit their teenage viewers in the long run.

Another television show that capitalizes on its elite high school characters' steamy sexual encounters is *Gossip Girl*. *Gossip Girl*'s intended audience is teenage girls aged fifteen and above (Filucci). In season one of the show, main characters Serena van der Woodsen and Dan Humphrey have sex with each other for the first time. They are both sixteen years old. The scene is set in an art gallery on Christmas Eve. Earlier in the episode, Dan discloses to Serena that he wishes it would snow on Christmas. As a romantic gesture, Serena has decorated the room with projections of snowy trees and paper snowflakes. Fake snow falls from the ceiling. Dan also presents Serena with a Christmas present: a story that he wrote about the first day that she spoke to him.

Serena is so flattered that she does not read the story, but instead kisses Dan passionately. After several seconds of kissing she unties her top, revealing her breasts. Dan is shocked, replying, "Are we really gonna do this?" to which Serena says, "Yeah" ("Roman Holiday"). Then, they descend onto the mattress Serena has placed on the floor of the art gallery as the camera pans to a window. To confirm that the couple has had sex, the scene cuts to Serena and Dan lying naked in bed the next morning. Dan tells Serena, "This is without question the best Christmas ever" ("Roman Holiday").

This episode aired on the CW Network in 2007, ten years before the release of *Riverdale*. The similarities in sex scenes in both of the CW series indicate that *Gossip Girl* may have influenced Riverdale's approach to sexual content. A recurring theme lies in the assumption that a woman taking her top off leads directly to sex. Both *Gossip Girl* and *Riverdale* fail to acknowledge any of the steps between kissing and penetration. While this may increase the dramatic effects of their plots, it does a disservice to teenage audiences. Communication and hesitation are important parts of sexual activity that are left out of sex scenes in these television shows.

Including uncomfortable parts of sexual experiences in television scenes would be beneficial to teenage viewers (Martino et al. 97). Higher rates of consuming sexual content on television are associated with younger ages of sexual debut and, consequently, a greater likelihood of disappointment in that sexual encounter (Martino et al. 97). Several studies indicate a connection between intake of sexual content on television and regret after having sex for the first time. Because "TV's sexual portrayals may help to shape adolescents' sense of what is normative and expected" (Ward et al. 248), it is theorized that this regret stems from their sexual experiences not living up to the glamorous sex scenes that teenagers are exposed to on television (Martino et al., p. 97). Prioritizing conversations about contraception, STDs, and consent in scriptwriting would provide a level of realism to sex scenes in television, giving teenage viewers a more accurate representation of what safe sex actually requires of its participants.

While not the majority, some shows succeed at including scenes that highlight teenagers' hesitations and uncertainties surrounding sex. One show that represents high schoolers engaging with sex in a more realistic way is *Never Have I Ever*. Released in 2020, *Never Have I Ever* is a Netflix series made for young adults aged

14 and above (Slaton). In the first episode of the series, high school freshman Devi plots to lose her virginity by asking if her crush would want to have sex with her ("Pilot"). Surprisingly, he says yes. The next day, he drives her home after school and they hang out in his garage. However, when Paxton takes his shirt off, Devi is overwhelmed. She makes up an excuse as to why she has to leave and runs out of the door.

Later that night, Devi is studying with her friends. She opens up to them, saying, "I think about sex 24/7, but I don't really know how to do it. In the movies, you always see the girl kiss her way down a guy's body, but then she moves offscreen," admitting, "I thought I was ready, but maybe I'm not" ("...had sex"). Her friends decide that they are smart enough to teach themselves how to have sex, leading to a montage of them doing kegels and using stuffed animals to visualize different sex positions. While many television shows dramatize sex in order to portray glorified unachievable standards, the awkwardness and embarrassment surrounding sex in *Never Have I Ever* appeals to the show's teenage audience because it is relatable. According to research done by Martino et al., writing honest conversations about hesitation when it comes to sex are more likely to benefit teenage audiences (Martino et al. 97). The more one's sex in real life correlates to what they have seen on television, the less likely they are to regret initiating their sexual debut (Martino et al. 97).

Unlike *Riverdale* and *Gossip Girl*, *Never Have I Ever* is a comedy. This classification allows the writers of *Never Have I Ever* to poke fun at the awkward and humiliating parts of sex. It is funnier to see Devi run out of her crush's garage after seeing him shirtless than it would be if she just chose to make out with him as the screen fades to black. Additionally, the production of *Never Have I Ever* is run by two female showrunners, Mindy Kaling and Lang Fisher. In an interview, Fisher clarified that the showrunners' high school identities as "goody-goodies who were dorks and maybe each had like half a boyfriend" majorly influenced the narrative and style of the series (Chuba).

In comparing *Never Have I Ever* to *Riverdale* and *Gossip Girl*, I theorize that comedic shows for teenagers are more successful at developing realistic expectations of sex than dramas because sex in real life tends to be confusing, messy, and funny, much like the content that comedic shows seek to produce. Therefore, I suggest that teens who actively seek out sexual content in their television choices (Bleakley et al.) turn to comedies for young adults, rather than dramas, in order to predict more satisfying sexual encounters. Additionally, scriptwriters for television shows aimed at teenage audiences should prioritize realism in sex scenes no matter the genre of their content. The portrayal of sex on television has the power to inform young adults' expectations of sex in real life, and highly unrealistic content results in younger ages of sexual debut and overall sexual dissatisfaction (Ward et al. 248). Therefore, in order to promote properly informed sexual practices among teenagers, television writers must aim to depict healthy and safe sex between teenage characters on television.

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Public Health

Why We Shouldn't Use War Metaphor to Describe the Next Pandemic

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Abstract:

The warfare metaphor that is used in public health impacts societal attitudes regarding prevention, spread, and vaccination. Using a socio-historical perspective to examine media examples from the 19th century onward, a greater understanding of the pervasiveness of the metaphor are illustrated. Articles published in the New York Times about the HIV/AIDS crisis, a comic published in North Carolina's Health Bulletin in 1919, and a speech given by President George W. Bush's are used as examples of how the metaphor functions. These examples are also put in conversation with articles and publications in global health, medicine, and health communication. The paper culminates in a presentation of current attitudes relating to the most recent COVID-19 pandemic, and how war metaphors can foster feelings of stress, weakness, and blame. Division creates more gaps in the collective spread of scientifically accurate information.

APA Style

The warfare metaphor that is used in public health impacts societal attitudes regarding prevention, spread, and vaccination. Using a socio-historical perspective to examine articles and publications in global health, medicine, and health communication, a presentation of current attitudes can be derived specifically regarding the most recent COVID-19 pandemic. Media and news outlets such as the New York Times, the Washington Post, and even the less credible Twitter and Instagram circulated information about the spread and brought ideas into discussion. "Invade" or "infiltrate," "fight" or "journey": what words will be used to describe the next pandemic? Highlighting the relationships between virus and human, doctor and patient, politician and constituents, the news and the spread of information transforms into many shapes and ideas. What happens when people die? There is an implied weakness plastered onto the soldiers who can't survive the battle. How can we illustrate susceptibility to disease as more than a moral failing or weakness? Using examples from the 19th century onward, humans make sense of disease in the terms they know, with a united front: a war against the disease.

Historically, scholars point to the origins of military metaphors in medicine developing in the late nineteenth century, hand in hand with germ theory development. In the study of public health and epidemiology, this is emphasized in the work of John Snow, the "father" of epidemiology, when he made linkages between water pumps and the cholera spread in England. But as it is discussed in Abraham Fuks' book, the cultural palace of ideas surrounding the human body's ability to engage with viruses was described in many settings and countries prior to the 19th century. German physician Carl Heinrich Schultz used the words Krankheitskampf (fight against disease) and Wehrprozess (military process) in his published opus on pathology in the mid-19th century. He also hypothesized the reactions a body has to pathological matter: expulsion of the virus from the body, casual force, or a defensive stance, like a fever. (Fuks, 2021). Pushing the virus out, using the immune system as machinery, was not out of the realm of possibility in the time of Pasteur's Germ Theory, because of the adversarial nature between person and body. (Fuks, 2021).

In Fuks' words, scientific theories themselves are metaphoric images of nature. In relation to Pasteur's Germ Theory, he presents the adversarial nature of the relationship between person and the body as being directly linked to the discovery of bacteria. It is a mixture, because from the acute to contagious, the devastation of disease spread mirrors that of a battle ground at some points. With the addition of the exogenous foreign elements as the culprit, it adds to the conceptualization of the image. (Fuks, 2021). A common thread in the literature of war metaphor in relation to medicine and disease is Susan Sontag's 1978 publication titled Illness as

Metaphor. Sontag pioneered a vision of critical theory behind the use of the warfare metaphor in cancer, but also how framing can provoke anxiety and a sense of helplessness in patients suffering from disease. This brings to the forefront the question: what happens when somebody dies? When treatments fail, will patients feel that they themselves are weak in comparison to the conceptualization of the virus?

Various examples of warfare metaphors to describe infectious disease spread exist in media from the early 20th century onwards. As Halliwell and Aristotle defined in Poetics, metaphors refer simply to 'a name that belongs to something else' (Halliwell & Aristotle, 1998). For catchy article titles, news reports, speeches, and comics, a warfare metaphor may be a suitable comparison and may create an understandable and relatable image for viewers and listeners. 17% of all articles in Time Magazine published between 1981 and 2000 contained at least one war metaphor (Karlberg & Buell, 2005). Another well-known use of warfare metaphors is for political campaigns such as "The War on Drugs," but also for causes like crime and poverty (Wicked & Bolognesi, 2020). These examples and platforms for usage can be a strong argument for and against the use, but these reasons are far removed from the science of spread and more connected to the marketability of the ability to garner attention and alarm. Words that were used to describe disease in public discourse on Twitter include struggle, weapons, wars, soldiers, violence, and attacks, but, additionally, the words peace, resist, and victory (Wicked & Bolognesi, 2020). There is a layer of seriousness that a war metaphor may add to the communication of disease–and inspiration– but the initial sentiment is often negative or attached to the fear belonging to the violent nature of warfare. The war also feels far away from those who aren't battling symptoms or watching a loved one struggle and face life changes as a result.

Another aspect of war metaphor is the basis of adversarial relationships that it contains. At its core, there is a theme of Us vs. Them. There are in-groups and outgroups, the healthy and the sick. This can be isolating and even stigmatizing to the people experiencing disease, as identified by Susan Sontag in her essay "AIDS and its Metaphor." Sontag 'attacks' military metaphor: "It overmobilizes, it overdescribes, and it powerfully contributes to the excommunicating and stigmatizing of the ill" (Nie et al., 2016; Sontag, 1990, 182).

Sontag wrote about the capacity of microbes to "invade" or "infiltrate" and making the connection to Robert Koch, who, in 1882, identified the bacterial causative agent of tuberculosis. Sontag highlights the "striking literalness and authority" that a warfare metaphorical view can encompass (Sontag, 1978, p. 66). Donald Trump referred to himself as the "wartime president" and said COVID-19 is an "invisible enemy." Authority figures choose to employ the warfare metaphor because

it is already existing within the political wheelhouse, and it promotes a sense of rallying the "troops." Troops are often used to describe healthcare workers (Levenson, 2020). In his 1914 address to the Tuberculosis Association, Sir William Osler encouraged his colleagues in public health by stating, "We have tracked the enemy, and know his very stronghold, and we know his three allies—poverty, bad housing, and drink." This example of an early 20th-century use of the warfare metaphor highlights the major determinants of tuberculosis and then goes on to describe the disease as man's enemy, warning the audience about the hundred-year war ahead. (Fuks, 2021). Using warfare to inspire action can easily have the opposite effect: war can evoke fear, and oftentimes images of battle. The fear may be evoked by the battle that is out of sight, an internal battle within the body. The battle will go unnoticed and avoided by those who are not in the direct line of fire. This can cause apathy among the population as a disease spreads, as a losing battle does not rally the troops.

Sontag argues that the military rhetoric about cancer, for instance, contributes to stigma around the disease and those have it. The figurative representation of illness as viewed by Sontag is influenced by her experiences of being a cancer survivor and working in academia. The figurative representation of "cancer as a war," in which the body is framed as a battlefield, illness functions as an unavoidable causality or as an enemy to fight (Panzeri et al., 2021). The danger emerges when patients are represented as expendable soldiers, and then this frame contributes to the general perception of the disease as a punishment, something fatal and shameful to repress, or alternatively to completely extinguish or defeat, which is sometimes never possible.

How do we describe disease? How are infectious diseases featured in influential newspapers like the New York Times? One comparison that can be highlighted is between HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. There are two newspaper articles that mirror each other, one titled "U.S. Reports AIDS Deaths Now Exceed 100,000" and "U.S Deaths Near 100,000, An Incalculable Loss" (New York Times, 1991; New York Times, 2020). Initially, the wording of the title can be identified as a difference; when referring to COVID-19, the lives lost are 'an incalculable loss' whereas the over 100,000 AIDS-related deaths 'now exceed," which shows no acknowledgement of loss. Another difference is that AIDS is identified in the title as the reason for death, whereas the 2020 article title does not feature the reason for death. It is impactful that the New York Times does not connect COVID-19 to the number of deaths; it makes the deaths feel farther removed from the disease. The 1991 article is smaller in comparison to the 2020 COVID-19 article. The 2020 COVID-19 article is a full-page feature, with names and information about the people who have passed

to humanize them. The HIV/AIDS article, very much in the fashion of the disease, is comparatively silent. Silence regarding HIV is associated with the silencing of patient experiences and the loneliness that emerged out of the fear of judgment for contracting the life-long illness. This is because of the association between HIV and gay intercourse; gay men were a vulnerable population in the United States when it came to the initial HIV outbreaks, and this increased judgment and negative attitudes. Furthermore, it has been pointed out by Fuks and also highlighted in "Healing Without Waging War," an article published in The American Journal of Bioethics, that by silencing patients' voices by erasing their experiences and narratives of illness, using war metaphor can hinder the medical profession as a whole. Similarly, the literature would suggest that the use of military metaphors can hinder the public health field and society in general (Fuks 2009; Nie et al., 2016). The relatability, the cause for alarm, and the honoring of the deceased are downplayed by the HIV/AIDS article's wording, placement, and size.

Another vessel of communication that can affect the public's perspective on infectious disease spread and mitigation is comics. "The Way North Carolinians Do It at Home," a comic published in North Carolina's The Health Bulletin in October of 1919 draws on very uncomplicated warfare imagery. One half of the comic features a soldier crouched down, shooting a machine gun into a battlefield with soldiers both dead and alive. There are clouds assumed to be from bombs or other methods of destruction in the backdrop, and the gunfire is illustrated as well. The opposing half of the comic mirrors the first, with the same positioning of a coughing man on the left-hand side in the place of the soldier. The coughing man is large in comparison, and his droplets and airborne particles fly like bullets in the direction of dead or dying men, women, and children. Under the war scene is text that reads: "The way the Germans did it at Chateau-Thierry," and under the coughing man, "The way North Carolinians do it at home." These texts employ the adversarial relationships found within the warfare metaphor and displays the inevitable casualties that come from it, as Sontag identifies in her 1978 publication. The second line of text underneath draws a comparison between the 1,000 casualties from North Carolina in World War I and the 13,644 casualties from the fall and winter epidemic of influenza. This comic additionally calls influenza a "spit-borne" disease, implying the saliva projecting from the man's mouth is what killed the other people in the image (The Way North Carolinians Do It at Home, 1919).

Debatably, one of the most influential forms of delivering information is from individuals in power. Their influence over the public can be a determinant for attitudes and further actions. President George W. Bush's public health response to avian flu is an example where mass military metaphors are used. Bush's speech in late

November 2005 described the circumstances as dire enough to take defensive action and have an aggressive public health response (Hanne & Hawken, 2007, p. 95). In the case of the United States government's response to the 2005 influenza pandemic, the defensive "strategies" are "building national reserves of antiviral medicines" (Williams, 2005). In Hanne and Hawken's original article about the metaphors for illness in contemporary media, they state that while metaphors of attack and defense are commonplace in popular and professional discourse, the comparisons to speeches about terrorist attacks are eerily similar. It doesn't help that strengthening surveillance and protections for the American people sound like the job of homeland security instead of that of doctors, nurses, and public health professionals (Hanne & Hawken, 2007, p. 95). In a photo taken of President Bush during a press conference on November 1st, 2005, he is passionately speaking and gesturing behind the podium. He was speaking about his National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness:

> Today, I am announcing key elements of that strategy. Our strategy is designed to meet three critical goals: First, we must detect outbreaks that occur anywhere in the world; second, we must protect the American people by stockpiling vaccines and antiviral drugs, and improve our ability to rapidly produce new vaccines against a pandemic strain; and, third, we must be ready to respond at the federal, state and local levels in the event that a pandemic reaches our shores. (White House Archives, 2007)

"Reaching our shores," marking the analogy of enemy ships entering our waters, here for attack. In relation to the question of whether the war metaphor influences reasoning, the widespread use of public speech for framing may play a part in any negative attitudes and effects. Some past presidents before George W. Bush have declared war against poverty (Johnson, 1964), crime (Johnson, 1965), drugs (Nixon, 1971), cancer (Nixon, 1971), and inflation (Ford, 1977) (Panzeri et al., 2021). To retrocede to the idea of terrorism working in tandem intentionally and unintentionally with disease discourse, in terrorism framing, the Other is like that of disease. In the example of cancer, cancer cells are described as 'non-intelligent,' 'primitive,' or 'atavistic' (Sontag, 1978, p. 67). In this way, cancer becomes a metaphor of 'the barbarian within,' which, in turn, makes counterterrorism a civil and ethically moral action (Rodehau-Noack, 2021). The cancer cells are killable, and ideally, the patient would be better off without them because they threaten the health and well-being of the patient.

The academic and peer-reviewed studies conducted and published about war metaphors span many different areas and disciplines. The first examination is "Framing COVID-19: How we conceptualize and discuss the pandemic on Twit-

ter," published in the Public Library of Science Journal. Researchers Philipp Wicke & Marianna M. Bolognesi analyzed the discourse around the trending hashtag #COVID-19 through the platform Twitter. The tweets were written and posted during March and April of 2020. Their sample included 75,000 Tweets in total, and the war framing accounted for more than one-third of all the words attributed to the metaphorical frames investigated (Wicke & Bolognesi, 2020). This 2020 study is intuitive in that it is an example of examining the media posted today to garner evidence about discussion and attitudes. Twitter was a vastly active platform during the beginning and the height of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic spread, and many individuals checked the platform for updates and information. This brought officials, doctors, professionals, and working-class people into discussion with one another. This discourse allows for metaphor to grow and become widely accepted. Wicke and Bolognesi used their data pool of tweets for framing and modeling to illustrate how the public was conceptualizing the threat of outbreak at that time.

In Wicke and Bolognesi's theoretical background, they accumulated that warfare methodology, often used unconsciously, is frequently used because it draws on basic knowledge of first-hand accounts or familiar systems. As previously mentioned, adversarial relationships are at the center of the warfare metaphor to describe disease and opposing forces clearly labeled as in-groups and out-groups or allies and enemies (Wicke & Bolognesi, 2020, p. 5). There can be adversarial relationships between doctors and the virus, patients and the virus, and the body and the virus. One downside of this adversarial view is that it decreases the ability to think critically about alternative ways to solve the problem and can provide an apt breeding ground for xenophobia, pitting people against not only the virus but also each other due to fear and anxiety (Wicke & Bolognesi, 2020, p. 5).

In the Wick and Bolognesi article they concluded that the WAR framing is the most frequent when talking about COVID-19, and thus, arguably, one of the most conventional metaphors, as previous literature also suggests. (Wick & Bolognesi, 2020). When searching the internet for tweets written by non-experts, there are certain trends in public awareness and attitudes about disease. One positive of the warfare metaphor is that it instills a sense of urgency for a negative situation and increases the necessity for action. But another negative is that, on Twitter, there are sometimes bots that mass release tweets to sway the public in one way or another (Wick & Bolognesi, 2020, p. 22). Twitter encompasses retweets and super-tweets that go viral, reaching many audiences far and wide. An urgent need to act can easily become anxiety-ridden outrage or fear. This study sorted their topic modeling into four groups: Communications and Reporting, Community and Social Compassion, Politics and Reacting to the Pandemic; tweets that feature war-related

terms are most likely to belong to topics like Communications and Politics instead of Community and Social Compassion. The messaging is used within the spread of information. It rings true that war is inherently Political in many senses, whereas the opposite can be true about Community and Social Compassion. A significant result that went hand and hand with the WAR frame is a literal frame of FAMILY. During times of war, instinctually we reach to protect our family and loved ones to keep them out of harm's way. This greatly resonates and becomes real to people in a similar metaphorical stance as a warfare outlook.

There are negative effects to using war metaphor to describe infectious disease spread. One example of how war metaphor can foster a negative effect is that pandemics are not a single event, and thus there is no clear relief of anxiety. Another negative aspect to the war metaphor is that it implies inherent weakness to those who die of illness or disease. These feelings of inevitable death do not inspire or connect people to use prevention measures. By contrast, it takes an incredible amount of collective effort to mobilize in times of disease. With the degree of blame that emerges because of war metaphor, people may turn to other anxiety-reducing structures that feel familiar such as patriotism and nationalism, which can lead to the beginnings of xenophobia and country specific decisions. Sontag illustrates this point well by writing, "One feature of the usual script for plague…[is] the need to make a dreaded disease foreign" (Sontag, 1978, p. 47). For example, the 1918 Spanish Flu had a large amount of nationalistic name-blaming, disregarding where the disease originated. The Germans called it the 'Russian Flu', Russians called it the 'Chinese Flu', Spain referred to this flu as 'The Soldier of Naples' and the 'French Flu' (Criag, 2020). War implies an inherent enemy to fight against and that's why these names are fostered and stick. How did the warfare metaphor manifest during COVID-19? One of the first mentions of an enemy occurred when President Trump called COVID-19 the "Chinese Virus" on March 16, 2020, on Twitter. From his official Twitter account, @realDonaldTrump, he continued to post using nationality specific labeling for the virus; there was an increase in anti-Asian hate crimes in the United States following the tweets (Hswen et al., 2021).

In another Twitter-centered study, Hswen et al. explored whether the phrases "COVID-19" and "Chinese virus" were associated with anti-Asian sentiments. Published in the American Journal of Public Health in May 2021, the authors include the public health implications of this negative sentiment and blame to the Chinese and the Asian demographic as a whole. Firstly, they advocate for having major agencies issue statements against stigmatizing language and that public health agencies should coordinate with policy makers, communication experts, and media outlets to reverse and reduce harm in the future. Secondly, The Department of Justice should

partner with the CDC and other agencies to identify discriminatory speech trends, hate crimes, and other forms of discrimination in relation to disease spread. This is an example of how the issue of framing can easily impact other spheres of discourse. Third, they consider future outbreaks and how we now know that it takes time to identify and name a specific pathogen. With that in mind, generic templates and talking points can be provided to the media from which to describe new outbreaks. Fourth and finally, COVID-19 could inform how we describe invasive insects, animals, and plants. More research can be conducted on whether naming and framing diseases factors into the societal response to a pathogen. This aspect of othering that can sometimes emerge out of war metaphor can be damaging and, in the case of COVID-19, can perpetuate structural racism and create conflict based on race.

A positive effect if applying a warfare metaphor to infectious disease communication is that it feels familiar to its audience. War metaphors draw from basic knowledge and first-hand experiences. The familiar feelings of nationalism can increase morale and make people aware of the public health crisis at hand. Another positive effect is the individual contribution; everyone needs to do their part in times of war. A war metaphor promotes unity in communities and for unlikely parties. To support the war effort, there may be an empathy to help your neighbor, or to vote for politicians who support public health. "War Metaphors (What Are They Good For?)" is the catchy name of a Fordham University study that examined whether war metaphor framing affects public views about individual responsibilities, targeted policies, and perceptions of those called heroes and soldiers (Blankshain et al., 2022). This research article published in the American Politics Research Journal focused on attitudes toward essential workers and cannot be generalizable to all attitudes, but the authors found that militarized rhetoric did not lead people to make inferences about the relative level of workplace hazard and that the war metaphor has limited utility to unite an already polarized population. Politics and bipartisanship prevailed as guiding principles for people regardless of framing. A drawback of COVID-19 attitude research is that results can be impacted by "COVID Fatigue," a phenomenon where there is a general disinterest and the messaging can have little effect or even backfire (Blankshain et al., 2022).

Regarding other impacts of the framing used during the COVID-19 pandemic, in an online questionnaire study conducted in Turkey, researchers Gök and Kara were interested in individuals' conceptions of COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire data was analyzed within the framework of a five-stage metaphor analysis to help phenomenologically inspect how participants conceptualized the pandemic, in their own terms. The main themes that were found were "anxiety/concern, risk, and faith" (Gök & Kara, 2021). In their introduction about the pandemics background, they indicate how conditions such as the high risk of infection, overwork, frustration, discrimination, isolation, lack of contact with families, and fatigue (especially in the case of healthcare workers) can cause feelings such as stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, denial, anger, and fear (Gök & Kara, 2021). These negatively charged and stressful feelings can influence attention, understanding, and the decision-making ability of healthcare and others. What is of utmost concern is that these problems may have lasting effects on the general well-being of individuals (Kang et al., 2020). The thematic element that is most relevant was found to be "risk," among the categories of deadly/dangerous and struggling. Frequencies of the deadly/dangerous category among the female and male participants are close to each other (Gök & Kara, 2021, p. 455).

The discussion in Gök and Kara's study brings up possible connections to culture and gender in the realm of metaphor usage. The struggling category among the male participants is more common than the female participants. This can be explained by the effects of aggression, leadership, and independence attributed to the male gender role. In the struggling category, war is the metaphor used the most frequently to compare with the COVID-19 pandemic (Gök & Kara, 2021). When faced with something deadly and dangerous, a human's first line of defense is their "fight or flight" system, but the conclusion highlights how the constant stress of a pandemic cannot be dealt with by a fight or flight response, since there is no acute stressor, and as previously mentioned, there is no end in sight (State University of New York – Institute for Disaster Mental Health [SUNY-IDMH], 2020; Gök & Kara, 2021) In this space, war metaphors are powerful political and emotional tools that attract the attention of individuals and are widely understood (Horton, 2020; Gök & Kara, 2021).

More impacts of war metaphor during COVID-19 are phrases like "stay at home," "shelter in place," and mandates for "self-isolation." These are policy metaphors strategically designed to valorize self-reliance and the integrity of the private home. The term 'quarantine' can evoke fear and is akin to imprisonment for Americans who suffer from idealized conceptions of freedom (Craig, 2020). Other takeaways from COVID-19 include initiatives such as #ReframeCovid, first proposed by Spanish scholars Ines Olza and Paula Sobrino, to use more efficient terminology and metaphor to communicate the pathogen's spread (Wicke & Bolognesi, 2020). There are alternative metaphors that can be used to describe disease from marathons to glitter (Guliashvili, 2022; Semino, 2021). As mentioned in Guliashvili's review article published in the Journal of Health Communication in March of 2022, The Director-General of the World Health Organization opts for sports as the source domain for disease metaphor. The director claims the sport-related metaphor is

more agreeable and charged with a positive connotation, which makes people more relieved in this hectic time: "You can't win a football game only by defending. You have to attack as well" and "The rule of the game: to kick out coronavirus" (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020; Guliashvili, 2022). Metaphor selection can be a vital part of public health messaging, and academics of history, linguistics, and health communication underscore both the positive and negative impacts of terminology and usage.

Though the discourse about war metaphor to describe disease is divisive, current attitudes are leaning toward its negative effects, especially after the initial responses to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020. Twitter and Instagram circulated information about the spread and brought the words and phrasing of politicians to the forefront instead of the public health professionals. The next pandemic should be consistently described, and governmental organizations should standardize information and take more preventive actions sooner. The deaths because of disease outbreaks are not martyrs, and the disparities that emerge in times of disease outbreaks should not be ignored. Weakness should not be plastered onto the soldiers who can't survive the battle, instead, collective action should inspire others to aid and support them scientifically but also empathically. How headlines are illustrated can have negative impacts, and new outlets should be more aware of the damaging effects of spreading misinformation.

There are negative effects to using war metaphor to describe infectious disease spread. War metaphors can foster feelings of stress, weakness, and blame. Pandemics are not a single event; there is no clear ending, and thus, there is no winning. This implies inherent weakness in those who succumb to the illness or disease, and if this is an enemy who kills, the spread feels impossible to stop or prevent. By contrast, there is an incredible amount of collective effort that it takes to mobilize in times of disease. Division only creates more gaps in the collective spread of scientifically accurate information. With this division comes a degree of blame. War metaphors breed patriotism and can give rise to xenophobia and country specific decisions.

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Music

Don't Blame it on the Bossa Nova:
Understanding Genre Through Discourse and 'Baubles, Bangles and Beads

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Abstract:

Bossa nova is a type of music that emerged in the late 1950s in Brazil with the goal of creating something modern and "unexotic," albeit grounded in Brazilian culture. The music, a hybrid that combines American jazz compositional styles with Brazilian samba rhythms, became incredibly popular both in Brazil and abroad. This paper seeks to better understand bossa nova and the discourses surrounding the music. To better understand Western perceptions and interpretations of the music, I examine Frank Sinatra and Antônio Carlos Jobim's 1967 recording of "Baubles, Bangles and Beads," along with the album's liner notes. Prior scholarly work on the topic provides insight into Brazilian and non-Brazilian perspectives on the music, further supplemented by broader genre discourse and the implications of genre designations. This paper argues that genre compartmentalizations stem from the unique perspective and background of the listener, and in the case of bossa nova, Western audiences often attempt to re-exoticise the music. Thus, there are inherent power imbalances present in the ways that certain musics are recorded, and later marketed and perceived, which can place non-Western styles and musicians at a disadvantage.

MLA Style

While recently listening to "Mas Que Nada" by Sergio Mendes & Brasil '66, I caught myself wondering whether it really qualified as bossa nova music: the song was missing elements that I had considered essential to the bossa nova sound. This led me to consider what exactly constitutes a particular genre or style of music, especially when most songs do not strictly adhere to a certain genre but instead fall in a liminal space between multiple genres. In the case of bossa nova, a genre created from the blend of jazz and Brazilian samba, its broader perception and classification is even murkier since it already does not adhere to one major genre. Thus, examining the varying ways in which the genre is perceived by different scholars and musicians can provide a broader picture of bossa nova, going beyond just the music and delving into the nuances of the genre, as well as the significance of genre within music more broadly. While there is no right or wrong way to define a particular genre, it is significant to consider the social, musical, and financial factors in play when people decide to divide music into certain genres, as this can have a profound and lasting impact on those involved in making the music.

1. CONTEXTUALIZING BOSSA NOVA

Bossa nova first emerged in the late 1950s as a result of changing cultural desires from middle class Brazilian youth. While older, more traditional musical genres existed in Brazil, such as samba, these were no longer considered relevant genres among younger generations. National optimism grew when, in 1955, Juscelino Kubitschek was elected president of Brazil, promising rapid modernization and development under the slogan "fifty years [progress] in five" (Reily 5). With these developments came a greater desire among the middle class for a modern, relevant musical style to match their hopes for the social and economic future of Brazil. It was during this cultural moment when bossa nova was first developed, beginning with João Gilberto's historic recording "Chega de Saudade."

From the advent of bossa nova, the main figures of the movement were Gilberto along with composer Antônio Carlos "Tom" Jobim and lyricist Vinícius de Moraes. The genre became distinct due to its unique blend of jazz and samba, formed primarily through Jobim's intricate chromatic compositions and Gilberto's unique style of performance; this featured soft, nasal vocals and a "stuttering guitar," which utilized a complex rhythmic style reminiscent of samba rhythms (Reily 5). The resulting sound is both elaborate and reserved, designed to be intently listened to but not danced to. This was supplemented by Moraes's lyrics, which primarily featured light, apolitical themes such as love and nature. These components first came together on Gilberto's recording "Chega de Saudade" in 1958, which marked a moment of great change for Brazilian music as a whole; for the first time, a genre

existed that felt both "Brazilian and non-exotic" so as to embrace Brazilian culture without being overly non-Western (Reily 6). Although bossa nova's popularity in Brazil only peaked for a few years, the genre went on to make a massive impact on the future of Brazilian popular music, fostering the development of future genres such as Tropicália.

Although bossa nova's peak in popularity ended in 1964 for Brazilians around the time of the military coup which established a dictatorship in Brazil, the genre continued to enjoy great popularity in other countries, most notably in the United States. However, the genre began to take a unique form upon entering foreign markets; in the United States, most popular renditions of bossa nova songs were created with involvement from prominent American jazz musicians such as Charlie Byrd, Stan Getz, and Ella Fitzgerald. While these performances had their differences from the original sound of bossa nova as established by Gilberto, they allowed the popularity of the genre to persist in the United States for a few years past its popularity in Brazil.

2. WHAT MAKES A GENRE?

Since bossa nova does not neatly fit into a single genre, its different classifications and definitions have a broader significance in terms of perception and categorization of the music. Many scholars and musicians attempt to classify bossa nova as a form of samba, which makes it more akin to other Brazilian music styles. On the other hand, bossa nova is often considered in the United States as a form of Latin jazz, which implies that it is a subset of jazz with Latin rhythms. Both of these classifications are limiting, however, since they wish to conform a hybrid style like bossa nova to a binary into which it does not neatly fit. Ethnomusicologist Christopher Washburne explains the complications of intercultural musics like Latin jazz, saying that the simple borrowing or referencing of other styles does not make a true hybrid style, but that a hybrid style must retain "a certain level of fluidity and ambivalence in the way it is positioned in relation to these various cultural inputs" (92). The use of the word "ambivalence" here is significant; not only is a hybrid music placed in between multiple genres, but it also does not show emotional or cultural allegiance to one single genre or style. Thus, it is completely separated from a particular predetermined binary or genre.

At the core of a hybrid music is its fluidity, which makes it both unique and challenging to properly classify, especially for a general audience. A primary concern within classifying music styles is marketing and knowing how to promote the right music for the right audience, which can become tricky for artists like those in bossa nova or other similar styles. These classifications are vital since artists need financial

support to survive and thus must know how to effectively release and promote their music, and because their own particular genres or subgenres are often too narrow to garner sizable followings from the general public. Thus, many artists must revert to generalized categories in which to promote their music, such as the way that bossa nova albums by American jazz artists were marketed as jazz albums. Washburne views this type of labeling and generalization as a form of "discursive violence," explaining that "what it often cloaks and ignores, though simultaneously reflects, is a murkier layer located beneath the institutionalized game of naming, which involves the slippery complex of intercultural exchange" (98). The graphic language of "discursive violence" within this context truly points to the malevolence with which these genre labels are defined and utilized; since they attempt to cast a wide net with respect to audience engagement to ensure the eventual success of the music, these broad labels often gloss over the complexities of a certain music or style in a way that is damaging to the legacy of the music and its musicians.

This system is beneficial commercially, but it can be highly stifling artistically since it places musicians in an uncomfortable position where they must adhere to a certain musical style if they wish to be successful. Musician Ray Barretto, raised in the continental United States but who is of Puerto Rican descent, gained initial success from performing in a salsa band but spent the last decades of his career almost exclusively playing jazz; this was because he believed that playing jazz gave him more cultural and artistic prestige. It can even affect the economic benefits provided to the musicians; for example, Barretto's salsa band did not receive individual hotel rooms when they were touring even though this is a common courtesy for most musicians, including jazz musicians (Washburne 102). This points to inherent racism within musical spheres, as musicians such as Barretto were able to obtain more lucrative opportunities within genres that were considered more "American" and less "ethnic." This leads to a further misattribution of genres beyond simply generalizing the music, since certain styles are disincentivized and are considered to be generally more undesirable than others.

Ideally, a genre should provide a fitting label to precisely describe and classify a certain type of music. Fabian Holt describes genre as "a type of category that refers to a particular kind of music within a distinctive cultural web of production, circulation, and signification. That is to say, genre is not only 'in the music,' but also in the minds and bodies of particular groups of people who share certain conventions" (2). Through this lens, something like bossa nova should be its own genre altogether since it encompasses a unique cultural and musical position; it not only produced new musical innovations, but it was developed to serve a particular purpose within Brazilian culture of the late 1950s. The significance of history and culture in the

music further comes to light when examining the ways in which scholars disagree on the phases of bossa nova: Where exactly they begin and end, and if the "second phase," in which bossa nova became internationally successful, actually exists.

3. DISCOURSES SURROUNDING BOSSA NOVA

As described by scholar David Treece, the "classic phase" of bossa nova lasted from 1958 to 1962, which represented the peak of both composition and performance of the genre, possessing a "magical" quality (6-7). While Treece does not deny the existence or relevance of bossa nova as a genre past 1962, he holds the belief that the pure, idyllic quality of the genre began to dissipate past this point. This assertion is supported by prominent bossa nova musician Carlos Lyra, who felt as though bossa nova could only persist for a limited period of time; in 1962, he stated that "[i]t was just musically a new way of repeating the same romantic and inconsequential things that were being said long since" (qtd in Treece 12). From the perspective of Lyra, and Treece as an extension, the idealism and apparent frivolity in early bossa nova compositions could not be sustained long term since it could not resonate politically with the people. This is fundamentally different from the assertion of another scholar, music theorist Irna Priore, that bossa nova simply ceased to exist past 1964. In a strongly worded footnote defending her decision to classify bossa nova as only existing between the years of 1958 and 1964, she argues that bossa nova had no place in Brazilian music or culture after the military coup in March 1964, becoming "irreversibly obsolete for the time" (Priore 110-11). Priore, having grown up in Brazil under the military government, is thinking more about the role of bossa nova within a political sphere and the ways in which it no longer served the needs of the Brazilian people after the change in government. While this is similar to Treece and Lyra's prior argument in that bossa nova would become irrelevant in Brazil due to the supposed lack of depth in the lyrics and meaning, the key differences in Priore's statement are that she ties it directly to a particular moment in Brazilian history and politics, and that she says the genre dies at that point, not that it ends its first phase of existence.

Different definitions and classifications of bossa nova also shed light on the way the genre is perceived by scholars and musicians. Bossa nova is defined by many as a derivation of samba; for example, scholar Albrecht Moreno describes bossa nova as "a form of Afro-Brazilian samba," without necessarily referencing the jazz influences of the music (130). Similarly, Naeem Inayatullah claims that Gilberto wished for Brazilians to see bossa nova simply as a form of samba that utilizes foreign influences (525). This implies that bossa nova is essentially nothing more than a samba variation that happens to use jazz influences, rather than a truly independent

genre that functions as a hybrid of its predecessors. Conversely, Priore argues that bossa nova may not be a genre, but a style in which songs can be performed. She speaks of two different approaches to the bossa nova style: the purist approach that Gilberto employs, which is closer to samba practices, and the universal approach that Jobim prefers which is closer in style to jazz (Priore 111-12). This is a radically different approach to thinking about bossa nova since it does not even consider bossa nova as a standalone genre, but as a style of performance that can be used to serve jazz or samba tunes. Interestingly, David Treece's classification considers all elements as he describes the classic phase of bossa nova; he explains that the music's features included "an extreme integration of musical form, textual structure and performative technique" (6-7). This definition integrates the ideas that bossa nova is a style of composition as well as a style of performance. All of these varying opinions and boundaries for bossa nova can function as valid arguments; more importantly, however, they demonstrate the extent to which even a niche genre such as this can be interpreted in different ways depending on the perspective used to approach the music.

4. UNDERSTANDING SOPHISTICATION, REFINEMENT, AND MODERNITY

The general language employed to describe bossa nova further demonstrates authors' notions of the genre, including the connotations they associate with the style. In comparison to older, more traditional Brazilian musical styles, bossa nova is often described as a more "refined" and "modern" style of music. This is illustrated well by ethnomusicologist Suzel Reily's statement that bossa nova's style "negated the stereotype of Brazilians as an over-emotive, exuberant race… to portray them as contemplative, intimate and sophisticated" (6). While Reily does not explicitly state that she agrees with these ideas associated with Brazil and bossa nova, she describes an association between bossa nova and refinement while the remainder of Brazil is conversely seen as unrefined. The use of the word "sophisticated" here is particularly striking; this term is often used in writings regarding bossa nova to differentiate it from prior musical styles in Brazil. For example, Moreno also uses the term to describe bossa nova, calling it a "sophisticated and innovative musical style" (130). Sophistication indicates a higher status for the music, with a greater sense of culture and perhaps cosmopolitanism than other genres.

The main differences between bossa nova and other Brazilian musical traditions, such as samba, lies both in its composition as well as its style of performance. Samba is generally characterized by highly percussive, loud, and upbeat music played by a large group that is designed to be danced to. On the other hand,

bossa nova has a chamber music quality; it is typically performed by a small group and is intended to be listened to silently by the audience. While bossa nova preserves some of the samba rhythms, they are essentially opposites in performance styles, with bossa nova being more closely related to post-war chamber jazz in its method of performance. Since bossa nova is a more Westernized style of music compared to other traditional Brazilian genres, the use of the word "sophisticated" implies that the Western elements of the music are what give it its sophistication, and as such, Brazilian elements are inherently unsophisticated. This propagates the idea that Western culture and music constitutes a higher level of artistry compared to other cultures and traditions, a damaging idea since it minimizes the quality of non-Western musics and cultures.

5. "BAUBLES, BANGLES AND BEADS"

Even though its Western influences often validate bossa nova as a "refined" or artistic genre, the essence of bossa nova often becomes skewed when it is performed by non-Brazilians, especially American artists. A notable bossa nova album from the United States is Francis Albert Sinatra & Antônio Carlos Jobim, released in 1967 by Frank Sinatra in collaboration with Jobim. The album presents Sinatra singing in an uncharacteristically quiet and cool style, singing seven Jobim tunes along with three American jazz standards in the bossa nova style as arranged by Claus Ogerman. The album generally maintains the bossa sound throughout, although it is perhaps not as musically "pure" as earlier Brazilian bossa recordings. One notable example of the cultural and sonic fusions of the album is "Baubles, Bangles and Beads," an old musical theater song that was adapted into a bossa nova piece for the album.

The song has a long and interesting origin story: "Baubles, Bangles and Beads" is a song from the 1953 musical Kismet, a show described as a "musical Arabian night" on the cover of the original Broadway cast album. The melodies from the musical, in turn, were borrowed from Russian composer Alexander Borodin; "Baubles," for example, borrows a melody from Movement 2 of Borodin's String Quartet No. 2. The piece is quite intriguing musically and can lend itself to jazz interpretations, but it is still worth noting the implications of adapting this particular song into a bossa nova tune. For example, one notable change in the bossa nova version of the song is the time signature. The original song is performed in 3/4, which is not a viable meter for the samba rhythms that are prevalent in bossa nova. Instead, the bossa nova rendition stretches out the phrasing of the piece to better suit the needs of the bossa nova rhythm.

The primary melody of the piece has been simply passed from one culture and context to the next, going from Russian classical music to American musical

theater and, finally, an American rendition of Brazilian bossa nova. While Kismet takes place in the Middle East, the writers of the show decided that a Russian composer's work sounds "exotic" enough for them to use within the context of the musical. Similarly, since bossa nova has historically been a poorly understood and seemingly "exotic" genre within the United States, it is not completely surprising that an already exoticized tune would be adapted for this album. It serves as a reminder that, to most Americans, genres like bossa nova simply function as an "other" without great effort taken to understand the musical and cultural nuances of the style. This is evident when examining the track more closely, and the ways in which it conforms to and goes against the typical style of a bossa nova song.

"Baubles" starts off with a solo stuttering guitar, and soon adds percussion, brass, and vocals. Interestingly, the first voice heard on the track is Jobim, with some light scatting before Sinatra begins the first verse. Sinatra sounds considerably softer and more intimate than his usual vocal style, although it is still evident that he has a robust foundation in vocal training. The difference in vocal delivery is quite clear when comparing Sinatra with someone like João Gilberto, who deliberately sounds effortless and untrained when singing bossa nova songs. Some brass and string instruments can also be heard on the track, which become overpowering at times. At 1:29 in the song, for example, the violins swell and Sinatra begins reverting back to his classic, brassier singing style. It feels like a jarring reminder that we are listening to a classic American musician rather than a Brazilian one, since it appears reminiscent of American big band music from the 1940s—Sinatra's specialty. The general bossa nova rhythm and sound does remain present as a base throughout the piece, but at times like this it becomes overshadowed by a Western, big band music style. Another notable element of the song is in the outro, which contains a shrill, rhythmic jingling sound, likely from a finger cymbal or other similar instrument. While this seemingly out-of-place addition to the musical texture could function as an homage to samba, which is known for having similar sounds, it primarily adds to the exoticized idea of the jingling jewelry that is referred to in the lyrics of the song. This is solidified by Sinatra's only notable lyric change in the song; he sings, "I have heard that's where it leads,/Wearing baubles, bangles and beads,/All those noisy bangles and beads" (1:52; emphasis added). Sinatra's addition of the word "noisy" has a negative connotation which not only takes a jab at the jingling jewelry, but also criticizes the sound of the song as a whole. The artistic goals of the album are also evident in its liner notes, which provide valuable insight into the recording process of the album as well as its perception by an American writer.

Prolific liner notes writer Stan Cornyn wrote the liner notes for this album; he had worked with Sinatra before, winning two Grammys in a row for his prior

writing on Sinatra albums. He is quite descriptive when explaining the recording process, although his perspective leaves something to be desired. Despite the fact that Sinatra and Jobim both share the album title, Cornyn places most of his attention on Sinatra and the ways in which he essentially runs the recording studio. When the conductor and musicians are unsure about the timbre or tempo of a piece, they turn to Sinatra first, hoping for his approval before proceeding. This is interesting because, in the last paragraph of the liner notes, Sinatra is referred to as "[Jobim's] singer," implying that Sinatra still has to get Jobim's final approval on recordings since he is the primary songwriter and better versed within the bossa nova style. This gives a certain validation to Sinatra's performance, since it seems like he got a stamp of approval from an actual Brazilian who is better versed in the music.

It is also worth noting the ways in which Cornyn refers to Brazilians and bossa nova as a whole. When writing about the recording process, Cornyn describes it as the "World Soft Championships," explaining the lengths to which the musicians would go to make sure the music sounded hushed and smooth, without "sharp" or out-of-place sounds. Despite this seemingly affectionate description of the music, it generally reduces bossa nova to simply something soft and meek without considering the further significance of the style. Cornyn is even less considerate to the Brazilians involved, even though they are the actual innovators of the genre. Although Cornyn admits that Jobim has the final say in terms of approving the recordings and Sinatra's singing, he refers to Jobim as a "slight and tousled boy-man" who is "troubled not by the clamour in the world," but by the "whisperings from his heart." This description presents Jobim as someone immature and aloof, too wrapped up in the music to really notice the world around him; this is in direct opposition with Cornyn's descriptions of Sinatra in the recording studio who is described as someone sharp and precise. Without much regard for Jobim's role in the studio, Cornyn explains Sinatra's meticulous control of the recording sessions:

The arranger-conductor, not made of asbestos, sensitive in his position, there between Jobim and Sinatra, looking over at Sinatra, worrying 'Tempo?' 'No, it's a good tempo. It's the only way you can do it. You have to hang with it.' Sinatra's assurance: there is only one tempo for this song; any other tempo would be wrong. Have been, are, and forever shall be wrong. (Cornyn)

In this vignette, even Jobim must defer to Sinatra to determine what is correct within the performance style and tempo; this grants Sinatra a god-like status in which he gets the final word on all creative decisions in recording the album.

Still, Jobim gets a kinder treatment than the other Brazilians mentioned in the piece. When describing Jobim's personal drummer, Dom-Um Romão, Cornyn says he "can look simultaneously alert and stoned," and that he looks like "he should

be selling weird rugs in Arab doorways." This type of language solidifies Romão, and Brazilians as a whole, as an "other" group with undesirable traits, either incapable or unworthy of working as musicians in the United States. This also works in conjunction with the decision to include "Baubles" on the album, since it reinforces an othering association between Arabs and Brazilians, vastly different groups who are both perceived as exotic by Americans. Even if Cornyn did not write these descriptions with malicious intent, they carry negative connotations that ostracize the Brazilian collaborators on the album and render them inferior to the American performers.

When considering both the music and the liner notes of the album, it is evident that the non-Brazilian collaborators may mean well when approaching the music, but they do not hold high regard for the people and culture associated with the music. Effort is taken by both the vocalists and instrumentalists to preserve the sound of bossa nova, which is a new experience for most of the American musicians. However, by emphasizing the foreignness and "other"-ness of the Brazilian musicians in the liner notes, it is clear that they are not the focal point of the project, but instead utilized to further the musical goals of the American musicians, namely Sinatra's music career. Even in using a song such as "Baubles," an already exoticized piece, the album attempts to compartmentalize bossa nova, and Brazilian music, as something foreign and separate from styles that are generally popular in the United States.

6. CONCLUSION

Between these different opinions, definitions, and iterations of bossa nova, a larger picture of the style can be formed that goes far beyond just the music itself. As Reily notes, while it is distinctly less "exotic" for Brazilians than many other Brazilian musics, being viewed as a "sophisticated" or "non-exotic" version of Brazilian music within their own spheres (6) , I argue that the music still has the perception of an "other" within foreign markets. More broadly, this shows how perspective can influence the perception of a music style or other artistic style. In the context of bossa nova, the different perceptions of the genre often stem from people either looking at the music through a Brazilian lens or a foreign lens. When scholars and musicians refer to bossa nova from a Brazilian perspective, they often focus on the samba influences as well as the cultural context of the music, while people thinking about the music from an American or otherwise foreign perspective place greater emphasis on the genre's ties to jazz or the ways it differs from their own common music styles. This can work in either sympathetic or unsympathetic ways with respect to the music, as seen when comparing, for example, Irna Priore and Stan Cornyn's sentiments about Brazilians and bossa nova. Most people tend to have

biases towards things they are already familiar with, which is reflected here with the ways that people empathize with the elements of bossa nova that resonate most with them or markedly alienate them.

This genre discourse surrounding bossa nova ties back to Washburne and Holt's argument about genre and the ways in which compartmentalization can be helpful or damaging for the music. When genre categories truly classify the music in the way that the musicians had intended, they can give a voice to a particular type of music that is in some way culturally distinct from others. However, when certain styles are overly generalized by those in power who may be unfamiliar with the musical style, they can minimize the significance and uniqueness of the genre and its cultural context. In the case of bossa nova, all of the opinions and discourse surrounding the genre adds to its cultural context, especially when exploring its path past the early 1960s. Expanding past its original artistic goals, the genre has taken a new life within the minds of different listeners as they seek to imagine and reimagine the nuances of the genre. In returning to "Mas Que Nada," it does not necessarily matter whether it checks off every box to qualify as classic bossa nova as conceived by Gilberto, as long as it maintains the musical, and more importantly cultural, essence of the genre.

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Political Science

A Critical Look at the Drinking Water Act

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Abstract:

Having access to clean and safe drinking water is a right that many Americans take for granted, unthinkingly letting the tap run while they brush their teeth or filling up a glass of water from the faucet and drinking without worrying about what's in it. The reality is that many Americans are not so lucky. Individuals who do not have access to clean water are already at an intense disadvantage, often drinking the risky water they do have access to and exposing themselves to dangerous chemicals, or spending significant amounts of time trying to access safe drinking water. Marginalized communities in America face exacerbated issues around water access, specifically people of color. The aim of this paper is to understand why the Safe Water Drinking Act is not as effective as it sets out to be at ensuring that all Americans have access to clean drinking water. The paper looks at how different demographics in America are affected by the water crisis and explains how it came to be that these already at-risk populations are further burdened by limited access to safe drinking water. It will also explore what the United States government is doing to remedy this, and what policy steps are missing that would further address the issue.

Having access to clean and safe drinking water is a right that many Americans take for granted, unthinkingly letting the tap run while they brush their teeth or filling up a glass of water from the faucet and drinking without worrying what's in it. The reality is, many Americans are not so lucky. In fact, a total of 0.41% of households, or 489,836 households, lacked complete plumbing from 2014–2018 in the United States (Weinmeyer et al. 2017). Individuals who do not have access to clean water are already at an intense disadvantage, often risking drinking what water they do have and exposing themselves to dangerous chemicals, or spending significant amounts of time trying to access safe drinking water. What's more is that this lack of access to water does not affect all Americans equally. Marginalized communities in America face exacerbated issues around water access, specifically people of color. The aim of this paper is to understand why the Safe Drinking Water Act is not as effective as it sets out to be at ensuring all Americans have access to clean drinking water. The paper will look at how different demographics in America are affected by the water crisis and explain how it came to be that these already at-risk populations are further burdened by limited access to safe drinking water. It will also explore what the United States government is doing to remedy this and what policy steps are missing that would further address the issue. Ultimately, the paper will serve as a critical analysis of the Safe Water Drinking Act.

The outline of the paper will be as follows. First, I will discuss the scientific evidence behind the problem, showing the severity of the water crisis and which groups are affected most intensely. I will also briefly touch on some of the infrastructure problems that have created such inequities in America. From there, I will explain what the United States government has done to address the clean water crisis, from regulations to studies as well as when this issue first appeared on the government's radar. I will include what the government is currently doing to amend water inequities as well. After completely laying out the depth of the environmental issue, I will identify some of the various alternative techniques that the federal government could use to alleviate the problem, and then make my policy recommendation that I have landed on based on my research. This policy will be the best means of fixing the clean water crisis in America. Finally, I will tie in my policy recommendation to the paper's stated purpose and summarize my research.

SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT

Although most Americans assume that all residents of the United States have access to potable water (water that is safe to drink), unfortunately, more than 46 million people in the United States suffer from water insecurity—either no running water or unsafe drinking water. To break this number down a little bit, according

to Dig Deep, a nonprofit with the mission of bringing hot and cold running water into American homes, 2.2 million people in the United States don't have any running water in their homes, including sinks, bathtubs, and toilets. In addition to this, there is a demographic of 44 million people who do have indoor plumbing and running water, but their water systems violate the Safe Drinking Water Act (Shane 2023). The Safe Drinking Water Act was originally created in 1974 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and amended in 1996 to establish protective drinking water standards for more than 90 contaminants (The Environmental Protection Agency 2023). This means that 44 million people potentially either have contaminates that should not be in their water, or have contaminates at a level higher than regulated by the EPA. Add to this number the 43 million Americans who rely on well-water which is threatened by droughts caused by climate change, and it is clear that the United States is facing a water crisis (Leys 2023).

In 2020, The Guardian and Consumer Reports (CR) conducted a nine-month study where they selected 120 people from the United States out of 6,000 volunteers to test for arsenic, lead, PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), and other contaminants. While the study only focused on 120 people, they used water systems that serviced a combined 19 million people. The study found that a total of 118 of the 120 samples had levels of PFAS or arsenic above CR's recommended maximum, or detectable amounts of lead. More than 35% of the samples had PFAS, potentially toxic "forever chemicals," at levels above CR's recommended maximum. "Forever chemicals" is the name used to refer to PFAS that are used to create stain-resistant fabrics and carpets, water-repellent clothing, nonstick cookware, and hundreds of other common products. These chemicals seep into bodies of water from factories and landfills, and because they don't break down naturally, they have earned the name "forever chemicals." At least 3,186 sites in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories, have drinking water known to be contaminated with PFAS, according to a January analysis by the Environmental Working Group (EWG), an advocacy organization (Environmental Working Group 2023). Another chemical that was prevalent in CR's findings was arsenic—a toxic heavy metal naturally found in the ground that can enter water through natural deposits or industrial or agricultural pollution and has been linked to cancer, and lowered IQ in children. Almost every sample CR tested had measurable levels of arsenic, including 10 – or about 8% – with levels between 3 ppb and 10 ppb. This level is significant because while the EPA has a limit for arsenic of 10 ppb, CR scientists have long said the EPA should set a limit of 3 ppb or lower, a sentiment shared by other health experts and environmental advocacy groups, such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) (National Resource Defense Council 2001).

So how is the water crisis in the United States also an issue of equality and environmental justice? Let's look at some of the numbers. From 2016 to 2019, the National Resources Defense Council partnered with Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform (EJHA) to analyze nationwide violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act. This study found that communities of color, low-income communities, areas with more non-native English speakers, areas with more people living under crowded housing conditions, and areas with more people with sparse access to transportation had increased rates of water violations (National Resource Defense Council 2020). Further, race is the strongest predictor of water and sanitation access. Communities of color are more likely to lack water access than white communities, and the disparity is particularly extreme for Native Americans (Dig Deep and US Water Alliance, n.d.). In fact, Native American households are 19 times more likely than white households to lack indoor plumbing, and Black and Latino families are twice as likely as white households (Dig Deep and US Water Alliance, n.d.). Continuing with plumbing access, a 2021 study by Nature Communications found that elevated levels of incomplete plumbing at the county level were significantly ($p < 0.05$) associated with older populations, lower income, higher poverty, greater portions of indigenous people (American Indian, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islanders), lower levels of education, and more rural counties (Switzer and Teodoro 2023). These findings from multiple studies in multiple regions in the United States show that water hardship is unevenly felt across the country, reflecting the spatial patterning of social inequality due to settler colonialism (indigenous people being displaced), racism, and economic inequality in the United States.

This lack of clean and safe water can be attributed to many sources. The first is the ever present challenge of climate change. Rising global temperatures are making natural disasters like hurricanes and tornadoes harder to predict and more severe, thus causing more damage to water delivery and filtration systems. In fact, the CDC recommends that during or after a natural disaster or emergency to use bottled, boiled, or treated water because the risk of contamination is much higher (Centers for Disease Control, n.d.). Climate change has also led to longer dry periods that put strains on well-water systems. People living in poorer areas, which consistently align with communities of color, do not have the resources or funds to repair water systems after natural disasters, leading them to consume unclean water. Another factor worsening the crisis is increased pollution. Contamination of water sources by manufacturing industries has reduced the availability of clean water to communities that desperately need it. There is a large discrepancy between what people think is legally allowed to enter their water and what actually enters their water (Texas Water Mission 2023). There is a legal limit on what pollutants the government allows to enter water supplies despite the damage it does on ecosystem; if the difference between the EPA's legal limit of PFAS compared to CR's and other experts recommendation of the limit of PFAS is any indication, the government's limit on pollution may not be what's best for Americans.

EXISTING GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Looking at the clean drinking water issue chronologically, its roots can be traced back to the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. The act was made to address and protect the quality of drinking water and "focuses on all waters actually or potentially designed for drinking use, whether from above ground or underground sources" (The Environmental Protection Agency 2023). The Act was one of the first pieces of national legislation after the creation of the EPA in 1970 while the country was in the midst of the environmentalism movement of the decade. Mobilization around the clean drinking water issue came in response to concern over environmental harms posed by industrial runoff and synthetic chemicals getting into the water supply. The Safe Drinking Water Act grants power to the EPA to set national health standards for drinking water, which includes bathing, cooking, dishwashing water, as well as water needed for oral hygiene and protecting public health (Weinmeyer et al. 2017). All water sources, publicly and privately owned, must fit these federal regulations if they have at least 15 service connections or regularly serve at least 25 people (Congressional Research Service 2021). While the standards are set at a national level, federalism explains that implementation of Safe Drinking Water Act exists at both the federal and state level.

One of the biggest ways that the EPA enforces the Safe Drinking Water Act is through imposing regulations on contaminants in drinking water that cause harm to the public's health. It is the responsibility of the EPA to enforce these standards as well. Under the 1974 version of the Act, there are three criteria that the EPA follows when evaluating contaminants. One) If a contaminant might have adverse health effects, two) there is a likelihood that the contaminant will occur in public water systems at levels of public health concern, and three) the regulation of said contaminant will reduce public health risk. Every five years, the EPA will announce unregulated contaminants that must be monitored by public water systems and make decisions on regulations for at least five of the listed contaminants. After the EPA creates this benchmark, it is up to the states to implement and enforce the drinking water program. Under the EPA, there is also a program called the Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) Program, which requires that states adopt regulations as strict as national standards, develop procedures to purify water and

monitor its contaminant levels, assume authority for penalties for violations, keep records and data, provide the EPA with reports, and create a plan for safe drinking water in emergency situations (Weinmeyer et al. 2017). Currently, 49 states have assumed primary authority over the PWSS Program, including all territories and the Navajo Nation (Congressional Research Service 2021).

In 1996, the Safe Drinking Water Act was amended to manage added challenges and attempt to reduce risks from naturally occurring chemicals and pathogens (Weinmeyer et al. 2017). The amendments require systems to report their water quality annually in Consumer Confidence Reports and require the EPA to produce the National Public Water Systems Compliance Report, which summarizes and evaluates the annual reports submitted to the EPA. The amendment also requires the EPA to establish permitting requirements for state underground injection control programs and clarifies that federal agencies engaged in certain activities like owning or operating a public water system must comply with all federal, state, and local safe drinking water requirements (The Environmental Protection Agency 2023). Because of the Safe Drinking Water Act and its 1996 amendments, the quality of drinking water in the United States has steadily improved in the last 40 years. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Tracker estimates that 99.2% of the population has access to safe drinking water and 88.9% has access to sanitation, and this wouldn't be possible without the Act (Weinmeyer et al. 2017).

Up until recently, there have been no explicit federal governmental action to address how the water crisis disproportionately affects marginalized communities. There have been sweeping efforts made to improve safe drinking water access, but none of this acknowledged the groups that have historically been left behind: people of color, poor people, disabled people, indigenous people, etc. This changed with the passage of Biden's Justice40 initiative, which makes it a goal that "40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution" (The White House 2023). Many investments fall under the initiative, but the most noteworthy is the development of critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure. This means that for the first time in U.S. history, there are explicit goals to address disadvantaged communities and acknowledgment that these groups face bigger challenges than the rest of the population.

ALTERNATIVES

Millions of Americans struggle with access to safe drinking water. This is largely considered a human right by the international community, emphasizing that the United States needs immediate action to amend this crisis. While a national

issue deserves national solutions, as in direct intervention from the federal government, there are many things that we as individuals can do to preserve the safety of our drinking water and help keep our community's drinking water clean. Some of the small actions citizens can take are in the form of things such as reducing your plastic consumption and recycling plastic when possible. Further, individuals should be properly disposing of chemical cleaners, oils, and non-biodegradable substances to prevent them from going down the drain and contaminating shared water sources. Making sure your car is kept well so it doesn't leak oil or antifreeze fluid is another important step (Denchak 2023). Overall, individuals should be aware of what liquids they are disposing of outdoors and in places that will flow elsewhere.

Individual action is always important and it's necessary for all of us to remember that our actions do not exist in a vacuum, but in terms of major crises, small changes aren't going to cut it. So much of the clean water crisis is due to poor and incomplete data of water quality and access, and the federal government doesn't have a comprehensive scope of the problem. National level data collection undercounts vulnerable communities, does not include wastewater issues, and is largely inconsistent (Dig Deep and US Water Alliance, n.d.). In fact, even though data on the Safe Drinking Water Act Serious Violators is widely available, the Clean Water Act data reported by the EPA is known to be inaccurate for 13 states (Weinmeyer et al. 2017). Further, even when data is known to be accurate and reliable, the data often doesn't cover the full scope of an issue. For example, most of the recent literature focuses on incomplete plumbing or water quality or only urban areas of the country, creating an incomplete picture of the facts (Mueller and Gasteyer 2023). There is a reason that the first step in most EPA regulations is gathering data to truly evaluate the scope of the issue. For example, there is a 12 month information-gathering period when someone petitions the US Fish and Wildlife Service to make an animal endangered. This failure of reporting also goes back to the disproportionate impact of safe drinking water, since all data is being reported the same. As mentioned prior, some of scholarly data focuses only on urban areas, not rural, and we know that rural areas have higher poverty rates compared to urban areas (US Department of Agriculture 2012). Even more, in rural areas, 30.7% of African Americans are in poverty, exacerbating how marginalized communities face more intense challenges when it comes to safe drinking water.

Now onto perhaps the most obvious potential solution in dealing with safe drinking water: more money. Much of the reason that so many Americans do not have safe drinking water or indoor plumbing comes from deteriorating infrastructure (Felton, Gill, and Kendall 2021). Most Americans know the story of Flint Michigan: In 2013, the Governor decided to pump in water from Flint River to

residents, and although the river water was highly corrosive, it was not treated by Flint officials. Lead leached from aging pipes—declining infrastructure—made its way into thousands of homes (Denchak 2018). This resulted in major water quality and health issues for the residents of Flint, and it was ultimately discovered to be doubling and tripling blood lead levels in children. At least 12 casualties were reported due to the water quality (Ray and Nathanson 2023). Long before Flint made the water switch, Flint River served as an "unofficial waste disposal sight," and raw sewage from the city's waste treatment plant has run off into the waterway. Unsurprisingly, Flint has a 51.5% majority of African Americans (State of Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget 2016), and this case has largely been condemned as an example of "environmental racism" (Clarke 2016). Unfortunately, Flint is not alone in its struggle for safe drinking water. In West Virginia, two-thirds of the population have been under a boil water advisory for a decade after the country's 120-year-old water treatment system failed (Shane 2023). Even areas that do have more fully funded infrastructure never received an equal investment, especially communities of color. The Natural Resource Defense Council says that underinvestment in infrastructure has left it outdated and "on the verge of collapse." Lead pollution, PFAS contamination, waste water disposal, and agricultural contamination (introduction of pesticides and nitrates into the water system from large-scale livestock operations) can all be avoided or at least reduced with better infrastructure. Experts say that at least $18.4 billion is needed over the next decade to bring water security to more Americans, but the EPA and American Water Works Association estimates that it would cost nearly $1 trillion to replace and repair the United States' aging infrastructure (Shane 2023).

Touching back on the disproportionate effects of inadequate infrastructure, Indigenous communities suffer the most. Looking at the Navajo nation, thousands do not have access to clean water. The Sioux nation of Nebraska has not had access to clean water in four years and has been unable to afford the necessary infrastructure to fix the problem (Beach 2023). A potential bright spot for Indigenous people is the Inflation Reduction Act, which sets aside money for clean water projects in tribal communities, and many tribes already receive funding from the Indian Health Service, the EPA, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is an example of funding being set aside to address the crisis, specifically targeting groups that need it most. The Inflation Reduction Act is a good start, but many small tribes do not have the resources to look into grants or government funding (Beach 2023). No matter what route the Federal Government decides to take, they, and we, have a very expensive problem on our hands.

SELECTED POLICY

While everything laid out in the previous section is important for addressing the clean water crisis, the most effective way to make change needs to come from the top in the form of regulations.

The Safe Drinking Water Act was created in 1974, nearly fifty years ago, and the last major amendment was in 1996. While this amendment was helpful in identifying new contaminants, the Act is in desperate need of an update. Further, the Safe Drinking Water Act took a hit under the Trump administration. In 2019, the administration rolled back Obama-era regulations from 2015 that had placed limits on polluting chemicals that could be used near bodies of water. This meant that polluters would no longer need a permit to introduce potentially harmful substances into streams and wetlands (Davenport 2019). The Safe Drinking Water Act needs a new amendment with stricter acceptable levels of dangerous contaminants and a stronger commitment to clean water.

As mentioned in the Scientific Context section of the paper, in a study led by the Guardian and Consumer Reports to look into the United States water quality, they found that more than 35% of the PFAs found in the tested water exceeded a safety threshold recommended by CR scientists. This data means that the current allowable level of PFAS in water as approved by the EPA is considered to be too high by experts. Despite the nice little acronym, PFAS are a family of approximately 9,000 human-made chemicals that have been linked to cancer, hormone disruption, liver and kidney damage, developmental and reproductive harm, and damage to the immune system (Bergen 2022). The clear answer here is that the EPA needs to update the Safe Drinking Water Act with a lower allowable limit of PFAS for the health of Americans and the quality of our water.

PFAS aren't the only contaminant that needs an update. Data provided by the Environmental Working Group, an advocacy organization, found that at least once a year since 2019, the Smithwick Mills water system in Texas has reported high levels of the synthetic chemical 1,2,3-trichloropropane, or TCP. This chemical is a cleaning and degreasing solvent and has been labeled as a likely carcinogen by the EPA for over a decade. In 2017, California state regulators set a maximum contaminant level for TCP at five parts per trillion to protect the health of its citizens. Smithwick Mills water has an average TCP level of 410 parts per trillion- 80 times what is allowed in California (Philip 2023). TCP is not regulated by the EPA and was detected in the water of 6 million people when the EPA last tested it nationwide a decade ago. TCP is one of over a dozen unregulated contaminants found in the country's drinking water. The last contaminant I am interested in is arsenic. The Guardian study highlighted that 8% of the samples tested had high levels of arsenic.

The EPA currently allows arsenic at 10 ppb, but CR recommends a level of 3 ppb, and the NRDC agrees. The EPA needs to lower the level of allowable arsenic in water to 3 ppb.

As part of the 1996 amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA needs to demonstrate that a contaminant is dangerous to humans and is prevalent enough in water systems to warrant action. For TCP, the EPA's lack of action is somewhat valid. In order to set a regulation for TCP, the EPA would also need to prove that the benefits of action outweigh the costs. However, just because there isn't enough evidence widely available for the EPA to take action does not mean this is the end of the EPA's responsibilities. The EPA needs to invest time and resources into conducting a study that would be the basis of this new regulation, because based on the smaller scale studies done, it would seem that there is plenty of evidence to warrant action. Also, the fact that the EPA itself hasn't done enough research to justify a stricter regulation does not mean that other non-profits don't have the data. On the contrary, there are several studies showing a significant presence of TCP, such as one by Clean Water Action that found samples in 372 active and standby sources, belonging to 92 water systems in 17 counties (CleanWater. Org, n.d.). If the EPA used data from studies conducted by non-profits as the basis for their regulations, or even if the EPA conducted the same studies themselves, they would find the data they needed. The EPA needs to set national standards on TCP to the stringency of California's enforcement.

Touching back on PFAS, as opposed to TCP, there is ample evidence and demand for stricter regulations. Many studies have been done to investigate the presence of PFAS in the United States Water system—at least 45% of the nation's tap water is estimated to have one or more PFAS (Communications and Publishing 2023). There is also abundant evidence of the harm that PFAS pose to human health, so there is no justifiable reason that the EPA has not taken more action to regulate these chemicals. To make regulations even more appealing, the apparel industry is a clear frontrunner for which industry contributes the most to PFAS pollution, which makes it simpler to hold them accountable. This industry uses PFAS to make clothes, shoes, and bags water and stain resistant while keeping them breathable. The apparel industry can play a major role in eliminating pollution of PFAS by using more climate friendly alternatives such as fatty acid derivatives or wax (Pandit 2023), which would be easy enough for the EPA to gather data on and enforce (Bergen 2022). Currently, the EPA regulates six PFAS as of March 2023 (Perkins 2023), which is a start, but for the health of this country, they will have to do much, much more.

My final recommendation to address America's water crisis is an amendment

to the Safe Drinking Water Act in three parts.

The EPA sets strict national standards (5 ppt) on TCP.

The EPA either regulates more than 6 PFAS or at least performs an in-depth study to investigate the next top 10 dangerous PFAS.

The EPA lowers the national standard of arsenic from 10 ppb to 3 ppb.

CONCLUSION

America is facing a water crisis and has been for decades. Having access to clean and safe drinking water is a human right, and yet millions of Americans don't have running water or can't drink from what water they do have. In 1974, the Ford administration signed into law the Safe Drinking Water Act, which is the first major federal act to regulate America's water supply with the goal of ensuring clean and safe drinking water. The Act grants the EPA power to set standards for water quality and monitor states and water suppliers. There are many attributing factors to why, despite the Act and succeeding amendments, the issue of access to potable water still exists in the lives of so many. One major issue is lack of data from the EPA. Because the EPA can't make regulations until it has sufficient data, there are areas of the country where there is little to no reporting of water quality or access, which makes action difficult. Further, areas with low data gathering coincide with groups of lower education levels, people of color, and poor people, who are already struggling with other systemic issues. Without the EPA and lawmakers knowing the full scope of the issue, there is nothing that can be done to fix it. So much of the water crisis also comes down to resources, and the areas that I previously mentioned also suffer from poor infrastructure, hindering their ability to distribute and sanitize water. America is burdened with aging infrastructure that is often over 75 years old (group6 2022). Without the funds to update this, there is little end in sight for limited water resources.

The goal of this paper was to assess the scope of the water crisis, through the lens of the Safe Drinking Water Act, understand the ways it has been able to get as severe as it has, and then propose a solution that would be the most effective in treating the issue. I also wanted to take a critical look at how those of marginalized communities bear undue burdens in regard to the water crisis, as race is the largest predictor of water and sanitation access. After completing my research and understanding the limitations of the EPA and what needs to happen to make change, I believe an updated amendment is the best way to make the largest impact in helping those who need better water access. This amendment would have three parts, one to set national standards on TCP, one to regulate more PFAS, and one to lower the acceptable level of arsenic in drinking water to 3 ppb. Because regulations occur in

a top-down fashion, this would be the most comprehensive endeavor. From there, the infrastructure would have to follow, but passing this amendment would demand action, whereas just updating infrastructure wouldn't ensure that all areas were updated equally. As equality under the Safe Drinking Water Act is something this paper also aimed to address, this action would be the most encompassing to ensure that those in marginalized communities also benefited from this change. Ultimately, ensuring safe drinking water to all Americans is a massive endeavor, but adding a new amendment that will reduce contaminants while simultaneously managing the negative effects of outdated infrastructure is the best course of action.

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Philosophy

Questioning the Presupposition of Longevity in Spinoza's "conatus" to Determine his Philosophy as Selfish or Selfless, Particularly as it Pertains to Suicidal Ideation

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Abstract:

It is held by some that committing suicide is a selfish act – it is even seen as a sin in some religions. This paper attempts to evaluate this belief by applying a Spinozist framework. Spinozism holds that each thing strives to persevere in its being. Spinoza refers to this as conatus. First, I introduce and challenge conatus' implication of longevity as a measure of good life by analyzing Mitchell Gabhart's work entitled "Spinoza on Self-Preservation and Self-Destruction." Next, I evaluate Gabhart's conclusion that there is no difference between suicide and other types of death because in both instances the person succumbs to external factors using Spinoza's ethical formulation of adequate and inadequate thoughts. That, if the conatus is true in the way that Spinoza determines it to be, then suicide is logistically impossible, so that instances of "suicide" are not failures of conatus but rather cases of inadequate thoughts pushing a person into passivity rather than action. Lastly, I suggest because of conatus' dependence on a presupposition that a long life is a better life, moral judgments are imposed onto those who experience suicidal ideation which creates a societal misunderstanding ultimately leading to less effective ways of intervention.

Inspired by conversations on self-destructive thoughts and behavior, particularly how those thoughts and behaviors can progress to suicidal ideation, the contention arose of whether or not Spinoza's philosophy is one of selflessness or selfishness. There are many moral standpoints that view suicide in different ways, ie. as a selfish act, or succumbing to a mental disorder of some sort (which could fall under the category of a selfless or blameless act). Spinoza takes a standpoint that is seemingly unclear at first, but after careful analysis, one can see that his morality and ethicality are at odds with one another.

Spinoza claims that love is the ultimate thing to increase one's power to act because it allows for the opportunity to be loved in return (Spinoza 123). And our capacity to act increasing means that the power of our nature also increases, leading to the formation of adequate ideas (Spinoza 108). Adequate ideas are of God, meaning that they are pure and communicate the true nature of reality (Spinoza 103). This is important because it describes Spinoza's ontology that is concerned with uncovering truth. As such, Spinoza is saying that love motivates us to understand the true nature of the world around us, including ourselves. That being said, his definition of love requires wanting what's best for another, and this presupposes selflessness as a prerequisite for love. In contradiction, one could say that this is actually a self-serving philosophy because the capacity to be loved in return is what motivates us to love.

Therefore, I'm interested in seeing how the self-interest perspective meets the selflessness perspective, specifically as it pertains to one developing destructive thoughts. Spinozism as a self-serving philosophy and Spinozism as a selfless philosophy must have the capacity to exist in each person, in a parallel way, due to the contradictory nature of how love is used in the philosophy. These acting at the same time creates inadequate thoughts, with the first example being that Spinoza's ethical and moral standpoint on suicide seem to differ.

First, Spinoza's claims for how destructive thoughts and suicidal ideation come to be must be analyzed. Author Mitchell Gabhart examines Spinoza's conception of human essence as necessarily self-affirming in his work entitled "Spinoza on Self-Preservation and Self-Destruction." He is keen on analyzing this concept against Spinoza's claim that willful self-destruction, such as suicide, is impossible. As his thoughts develop, he eventually ascertains that there is actually no difference between suicide and any other form of death, as they are both a result of succumbing to external circumstances (Gabhart 628). Moreover, he goes so far as to claim that when one reaches the point of suicidal ideation, they have already succumbed to a type of death.

Human essence as necessarily self-affirming comes from proposition six in

Book I of Spinoza's Ethics. He states, "Each thing, in so far as it is in itself, endeavors to persist in its own being" (Spinoza 108). Specifically, Spinoza means that every thought and action of a person, when adequate – meaning it is of the second two types of knowledge – supports a mode of self-preservation. For the purpose of succinctness, self-preservation will be used in term.

In the context of first philosophy, it's important to note that a concept like self-preservation presupposes longevity as the necessary condition of a good life, and Spinoza's philosophy is no exception to that. Such a presupposition makes it so that analyzing Spinoza's philosophy as being selfless and selfish calls for more nuance, since the very nature of selflessness and selfishness depends on a moral judgment from other people. In other words, one would have to argue the moral point of whether a longer or shorter life is better. Appropriately, the presupposition must be called into question.

Spinoza maintains that human beings possess an appetite which acts as a vehicle that subconsciously drives humans towards things that are composite, or, things that add value in the form of joy to one's life (Deleuze 19). Conversely, the appetite steers one away from things that are decompositional. The appetite is always active, never dormant. When consciousness is directed towards the appetite, Spinoza calls this the "conatus" (Deleuze 58). Conatus is another power that describes not just the struggle towards self-preservation, but also the pursuit of joy and the ability to increase one's power to act (Deleuze 58). However, the idea of conatus also presupposes longevity. When someone wants something such as a job promotion, acceptance into a prestigious university, or a pet, that is the meeting ground for desire and the awareness of conatus. That person becomes aware of wanting something that will benefit them further in their life. This is also an example of something that is composite to someone's life. Desire is the awareness of conatus. Conatus, as it pertains to Spinoza's philosophy, is the underlying force behind self-preservation – and everyone has one, but even preservation itself presupposes that one is taking action to maintain themselves for the future.

To exemplify, the desire for things like job promotions, acceptance into universities, and adopting pets points to a desire for fulfilling longevity: job promotions fulfill the desire for future financial stability, university acceptances fulfill the desire for future employment (which fulfills the desire for financial stability), and adopting pets fulfills the desire for companionship, which can curb an anxiety for being alone— now or in the future. Stability and companionship in general curb our anxieties of the future. Conatus is therefore inherently active, not only in the sense of pushing us towards the pursuit of happiness and the ability to increase one's power, but to do those things directly as it supports our future (such as longevity).

Gabhart offers an analogy that illustrates the danger of such a presupposition and more; he states, "...we say that a blind man is deprived of sight because we readily imagine him as seeing", where it is presupposed that sight is lost to the man, and he therefore lives a life without something that is had by the majority of people around him (Gabhart 626). But to say that he is without sight is to presuppose that he at one point was with sight, which is just as illogical as to say that a rock is blind simply because it is without sight (Gabhart 627) . Spinoza ascertains God as the final causality in one of his propositions, meaning that the only true cause of something is God/Nature (Spinoza 46). Gabhart summarizes this concept nicely by saying "...God is no more the cause of his not seeing than of a stone's not seeing, this latter being pure negation" (Gabhart 627). In other words, he is saying that the blind man's identity is one of negation, which has been determined, not truly caused, by a person with sight. This is contrary to God's natural assignment, and must therefore be inadequate – after all, Deleuze offers that the definition of determination is negation (Deleuze 62).

In direct comparison, sight is to longevity as the blind man is to conatus. Sight is presupposed to determine the blind man, just as longevity is presupposed to determine the conatus. In regards to someone developing destructive thoughts, all thoughts and actions that are anti-longevity would be determined as destructive. A Spinozist would say that anything that goes against the conatus is destructive. However, as aforementioned, the conatus is a determination made by Spinoza that, by definition, negates the natural assignment of God, as seen by its dependence on a presupposition. As Gabhart says, "one's nature is what it is, just as it is at any other juncture of individual duration" (Gabhart 627). So then, the natural assignment of human motivation cannot be the conatus.

In proposition forty-one of Book II of Spinoza's Ethics, he states, "knowledge of the first kind is the only cause of falsity; knowledge of the second and third kind is necessarily true" (Spinoza 91). The first kind of knowledge is sensory experience, the second type is understanding through reasoning, and the third type is intuition (Deleuze 81-83). At the first level of knowledge, according to Deleuze, we are condemned to inadequate ideas, since sensory experience is illusory to the true nature of life. At this level of knowledge, the conatus (since it is always active) would continue to strive, but it would direct us towards inadequate ends that feed into the illusory experience of the senses. This is contrary, then, to Spinoza's assertion that the conatus is a vehicle for self-preservation, because preserving oneself through inadequate ideas would preserve them inadequately. Moreover, inadequate knowledge inherently lends itself to a selfish philosophy because it is misinformed and confused. In other words, it is impossible for someone having inadequate ideas

to act selflessly; after all, selflessness presupposes having an awareness of one's true nature and its impact on another. In summation, the first level of knowledge can only pertain to a philosophy of self-interest because the circumstances hold that the always active conatus is working only with inadequate tools.

By the second level, one is able to understand one's sensory experience through reason, albeit not always to the level of success as the level of intuition would offer. More specifically, reason brings us closer to an adequate understanding of our nature, whereas intuition is already in our adequate understanding of nature. It is still possible to reason incorrectly, which can form inadequate ideas. It is for this reason that intuition is the only type of knowledge that has the potential to undoubtedly support a selfless philosophy, with knowledge of reason as being a potential to either support a selfless or selfish philosophy. Intuition is another word to explain observing and therefore understanding the true nature of things. At this level, the observer has surpassed a need for sensory input or reason, and is instead seeing things for what they truly are.

A more specific example of how knowledge types one and two lend themselves to inadequate thoughts is explained in proposition twenty-eight of part II of Spinoza's Ethics. Here, he states, "The ideas of the affections of the human body in so far as they are related only to the human mind, are not clear and distinct, but confused" (Spinoza 83). Affections are corporeal images that manifest as feelings in a person (Deleuze 48). As such, affections are of the first type of knowledge because they rely on the senses to form. In other words, any feeling is a result of external stimuli. For example: sadness is a result of our senses perceiving information that upsets us. Affections that do not collide with reason and understanding remain in the first type of knowledge, and therefore can only create inadequate ideas. As such, feelings or affections that only remain in the mind do not reflect the reality of the body they are putting those ideas into;they are not intuitively experienced or reasoned with in a way that their physical experience is taken into account. It is for these reasons that events and circumstances seem to "create" suicidal ideations in people. It isn't that the nature of the events are bad enough to be worth taking a life, it's that the events cause feelings in us that are trapped within the first level of knowledge (they're not allowed to be processed and talked about openly). In other words, these are examples of a conclusion without premises or even a conclusion with false premises.

Nevertheless, be certain that we are not condemned to being prisoners of our affections. When the first level of knowledge is interrupted by resources and intervention, affections can be analyzed with reason, and understanding can ultimately be reached. Moreover, when affections are experienced through intuition, meaning

when the true nature of events around us are observed for what they are, only adequate ideas will formulate in our minds. For example, when we are overwhelmed by the stressors of life and we have access to resources that help us gain perspective, our feelings are reasoned with and understood in a way that removes the burden of how they affected us. These resources can be therapy, a good friend, or other coping mechanisms that remind us of the parts about our lives that bring us joy. What's more, already being in touch with how your nature interacts with and is affected by the nature of other things makes it so that misunderstandings cannot occur at all.

How, then, can one claim Spinozist philosophy as being either self-serving or selfless while neglecting to consider that the three types of knowledge do not successfully fit into either category? Moreover, one can not enthusiastically claim the presence of self-destructive thoughts and suicide to be of one of those two characteristics when the way those thoughts form is inherently a result of one of the three types of knowledge.

Rest assured: what this offers is that knowing how to access the third type of knowledge, and knowing how to access and successfully use the second type of knowledge can ensure only adequate ideas. And, as we know from Spinoza, adequate ideas are of God, meaning that they do not represent any idea or concept but rather they communicate the true nature of things as observances. Therefore, for someone experiencing destructive thoughts or suicidal ideation, having the ability to see the true nature of their circumstances aligns with the potential to rid themselves of those negative thoughts if applicable. However, this is only assuming that the nature of those circumstances is truly conducive to remaining alive.

Consider assisted suicide for example: it is used to help terminally ill patients escape the suffering that their current circumstances provide. In these cases, it's been decided that all efforts of self-preservation (in the presupposed way that lends itself to longevity) no longer provide relief to the patient. It is therefore decided that the patient can be put to sleep forever. But what if the presupposition for longevity was suspended? If self-preservation wasn't that of living a longer life but of some other set of goals or characteristics, then the world and especially healthcare would look very different.

Here, the idea of the conatus clashes with what is or isn't an adequate idea. As previously discussed, the conatus is both a negation of God's natural assignment and the vehicle for human preservation that can be confused by the first two types of knowledge. Therefore, the ways in which the conatus informs us of how to preserve cannot be trusted to reflect the true nature of one's circumstances. This could mean that those who request assisted suicide are having inadequate ideas, but it could also mean that the healthcare providers who either grant or deny the procedure are

having inadequate ideas. It depends on what type of knowledge their conatus is working with, as well as their concept of self-preservation, and whether or not they experience that idea through the presupposition that a good life is a long life. Most people probably do. By the same token, whether or not assisted suicide is by nature a selfless or a selfish act remains dependent on what exactly the nature of the conatus is, without the presupposition of longevity, that is.

Naturally, any death is seen as a decomposition while presupposing longevity of the conatus. Assisted suicide is only acceptable because most would agree that suffering for a long period of time with no evidence of improvement is worse than just dying. Moreover, most people would rather see their loved ones die with some semblance of dignity and comfortability. Watching someone decompose to their very last breath is just too much for human morality in these cases, so an exception is made. However, those last breaths are still proof of the conatus and its preservative instincts. Therefore, a true believer that the conatus is what Spinoza claims it to be would inherently be anti-assisted suicide.

Gabhart offers his own theory as to why people experience suicidal ideation, and while considering it against Spinoza's ideology, it becomes clear why Gabhart thinks there is no difference between suicide and any other form of death. In proposition one of part III of Spinoza's Ethics, he states, "Our mind is in some instances active and in other instances passive. In so far as it has adequate ideas, it is necessarily active; and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily passive" (Spinoza 103). To simplify, considering that Deluze's definition of "act" is a power (Deluze 48), activity and passivity relate to one's ability to act within their true nature. The mind is active, or it has the power to act in its nature only when it has ideas in God, and it is necessarily passive when it has ideas outside of God. Inadequate ideas are representative of states of things or of what happens to us – they are a misunderstanding of the true nature of states and events. For example, an inadequate idea would be thinking that losing your job is representative of a reason to take your life. An adequate idea would be to understand truthfully what the nature of your job was in the first place and how that pertains to the rest of your life. The former example would lead that person into passivity, and the latter into activity. Gabhart believes that this movement into passivity is ultimately what allows for suicidal ideation to permeate someone; moreover, the movement itself marks the moment when someone has already succumbed to external forces in the same way as with other forms of death (Gabhart 628).

Assuming then that the conatus is in fact what Spinoza determines it to be – the driver of self-preservation— it could be said that it fails in cases of suicide. However, the conatus is ever active, which makes it necessarily impossible for it to

fail since its nature (according to Spinoza) is to preserve the person. It appears, then, that the conatus doesn't fail; but, it is not powerful enough to combat against external circumstances, and the point at which it loses the battles is when the person has enough inadequate ideas to push them into passivity.

Suspending longevity, the topic of assisted suicide might actually be pro-preservation – albeit a different kind, that is: preservation of autonomy on behalf of the terminally ill, preservation of comfortability, and preservation of relief from suffering, to name a few. The topic of non-assisted suicide, however, becomes more nuanced since there aren't other parties involved to rely on for affirmation that their ideas are contextually "adequate" or not, as with assisted suicide. But, purely, an outside party is not needed to determine whether an idea is adequate or not; in fact, it's already been said that determinations already negate something's validity, so a determination of a doctor as to whether their patients' decision is right or wrong wouldn't reflect the true nature of what happened.

In cases of non-assisted suicide, or just suicide, cultural differences in morality tend to make these contexual judgements; but once more, those determinations do not reflect the true nature of the loss of a life.

That being said, Spinoza famously asserts: "... if anyone sees that he can live better at the gallows than at his own table, he would be very foolish not to go and hang himself" (Gabhart 625). Here, Spinoza is saying that if, by nature, someone adequately understands their life to be better dead than alive, then they should absolutely kill themselves. The issue with this statement is that one's life inherently cannot be better dead than alive, since their natures are contradictory. To say life is better in death is to say that life is better when its nature is negated.

Once again, there is a presupposition here: that people kill themselves because it's better for them. This also still presupposes longevity because it assumes the capacity to judge the betterness of their circumstances post-suicide. The longevity is in the assumption that the decision they made to end their life will make their future life better. The word better generally implies a change from past to present or from present to future. It bears repeating that this presupposition is problematic in that it reduces human motivation into the idea that a long life is a necessary condition for a good life.

He goes on to state, "For in relation to such a perverted human nature, villainy would be virtue," with virtue also meaning power according to Deleuze (Gabart 625). What he means, therefore, seems to be that for someone to know by nature that their life would be better if it ended would mean that villainy, ie. other horrible natured things would be held to a high standard and sought after. Such an implication points towards the notion that Spinoza believes suicide is a highly

villinous act, and therefore he believes it is inherently decompositional. However, he only considers suicide through the lens of betterment which presupposes conatus' presupposition of longevity, so it naturally follows that this is what Spionza's moral stance on suicide is. However, he is confusing it with a truly ethical standpoint as seen by it being of an inadequate idea.

In summation, the presupposition that a long life is a better life projects a moral judgment onto the topic of suicide and other forms of self-destructive ideation. As such, this presupposition acts as a negation to the true nature of conatus. This presupposition therefore supports that Spinozism can neither be a selfish philosophy or a selfless philosophy because of its dependence on that moral judgment. Rather, Spinozist philosophy, as it stands, is a complex overlapping of selfish and selfless forces that stem from tension between one's morality and their ethicality.

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English

Against Kind: Metamorphosis, Monstrosity, and the Bounds of Humanity

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Abstract:

This paper was originally written as the cumulative work for a First Year Seminar, positing a personal theory of metamorphosis, and was rewritten later that year as an autobiographical piece. The paper takes an abstract approach to examine a personal journey of gender discovery, utilizing the work of contemporary queer theorists like Judith Butler and Sonny Nordmarken to dissect the ways in which gender is a construct that is enforced by both the self and community that one is surrounded by. It also looks at the lasting effects of growing up in a community surrounded by repressed identities and Jewish mythology, in a city and culture known for its ideological liberalism. The concept of gender as a rigid structure is one that's been thoroughly disproven in a broader theoretical space, and this paper details what that deconstruction looks like on an individual level, as well as the metamorphoses that children and teens growing into queer identities go through, both intentionally (and perhaps knowingly) and not. The paper concludes on the idea of becoming comfortable in not having a clear understanding of one's own identity, and the hope of using queer theory and practice to let go of having clear answers.

MLA Style

I can't say with absolute certainty when the first time was that I met a non-binary person my age. At the time, the upper crusts of the North Seattle Jewish community were fairly rigid in their compliance to normative genders and sexualities. I've heard they're better now, but from what I've seen (a trans woman's messy divorce, a family who still misgenders their child after three years of their being out) I think the acceptance is more of an act. It wasn't then until high school that I would have met someone more outwardly fluid in their gender self-identification (this fact, along with many other things I believe about my past, is likely a lie. At the times when I would've encountered genderqueerness in my youth – and having done theatre for as long as I have, I definitely did – I fundamentally did not understand what it was. It is remarkable in how many ways education about less normative identities has progressed in the last decade. In as many ways, it has not).

Judith Butler says that identities can only be experienced with recourse to some greater ideal (28). Without an idea of what we are or aren't allowed to be, we fundamentally can never understand what we can become. My first metamorphosis that matters to this story came at the beginning of my freshman year of high school (my queerness is a circle, an ouroboros, ever consuming its own tail. I am ever consumed by my own doubt. The Zohar describes Leviathan – Jewish mysticysm's world snake – as a solitary creature, entirely unique in his existence, castrated by divine edict upon the moment of his creation. I do not want to be castrated. I do not know if I want to be unique. I consider new potentialities of my own identity and come in time to accept them, and then again, and then again). That year was undeniably a regression on a few personal levels, but it was my first experience with a kind of intellectual liberation that came with a more ideologically and culturally diverse environment than the small private schools where I'd spent my earlier years.

It is also important to note before delving too far into my metamorphoses that this list is both incomplete and hypocritical, which is to say I believe that metamorphosis is an ongoing and unquantifiable process. The artist and historian Leah DeVun writes about how monsters define the bounds of humanity. Should anything fundamentally go against what we believe to be the definition of 'man', it resides "against kind" (DeVun 43). In my sophomore year of high school, I moved from the room I'd shared with my brother throughout our childhoods to the guest room in the basement. My mother stored a few of her dresses in my closet. There was one in particular, a thin black wrap dress emblazoned with red, yellow, and blue flowers, that enraptured me. I felt it like a monster within my space, a visitor whom I did not invite but whose presence was never unknown to me. It pulled at the boundaries of what I considered to be mine, is everything in a space not, in some small way, a reflection of that space's keeper? Once that year, in the solitude of my room, I tried

it on (it didn't fit well; my body is not shaped for dresses). As I spun in my mirror, the dress billowing as much as it could, the biting cold of its fabric only magnified by the frigid basement air, I felt what it was to be against kind. It felt like that act wasn't for me, even though I couldn't place why.

I consider this first metamorphosis to have lasted from the moment I stepped through the glass doors of my high school to the midway point of my sophomore year. The first year was spent in a horrifically toxic friend group, which I feel ever grateful for having escaped (an escape which was, in large part due to my connections built through theatre). The character that I played that year was a suppressed one: dressed in black, a hood pulled up to hide my hair, to hide myself. I tried my hardest to present as quiet and unapproachable, as someone not to be perceived. Looking back at this time feels like an exercise in Butler's performativity, both of my own actions and those of my peers. What was it about that year that led me to try and hide myself from the world? Was it a fear of how I would be received by those around me, of how their perceptions would force me to change? Even outside of spaces with my peers (at home, on vacation, the list goes on), I shielded myself from the world. My performance was both self enforced and ceaseless, and the curtains never closed in my mind.

As I write this it is Passover, during which I have attempted to swear myself off of hametz (any products made with leavened grain, forbidden by Jewish tradition during these eight days). There is no bolt of divine lighting bound to strike me down should I eat it, and had I been less of a recluse that year, I likewise would not have been vaporized by divine might, rendering me nothing more than a shadow burned into the ground beneath me (as a child, I was terrified of nuclear weapons. My grandpa told me about the drills he did, cowering beneath his school desk, a solution for a bomb that had it arrived would either have turned him instantly into a fine, irradiated mist – undoing the need for hiding under his desk or the fallout would've rendered his home inhospitable for centuries – also undoing the need for the desk. As I cowered in my high school theatre's booth waiting for a gunman who would never come, I considered those desks. What help are they really? Are they not another performance, as if signaling to ourselves that we will be safe?). The costume I wore was a chrysalis that hid me from the world. I thought that if I sheltered my soft organs from that which might hurt them that I couldn't be harmed. It was the misguided performance of a scared boy, and I believe that the space I was later given would be my salvation.

Metamorphosis often comes in a moment of great duress: the pacific salmon reverses the sodium pumps in its gills to adapt to the sudden exposure to saltwater, Seattle rebuilds after 25 blocks are destroyed in a great fire in 1889. Likewise, my

'next' metamorphosis happened during the lockdowns surrounding COVID-19. I was given time to be physically alone, free of many of the harmful ideologies that I'd picked up (that ideological freedom, it turned out, came with gains and losses) and free to focus on creating a healthier space for myself to exist. This improvement was almost directly correlated with finding a new group of friends, which, in retrospect, is hardly surprising. Suddenly and without choice, I had been given the clarity of a healthy distance. My head was dunked into the cold waters of a baptism I never received, and I found my way into a group of people who were both confident in their identities (or at least in their abilities to grow and change) and willing to accept mine. My chrysalis opened, and I emerged a better person, an evolution of the sheltered boy I'd once been. I reached out and reckoned with a world in which, frankly, I wasn't terrible and unpleasant to be around, and I was taken in with open arms. When my head was pulled from the icy river, I was given another chance to find myself.

It was around this moment that I first began to reckon with the idea of my non-man-ness. While theorizing on gender identity and monstrosity, Sonny Nordmarken remarks on the fear inherent in those genders and non-genders that we cannot easily understand (45). At first I was afraid of what my own un-knowing meant about me, about the way that (I thought) I wanted to live. Was I doing something wrong? If all humans were made in God's image, was I a divine misfire? Genderqueerness was an idea that I'd been presented only regarding others; I never thought it would apply to myself. I would toss and turn at night with guilt about a past that I'm unsure ever existed. I yearned towards the ideality of a person who had been fully confident in their identity, who had never stopped to consider what was truly them, and what was a construction of the world in which they lived. It turned out that once again what I needed was a new space.

When I was a young child (elementary school age) I was a constant daydreamer. I'd walk across the same patch of my childhood home's front lawn for hours every day, rain or shine, wind or snow.

back and forth

back and forth

My parents called it my deer path / The grass / Evergreen from Seattle rains / Was worn down to dirt

back and forth

That grass didn't grow back for almost a decade / After I decided I didn't want to daydream anymore (too childish, I'd thought, even though I was still a child)

Back and forth

My muscles are torn and mended as I grow / My joints weaken from the strain of my long limbs

Back and forth

I cut my curly hair short before sixth grade (looks more hip, I'd thought) / I dignify / I normalize

Back and forth

Inside my hard chrysalis / My insides turn to a liquid / Only my base neural functions remain

Back and Forth

The blast reduces me to a shadow burned into my bedroom wall / The bullet turns me into a story on CNN / Another tragedy!

Back and Forth

On the college green my first day of orientation / I finally decide I like how non-man-ness feels /

I try it on / I show it off

Back and **Forth**

I'm in my basement / It spins around me / I'd often considered the way it might fit / I like the way that it holds me close / It feels safe

Back and **Forth**

In the worlds I imagine I am never monstrous

I tread my path ever clearer into the wet grass / It is a dedication / It is a performance / I am following in the footsteps of so many others

The rain begins to fall again / (in Seattle the fall rain never really stops, only waits for you to become comfortable in its absence) / I try to become comfortable in the absence of a clear definition

I run back inside / I am seven again

King Solomon looks at the ring he has been present-גַּם זֶה יַעֲבֹר

ed: / This Too Shall Pass

I am never more confident in who I am than when I do not consider it / I am glad I consider it /

I do not have to know who I am

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Art History

Military Regalia and Male Power in Renaissance Portraiture

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on portraits that display male power via the usage of military regalia, and looks to answer the question of how the self-fashioning of figures in portraits in military clothing and the use of weapons construct the idealized, masculine version of the "Renaissance man." In addition, it examines how paintings reflect the construct of masculine power and authority, maintaining that military settings are exclusive to men during this time period due to gender roles and norms. Three paintings are examined closely: *Portrait of a Venetian Commander in Armor* by Domenico Tintoretto (c. 1580 or 1590), *Vincenzo Gonzaga I, Duke of Mantua* by Flemish painter Frans Pourbus (c.1600-1609), and *Portrait of Moctezuma* by Antonio Rodriguez (c.1680-1697). Together, these three paintings shed light on how Renaissance self-fashioning and the development of portrait-painting during this period reflect military symbolism as a mechanism for masculinity and power.

The Renaissance period marked the rebirth and further development of Humanism, causing an increased interest in the potential of the individual. The concept of the quintessential "Renaissance Man" embodied the basic tenets of Humanism as a man was considered the center of the universe, limitless in his capacities for development, and one who should try to embrace all knowledge[1]. In order to imitate this idealized version of a man, the movement of Renaissance self fashioning, or the process of constructing one's identity and public persona with fine clothing and refined behavior, especially through portraiture, was born. This paper will focus on portraits of men in military regalia, using examples taken from Italy, Flanders, and Mexico, by discussing three portraits in conversation with each other. *Portrait of a Venetian Commander in Armor* by Domenico Tintoretto, *Vincenzo Gonzaga I, Duke of Mantua* by Frans Pourbus, and *Portrait of Moctezuma* by Antonio Rodriguez all shed light on ideas of male identity and military power and fuse these concepts together in the Renaissance context.

The first object, *Portrait of a Venetian Commander in Armor* by Domenico Tintoretto (c. 1580 or 1590) displays the significance of armor in European Renaissance portraits to convey ideas about power and masculinity. Tintoretto employs a vigorous painting style with broad, free brushstrokes and experiments with the reflection of light to define the martial body of the sitter that is self fashioned in military regalia and armor. This painterly quality is common in Venetian painting, which artists such as Titian and Tintoretto are known for. Even though the identity of the sitter in the painting is unknown, it is clearly evident that the man is a military commander. This is due to the fact that Tintoretto paid a lot of attention to detail and splashed white paint on the canvas to convey that the sitter is wearing glittering, expensive, and high quality armor that only esteemed military officers wore during the 1570s.

Not only did Tintoretto pay a great amount of attention to the physical appearance of the armor, but also to how he posed and positioned the martial, armored body of the commander. The portrait depicts the commander in a broad chested, dramatic pose in a frontal view that draws the viewer's eye to his stoic, intimidating facial expression. The flashing brushstrokes and "sprinklings of light" truly enliven his facial features, and according to prominent art historian Adolfo Venturi, bring out the "character" of the sitter "with a powerful energy," or a sense of confidence and intimidation that the masculine, military commander definitely possesses[2].

1 "Renaissance Man," Encyclopaedia Britannica, last modified September 13, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Renaissance-man.

2 "K0345-Expert Opinion by A. Venturi, 1934," Kress Collection Digital Archive, National Gallery of Art, Gallery Archives, last modified 2023, https://kress.nga.gov/Detail/archival/DOC07860

In addition, it is important to note that Tintoretto originally honored the power and prestige of the commander who was either a sea captain, admiral, or navy officer by highlighting his armor with white, gold, and crimson oil paint. Unfortunately, the 1951-1952 process of restoring and cleaning the painting damaged some of the colorful pigment on the armor and in his face. While it is not immediately evident, the figure may also be missing some original color in the face[3].

Portrait of the Venetian Commander in Armor pays a great deal of attention to the material quality and significance of the commander's armor, dated between 1570 and 1575. The Venetian Commander in the painting wears plate armor or an arming doublet with arming points that had thick laces to go through holes in the armor and secure it to the body. This armor was often etched and engraved, reflecting the development of the new process of fire gilding, or vaporizing mercury to apply gold ornamentations to armor that became apparent during the sixteenth century. The ornamented surface of this type of armor was often made in the Italian *all'antica* style with decorations of animals, religious symbols, and depictions of women such as the classical Greek Goddess, Victory. In this particular painting, the commander's armor harkens back to the classical Greek and Roman past as it possesses detailed gold scroll decorations that were common in *alla romana* armor[4]. This, in turn, constructs and emphasizes a complete, idealized version of the muscular, hypermasculine martial body that was sought after during the classical period but in a new Renaissance context.

Tintoretto as a portraitist sought to impart dignity and personality to his subjects, including the Venetian commander, and did this by immortalizing the commander's martial, masculine body in armor. In fact, the commander's armor is much more than just a protective shield from the perils of battle, rather, it is a "prosthesis for entry into the hypermasculine space of combat" and the "literal figure and rhetorical trope of elite martial masculinity,"[5] as wearing armor was associated with being explicitly male during this time period. By taking the time to paint the metals folds, ridges, gold filigree, and embossed crests of the intricately textured commander's armor, Tintoretto shows his respect and appreciation for the armor's role in representing the elite status of the commander and for the patriarchal and hierarchical society of Renaissance Venice that celebrated the accomplishments of powerful military men. In addition to the transformative effect of armor as a prosthesis, the Venetian commander's armor enhances his martial prowess by con-

3 Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools* (The Phaidon Press, 1966), 61.

4 Amanda Dawn Taylor, "Fabricating the Martial Body: Anatomy, Affect, and Armor in Early Modern England and Italy" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Minnesota, 2017), 240.

5 Ibid, vii.

structing an appearance of a masculine military lineage and heritage. Through the gold scroll decorations on his armor, which as mentioned above were features of ancient Roman armor, the commander assumes a rank not only of his own power, but as part of an imagined lineage of military men dating back to antiquity[6]. The commander's self-fashioning in armor acts as a visible marker of his similarity to his powerful and wealthy military ancestors and allows the commander to wield symbolic, rather than real, power and see himself as superior to other men because he is in the military service.

Additionally, the battlefield background of the portrait further perpetuates the construct of masculine power and authority as the battlefield was characterized as a place of display and performance for military prowess during the 1500s. Through the open window, Tintoretto paints flashes of light and smoke from a great explosion with open brushwork in a painterly quality in order to transport the viewer to and convey a spectacular, imagined battle scene and emphasize the commander's patrician bravery and steadfast commitment to defending Venice. The "expressive vigor" with which Tintoretto depicts the burning ships commemorates the victory of the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, in which the united Christian fleet under Don Juan of Austria defeated the Turkish Armada or the Ottoman Empire[7]. The Battle of Lepanto's role as the backdrop of the painting brings to light concepts of honor and shame as social evaluations as Venice provided more than half of the powerful fleet, further proving the supremacy of the city's navy and commanders, such as the man in the painting, over the Ottomans[8]. The inclusion of the scene of the Battle of Lepanto provided the commander in the portrait the opportunity to showcase his superior masculinity and military skills for all to see in an almost entertaining, performative, or spectacle-like manner because his fleet so easily destroyed the weak Ottomans, as clearly shown by the burning, defeated ships in the painting. This display reveals the true power of elite martial masculinity, and how its impacts can either be devastating towards those who stand in its way, or can empower the actions of the martial body. Even though the commander in the painting did face potential risks such as death or combat wounds during battle, his sense of superiority as an elite, martial, and masculine man provided him with the necessary power and intrinsic motivation to act violently and successfully destroy the Ottomans without fear or hesitation that a weaker man might have possessed.

6 Amanda Dawn Taylor, "Fabricating the Martial Body: Anatomy, Affect, and Armor in Early Modern England and Italy" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Minnesota, 2017), 214.

7 "K0345-Expert Opinion by Longhi, 1934," Kress Collection Digital Archive, National Gallery of Art, Gallery Archives, last modified 2023, https://kress.nga.gov/Detail/archival/DOC07866

8 Diane Cole Ahl et. al., *The Samuel H. Kress Memorial Collection* (Allentown Art Museum of the Lehigh Valley, 2012), 80.

The commander's concept of self-assuredness while defeating the Ottomans is an example of the Renaissance ideal of *sprezzatura*, or "the practice in all things a certain nonchalance which conceals all artistry and makes whatever one says or does seem uncontrived and effortless[9]." This means that despite the difficulty and risk involved in military warfare, the subject of the painting appears completely confident, unwounded, poised, and self-assured This demonstrates that the commander is truly the ideal representation of a masculine Renaissance man and strong hero.

Vincenzo Gonzaga I, Duke of Mantua, a portrait painted between 1600 and 1609 by Flemish painter Frans Pourbus, illustrates cross cultural exchanges via the acquisition of exotic goods featured in the painting, which reflects the wealth and social status related to Renaissance military practices and military men. Pourbus utilizes a deep, rich palette of colors and includes a dark, dramatic facial expression, giving the Duke's painting an intensity not typically found in court paintings during the time period. Frans Pourbus was a specialist in dynastic portraits, and like many Flemish painters of the period, he was adept at acute observation, and painstakingly recorded details[10]. Such careful attention can be seen in the embroidery on the Duke's lace collar, his brilliant military medal, and his beautifully embroidered clothing. Pourbus also perfectly executed Vincenzo's wish to promote his family's image in European courts by emphasizing the stateliness of his figure. The Duke poses in a serious, upright *contrapposto* stance while holding symbols of his power including a scepter in one hand and a sword in the other. This, in turn, constructed Vincenzo in the image that he tenaciously embodied for the entirety of his life: that of an ideal liberal and refined prince.

It is important to note the material quality and significance of the Duke's armor and how Pourbus consciously chose to portray his subject wearing parade armor. This type of armor was not actually worn to battle but instead was used for ceremonial purposes. It was much lighter weight and more decorative than military armor such as that seen in Tintoretto's *Venetian Commander*. Therefore, the Duke of Mantua could present himself as a refined gentleman and a military man at feasts or important events of the court. His status is also conveyed on the shoulder of the armor that features the emblem of the crescent moon enclosing the monogram 'SIC' (Sic Illustrior Crescam), which was adopted by the Duke in 1595 after his participation in the crusades led by the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II against the Turks in Hungary. Additionally, the Duke proudly wears the medal of the order of

9 "Castiglione on Sprezzatura," University of Washington, https://courses.washington.edu/hsteu401/Courtier%20sprezzatura.htm.

10 Barbara Furlotti and Guido Rebecchini, *The Art of Mantua: Power and Patronage in the Renaissance* (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008), 225.

the Golden Fleece, a Catholic order of chivalry, conferred by Philip II of Spain in 1589, and placed in the center of the composition by Pourbus, serving to highlight the prominent status of the Duchy of Mantua in both the political and religious sphere[11].

Pourbus self-fashioned Vincenzo Gonzaga I in armor because it is a heightened form of male masquerade costume, a three dimensional portrait of his wealth, and a map of Gonzaga's place in the world as an esteemed, truly masculine military man. Both the crescent moon emblem and order of Golden Fleece on Gonzaga's armor monumentalize his body in his most heroic, dignified, and aggrandized form and confirm his identity and authority as coming from a wealthy noble family that had greatly influenced the political and religious climate of Europe. Gonzaga's shimmering gold armor literally embodies the very nature of aristocratic wealth and privilege: the fantasy of access to a second, incorruptible body that is impervious to injury, aging, and death. Gonzaga's armor also acts as a mechanism by which he can preserve his identity long after the death of his physical body as his armor acts as a continuous reminder, and thus, an extension, of his identity, wealth, and legacy[12]. The metallic splendor and radiant surface of Vincenzo's armor also fashions his signorial masculinity and attracts and overwhelms the gaze of the viewer. Unlike the coarse, undyed, drab, or literally lackluster clothing of most common people at the time, the "constant interplay with light and movement" of Gonzaga's gold, materially extravagant armor "defied normal experiences of color constancy," instantly distinguishing his wealthy, aristocratic body from other common bodies[13]. Art historian Timothy McCall writes on the difficulties faced by artists like Pourbus in accurately rendering the appearance of armor using oil paint. Because of the preponderance of metal on the surface of the armor, the painted, fictive armor pales in comparison to the luster of real armor[14]. Because Vincenzo Gonzaga I's gold armor so ostentatiously displays his immense wealth and so effectively attracts and commands the attention and respect of others, he perfectly embodies the identity of a powerful lord and a true military man.

In addition, the punctilious and astonishing manner with which the soft feathers of Vincenzo's helmet are rendered emphasizes once again the insatiable desire, wealth, and power of hypermasculine military men that could access goods and fashion acquired via global trade. While Vincenzo did collect natural curiosities such as macaws for scientific purposes, his interest in them was more in their aesthetic beauty, and he often collected things on a spur of the moment basis[15]. For example, his headdress in the bottom left corner of his portrait prominently features protruding feathers. This fashion came out of the Age of Exploration and was directly related to a European fascination with Mesoamerican feathered headdresses. In Central Mexico, as in many parts of the Indigenous Americas, men wore feathers as signs of sacred and military power. Soon Europeans began commissioning their own featherworks, often created by the same Indigenous artists, called in Nahuatl *amanteca*, who excelled in this craft before the conquest. Featherwork continued to be associated with male power, which was enhanced by its referencing of the far away and exotic world of the Americas.

While we do not know specifically what bird species were used in this helmet, the general fashion of feathered helmets carried associations with global trade, colonization, and the power to acquire foreign goods. Collectors of feathers such as Vincenzo Gonzaga I were often explicitly associated with power in the sixteenth century European aesthetic economy. These feathers were seen as a hallmark of a fine collection that left its viewers smack of wonder and in awe of those who could afford exquisite objects such as military men[16]. In his portrait, Vincenzo Gonzaga is positioned directly next to his feather headdress in order to convey his powerful status because feather headdresses were often used to emphasize military seniority or leadership, and create a more intimidating appearance, therefore fortifying the spirits of the commander marching into battle. Because the acquisition of exotica such as feather headdresses was often seen as a way for Europeans to access the practices and customs of indigenous populations of the Americas, the headdress serves as Gonzaga's metaphorical link to the Americas and his ability to influence and control the economic climate of the New World as a military man without ever crossing the Atlantic. While the feathered helmets may have signified a connection to the Americas, the wearers would not have had knowledge of the cultural specificities of Mesoamerican feathered headdresses.

Similarly, the Americas are additionally referenced in the use of the brilliant red curtain that hangs behind the Duke. Such fabrics were typically dyed using an

11 Mark Weiss, *From Merchants to Monarchs: Frans Pourbus the Younger* (2015), 41, https://www.weissgallery.com/publications/8-from-merchants-to-monarchs-frans-pourbus-the-younger-1569-1622/.
12 Carolyn Springer, *Armor and Masculinity in the Italian Renaissance* (Toronto, Toronto Italian Studies: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 13, https://muhlenberg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/705263679.
13 Timothy McCall, Brilliant Bodies: Fashioning Courtly Men in Early Renaissance Italy (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022), 17, https://muhlenberg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1347428179.
14 Ibid, 33.
15 Barbara Furlotti and Guido Rebecchini, *The Art of Mantua: Power and Patronage in the Renaissance* (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008), 218 and 220.
16 Claudia Swan, "Exotica on the Move: Birds of Paradise in Early Modern Holland," 2015, 628-629, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.12171

imported dye from the Americas. This dye, called Cochineal, was originally described in *The Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain* by Fray Bernandino de Sahagun as a chili red coloring medium, and became increasingly popular and expensive during the Renaissance. Cochineal is made from a crushed red bug that eats the nopal cactus plant, and was sought after in Europe because it lasted longer than other dyes and worked very well in dying cloth red, pink, and purple. The combination of the Duke's sumptuous military regalia and the overabundant scarlet curtain background dyed with Cochineal illustrates his pure sophistication, his exalted social status in Renaissance society, and his excessive, over abundant wealth and materialism.

Finally, *Portrait of Moctezuma* by Mexican painter Antonio Rodriguez was created around 1680-1697, more than a century after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, therefore reimagining the Aztec past. Even though this particular portrait provides a non-European interpretation of a male military man not wearing traditional armor, it still conveys strength and intimidation through the depiction of the exotic military regalia and the indigenous body. Moctezuma's portrait is not entirely accurate as it features reimagined Baroque portraiture conventions mixed with accurate elements of his costume, combining both Aztec and European ideals of masculinity and power. While the style of the loincloth and cape he wears are based on Aztec male costume, the decorative designs on them are European style vine and scroll details, traceries, and arabesques. This is clearly a more European interpretation of the textiles which in the Aztec past would have been composed of woven geometric designs rather than the curvilinear forms seen in the portrait[17].

Additionally, the headdress and feather shield, or *chimalli*, are accurate to pre hispanic Aztec male elite dress. The *chimalli* is a type of round feathered shield made from animal hides and elaborated with vegetable fibers and feathers. It is important to note that the *chimalli* was distinguished into two categories of the *Yaochimalli* (war shield) and the *Mahuzyochimalli* (ceremonial shield), and the extent and quality of the shield's decor was linked to seniority and doubled as iconographic badges of honor and status, especially for high profile figures such as Moctezuma[18]. It is unclear from the portrait which *chimalli* type is rendered here, and it is unlikely that the artist would have even known the difference. Even though Rodriguez correctly depicted Moctezuma's chimalli, his proportions of Moctezuma's arrow are completely off, and is clearly fictive, as it is too large to have been used in an Aztec

17 Anawalt, Patricia Rieff. "The Emperors' Cloak: Aztec Pomp, Toltec Circumstances." American Antiquity 55, no. 2 (1990): 292. https://doi.org/10.2307/281648.

18 "The Chimalli or Shield, a Classic Mesoamerican Defensive Weapon," n.d. https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/artefacts/chimalli-defensive-weapon-par-excellence

bow and arrow.

Even though numerous Aztec conventions are completely reimagined in Rodriguez's portrait, male military power is still heavily emphasized in the subject matter. In fact, from their settlement in the Valley of Mexico at the turn of the fourteenth century until their conquest by the Spanish in the early sixteenth century, the Aztecs were a warrior culture, with their values and attitudes firmly rooted in the necessities of a martial life. Moctezuma himself was also the key reinforcer of ideals of manhood through creating a society that emphasized the psychological importance of perceived reputation or "masculinity" to male identity as a channel to everlasting glory[19]. In addition, Moctezuma's brightly colored, elaborate *chimalli*, and headdress are both made out of bright blue and green Quetzal feathers, the breast and tail feathers of the blue Cotinga, red spoonbill, and yellow parrot feathers. It is important to note that rich and iridescent plumage was not associated with common feathers used in featherworks, rather, these more precious feathers were reserved for royalty such as Moctezuma because of their abilities to react with light and were associated with the power of the sun that transformed warriors[20]. Moctezuma's brightly colored military regalia epitomizes how Nahua or Aztec featherwork iconography of bravery, lineage, and seniority was inextricably linked to the Aztec social structure based upon honor, military hierarchy, and masculinity.

Moctezuma's portrait is a fictive reimagining that historicizes the ruler's military strength, complete control over his subjects, and ties him to his military past as a commander. In Aztec culture, feathered military regalia was the substance that made it possible for rulers to be transfigured into powerful beings and symbols. Moctezuma's divine or precious feathers, such as those seen in the portrait's headdress and shield, were, in the Aztec context, symbols of the axis mundi and the Mexica sun. Feathers were not only worn by the *tlatoani*, the title of the Aztec emperor, but were also used to transform mortals into deity impersonators, or *ixipla*, by enveloping the wearer in the precious essence of the god embodied in the iridescent blue-green feathers[21]. Therefore, Moctezuma's headdress associated him with deities, power, and sacrifice. As he moved through space during Aztec rituals, the feathers would have appeared to emerge from his body, thereby transforming him into a man-god. The feathers acted as windows into another world causing him to simultaneously occupy a liminal place between the eternal time of gods and the contingent time of mortal martial men.

19 Caroline Dodds Pennock, *Bonds of Blood: Gender, Lifestyle, and Sacrifice in Aztec Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 15 and 34-35

20 Russo, Alessandra, Gerhard Wolf, and Diana Fane, eds. 2015. Images Take Flight : Feather Art in Mexico and Europe (1400-1700). Munich: Hirmer, 146, 369-371.

21 Ibid, 146, 373-376.

Returning to the portrait, the details of Moctezuma's costume secure the accuracy and hence the so-called authenticity of a documented historical military man, but there is a definite slippage, demonstrated through its form, in the true purpose of this painting regarding whether or not it is a portrait or ethnographic image as it manipulates and fuses the European and Aztec genres. Viewers are then only further confused about the true purpose that this painting serves as it nonetheless retains many features of the ethnographic illustration such as the static frontal pose, emphasis on details of costume, and simplified setting. Art historian Claire Farago argues that many portraits painted decades after the Aztec conquest, like Moctezuma's, do not focus on depicting Moctezuma as an individual, rather, it focuses on his representation as an elite man with military social status and fictionalizing him in the best possible light in richly elaborated, beautifully crafted typologies[22]. However, this portrait is special because it destabilizes those inherited distinctions due to the mixing of Aztec and European ideas of masculinity and power. The fictionalization of Moctezuma is prominent in Rodriguez's focus on the particular, non- European elements of his military regalia, especially on the featherworks, overexaggerated arrow size, and the perfect, muscular, and therefore somewhat sexualized indigenous body. These anomalies put Moctezuma as the subject of the portrait in a precarious and unstable hegemonic position as his imaginary reconstruction is ripe for reinterpretation, reimagining, and over exoticization at the receiving end of European culture, and overshadows his true identity and aspects of Aztec culture[23].

All three of these portraits shed light on how the self-fashioning of the martial body in armor, weaponry, and battlefield backgrounds emphasize the "Renaissance Man" concept, how cross cultural exchanges via the acquisition of exotic goods reflect the wealth and social status of military men, and how the reimaging of the past and ideals about masculinity and power using Baroque portraiture conventions mirror developments of European and and Non-European Renaissance culture. In this way, portraiture becomes emblematic and a way to convey and crystallize ideas about male power, which is oftentimes conveyed through their military regalia. It is interesting to consider that although the Mexican portrait, *Portrait of Moctezuma*, is not European like the *Portrait of the Venetian Commander in Armor* and *Vincenzo Gonzaga I, Duke of Mantua*, and that the Aztecs did not have a portraiture tradition, European Renaissance ideas about military men still come out. Nevertheless, the idea of masculine power tied to military strength remains analogous in Aztec culture

22 Claire Farago, "The Face of the Other: The Particular Versus the Individual," *Boletim Do Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi Ciências Humanas* 12, no. 2 (August 1, 2017): 289–313. https://doi.org/10.1590/1981.81222017000200003.

23 Ibid, 289-313.

and universal in countless regions of the globalized world, and continues to be perpetuated through the oppression of others by men into the modern consciousness and experiences of those regions.



Figure 1. *Portrait of a Venetian Commander in Armor*
This portrait was made by Italian painter Domenico Tintoretto around 1580 or 1590 with oil on canvas in Venice, Italy. The dimensions of this painting are 72.7 x 55.9 cm and can be found in The Kress Collection in the Allentown Art Museum in Allentown, Pennsylvania.



Figure 2. *Vincenzo Gonzaga I, Duke of Mantua*

This portrait was painted by Flemish painter Frans Pourbus the Younger around 1600-1609 with oil on canvas and Cochineal in The Duchy of Mantua, Italy. The dimensions of this painting are 114 x 108.5 cm and can be found at Sala di Pallade du Castelli in Mantua, Italy.



Figure 3. *Portrait of Moctezuma*
This painting was painted by Mexican painter Antonio Rodriguez around 1680-1697 with oil on canvas. The dimensions of this painting are 182 x 106.5 cm and can be found at the Museo degli Argenti, Palazzo Pitti, Polo Museale Fiorentino in Florence, Italy.

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Media & Communication

MrBeast:
The Fortunes and Costs of Marketing Orientation for Social Media Content Creators

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Abstract:

The current social climate has transformed social media into a key business tool that has proven to be very impactful on users. Social media content creators and influencers have a remarkable ability to leverage their social media presence into business ventures. In such instances, individuals become the product and the seller as a result of displaying their personality in comparison with others. The approach of commodifying oneself is called the marketing orientation. Influencers' implementation of this has exposed the intersection between personal and business branding, unveiling a tension between authenticity and self-promotion. This essay provides an analysis of social media phenom MrBeast, examining his ability to assume risk, create a calculated business plan, and diversify revenue streams. From this examination it is clear that the marketing orientation is likely to become a pattern for future influencers and content creators.

Over time, social media has transformed into a key business tool which has opened entrepreneurial opportunities for individuals to market themselves online. On media platforms, influencers' captivating personalities coupled with meticulously tailored algorithms have fueled an attention economy that can target hyper-specific audiences. Some public figures have accumulated enough traction to leverage their following into business ventures in a range of industries, even those unrelated to their original niche. In such instances, individuals become the product and the seller as a result of 'putting across' their personality as synonymous to their brand. Since their success relies heavily on selling their personality, individuals come to regard themselves as commodities. Psychoanalyst Erich Fromm described this phenomena as marketing orientation (Fromm, 2014). The adoption of marketing orientation by social media personalities has exposed the intersection between personal and business branding, unveiling a tension between authenticity and self promotion. A deep analysis of MrBeast provides academics and laypeople alike a window into his transformative impact of incorporating marketing orientation. This article will argue that the marketing orientation of treating the influencer's persona as a business is likely to become a pattern for future influencers and content creators.

THE RISE OF SELF BRANDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In recent years, there has been a push online to cement professional reputations by developing personal brands as a method to get ahead, expand one's agency, and create economic stability (Goldberg, 2022). The idea of self branding is not novel; Tom Peters, the management writer who popularized the term in a 1997 article, extends the idea of brand building beyond product lines to individuals, claiming "we are CEOs of our own companies… [it is] our most important job to be head marketer for the brand called You" (Peters, 1997). In these instances, individuals curate themselves not as representations of culture, but as objects of commerce (Burton, 2020). These aforementioned ideals directly align with Fromm's phenomena of marketing orientation, and expose the blurred line between who people are and how they present themselves (Peters, 1997).

The rise of self branding and marketing orientation on social media, whereby creators and influencers monetize themselves, has been popular since the late 2000s. In 2009, Dan Schawbel, a New York Times-bestselling author and researcher, accurately forecasted the future of personal branding, predicting the power of monetizing oneself in a specific niche on social media. The rise of social media and personal branding are inextricably linked because they simultaneously increased in popularity. During this coinciding rise, 94% of companies continued and/or broadened their investment in social media tools (Schawbel, 2009). These predictions were shortly proven true, as major celebrities connected their names and/or faces to product lines, increasing the influence of celebrities. With the rise of social media, the marketing strategy of connecting individuals to products has translated to influencers and content creators in the online space.

Starting as early as 2008, pop culture figures leveraged their personal brands to acquire capital, expand their reach, and further develop their brand. For example, in 2008, music artist Dr. Dre created Beats by Dre, a high quality audio products line, a now extremely successful business with sought after products designed to enable music lovers to "hear what the artist hears." Dr. Dre recognized a niche, leveraging his perceived expertise in music to create a product directly related to the skill that first brought him popularity. Not only did Beats products provide Dr. Dre additional streams of revenue, but it also augmented his social capital and accrued greater popularity, thereby further developing his personal brand (Machalek & W. Martin, 2015). Other celebrities such as Victoria Beckham have taken similar approaches, launching ventures associated with their brand to differentiate themselves from competition. In 2008, Victoria Beckham created a luxury fashion brand which later led to Victoria Beckham Beauty in 2019. Due to the success of these early examples, celebrities continue to harness the power of self branding. For example, influencer Kylie Jenner focuses her efforts on marketing her respective beauty brands, Kylie Cosmetics and Kylie Skin (Giardina, 2022). A testament to her success was when she "broke the internet" upon the launch of her lip kits (Ward, 2016). Each aforementioned celebrity applied their personal brand and marketing orientation to retain their existing audience, grow their influence, and ultimately further their reputation and business persona.

The growth of self branding as a strategy exploded with the institutionalization of YouTube. Across the platform, ordinary users were exposed to self branding techniques, opening the door for homegrown YouTubers to become professional content creators. A paper published by Mingyi Hou suggests that the logic of branding and celebrification has kickstarted the rise of a new type of celebrity online, mainly on YouTube. The meteoric rise of YouTube as a platform can be attributed to the influencers at the forefront of YouTube's institutionalization. There are two types of distinctive celebrities, traditional and modern social media celebrities. Whereas traditional popular figures are typically branded and differentiated by their "extraordinariness, perfection, glamor, and distance," social media influencers project an image that "attract[s] attention through the performance of ordinariness, intimacy, and equality" (Hou, 2018). Unlike the old definition of celebrity, influencers uniquely attract consumers by aligning with their audience's interests, thereby increasing their opportunities for monetization. The image that social media influencers create

by utilizing marketing orientation is a performance aimed at creating a misleading sense of authenticity. Such a facade is achieved by contrasting traditional celebrities' perfection with media influencers' personhood and creates a product that can come across as authentic (Hou, 2018).

Social media influencers are meant to appear authentic, however, when out of the public's eye or within differing markets, they act differently than their calculated online personas. This fits the theory proposed by social psychologist Erving Goffman known as the contrast of performance. Goffman posits that there are two realms of existence, "frontstage" and "backstage" that can be applied to the online or offline context (Goffman, 2022). The frontstage refers to when individuals are aware that they are being observed, so they construct detailed performances to control their audiences' impressions. Backstage, on the other hand, is when an individual is less visible to their audience. When backstage, one is not pressured to engage in "impression management" which is the constant and careful tailoring of one's behaviors with the means of controlling audience impressions. There are few completely performance-free contexts, thus the authenticity of an individual is not easily defined but rather operates on a spectrum. Similarly, the frontstage and backstage are determined in relation to each other. This theory is particularly important when considering influencers because the place they hold in society requires a myriad of both front and backstages. Since they are perpetually in the spotlight, influencers are partaking in impression management by controlling their authenticity levels across various platforms. For social media influencers and traditional celebrities, their fan base is largely distanced allowing more leeway for them to alter perceptions of authenticity. On platforms like YouTube, achieving popularity requires a careful balance of curated authenticity. Professional content creators are perceived as authentic compared to average social media users due to their character and transparency. However, this authenticity is more a result of their impression management and online accessibility rather than their real-life personalities.

Viral YouTuber MrBeast, from Greenville North Carolina, is the quintessence of how content creators on YouTube engage in impression management to manufacture representations of themselves across media. Driven by the adoption of marketing orientation and personal branding, MrBeast has transformed himself into a cultural commodity. Through these practices and the performative act of content creating, MrBeast has become fully fused with his business, which has enabled him to increase monetization and acquire various profitable sponsorships to both retain and expand his fan base. On the surface, MrBeast might appear to be an authentic creator, but a deeper analysis of his content and interviews unveils a stark contrast between his frontstage and backstage personas. Comparative authenticity is created

when frontstage and backstage personas are juxtaposed and, when examined in isolation, it becomes clear that MrBeast operates as a business firm, not as an authentic individual. While MrBeast claims that he is "not a businessman, [he's] a creator," his actions and the direction of the overall creator business suggests otherwise (Colin and Samir, 2022). The rest of the paper will cover how MrBeast's internalization of marketing orientation exposes a disconnect between his frontstage and backstage personas, bringing to light the tension this ignites regarding authenticity.

MRBEAST'S BACKGROUND

MrBeast, otherwise known as Jimmy Donaldson, is an American YouTube personality credited with pioneering a genre of YouTube videos focusing on expensive stunts. Currently, he stands as the fifth-most-subscribed creator globally on YouTube. However, he did not become a professional creator overnight. His journey started as a passionate pre-teen gamer who discovered a hack and shared it in a video that reached a surprising 20,000 views. While that initial video went viral by chance, MrBeast's ever-scaling career occurred because he took calculated risks, carefully managed his brand and video metrics, and committed himself to connecting with and creating content for his target audience (Blenman, 2022).

In addition to gaming on YouTube, Jimmy Donaldson's entrepreneurial experience continued when he started a side-business selling digital items in video games for a 100% markup. By doubling his investment and content creating, Donaldson learned valuable business skills early on. In 2016, MrBeast had accumulated 30,000 subscribers. After a short two weeks at East Carolina University, Donaldson quickly realized that his dream was to be a full-time YouTuber (Blenman, 2022). Donaldson's decision to leave college gave him crucial time to further develop a skill that has been essential to his success – the ability to gain subscribers by producing specific content that reaches particular metrics. MrBeast stated that at first, he "wasn't making content that deserved to get views…if you look[ed] at the retention graphs, people would click off in the beginning" (Insider, 2022). Recognizing this pattern, he sought to intimately understand his audience. Donaldson spent countless hours analyzing videos with other aspiring YouTubers known as the Daily Masterminds. Some of his content was successful, while other videos tanked, but nevertheless, Donaldson's passion for creation and his entrepreneurial fire persisted, leading him to his eventual monetization on YouTube.

In 2017, a year after MrBeast left college, he piloted the series Worst Intros, consisting of 70 reaction videos to poorly made intros. This work helped him achieve 100,000 subscribers (EssentiallySports, n.d.). Following that, he published I Counted To 100,000!, a video that went viral with more than 6.5 million views by

the next morning, despite the fact that the video totaled 24 hours long and achieved YouTube's video length limit. His noteworthy content caught the HuffPost's attention – they reported that "the sheer number of hits that the video is garnering undoubtedly prove it's a viral smash" (Moran, 2017). The media attention resulting from this viral video positioned MrBeast for future success.

With the traction from a viral video, MrBeast had the power of analytical statistics, an understanding of his viewers, and a projected metric goal to achieve. The only thing MrBeast needed was to secure adequate funding to scale his channel. Finally, with over one million subscribers in May 2017, MrBeast approached Reeds Duchscher, an ex-sport agent turned creator manager and owner of Night Management. MrBeast shared with Reeds the business plan he would implement to reach his goal of 10 million subscribers by the end of the year. Reeds agreed to work with MrBeast based on his belief that consumer loyalty was shifting from corporations to individuals (Colin and Samir, 2022). Since their partnership began, Donaldson and Reeds have embarked on numerous ventures, reinvesting and scaling MrBeast's brand.

MRBEAST'S MARKETING ORIENTATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON AUTHENTICITY

Over the last 10 years, MrBeast has established a massive YouTube empire while also maintaining an authentic image, earning him the title as one of the most genuine creators on the internet (Wide Awake Podcast, 2022). Despite fans and experts' beliefs, MrBeast's seemingly genuine authenticity is actually his curated frontstage persona. When examining MrBeast's identity as instructed by marketing orientation, it becomes clear that MrBeast assumes risk similar to a firm, creates an intricate business plan, and diversifies his revenue stream. I argue that by focusing on these strategies, MrBeast has indirectly stripped himself of the ability to be authentic by relying on his frontstage persona to hide his businessman backstage behaviors.

MrBeast takes a calculated approach in which he assumes financial risk when creating content. Thus, the reality of MrBeast's strategic nature contrasts the carefree persona he portrays. One way MrBeast is inauthentic is that behind his wild content, there is a strategic financial plan unfolding which he conceals behind his crowd-pulling content. The goal is to create insane and entertaining content that distracts the audience from the immense financial assets required for videos at this scale (Mohanta, 2022). MrBeast is aware of his expenses and methods of monetization, giving him a leg up on competing creators who lack the same understanding of financial planning. Although MrBeast can spend up to five million dollars on one

video, he is able to adroitly balance risky investments with sponsorships, ad revenue, and other streams of income (Colin and Samir, 2022). Because MrBeast simultaneously acts as the product and seller of his YouTube creations, he assumes high risks for high rewards, as any other successful business firm would.

Not only does MrBeast assume immense financial risk when creating content, but he also takes on extreme physical risk that furthers possible financial burdens if something were to go awry. Due to his unique and sometimes dangerous content, intense precautions must be implemented to protect Donaldson's health while creating engaging content. According to metrics that show current and projected patterns within his target audience, crazy and often dangerous content is extremely appealing to his viewers, such as his successful videos I Spent 50 Hours Buried Alive and Spending 24 Hours Straight Under Water. The dialogue and actions of MrBeast in these videos reveal that when Donaldson is "on set" he is not always making the video for fun, but is attempting to optimize views for financial gain (Wide Awake Podcast, 2022). After spending 24 hours underwater, Donaldson says that the video was a "horrible idea for [his] health," yet he continued to create equally dangerous videos such as I Didn't Eat Food For 30 Days (MrBeast, 2018). This is because metrics showed Donaldson's viewers enjoy his randomness and daredevil-ish personality, so he willingly assumes risk to gain and retain viewers.

Furthermore, MrBeast partakes in business-like activities, following strict plans and guidelines for his content. Consumers frequently overlook the infrastructure behind MrBeast productions, stunts, and philanthropic activities, which leads him to look inexperienced at the surface level. In reality, MrBeast is a purposeful businessman that understands his audience and targets their desires with calculated creations. For MrBeast, maximum monetization occurs when his content and products intersect with audience's interests. To produce MrBeast's original content, a carefully constructed, massive infrastructure must be erected on multiple levels, including but not limited to acquiring sponsors, creating sets and producing videos. Donaldson's girlfriend Thea explains in an interview that "there's a lot of helping behind the scenes without anybody knowing…" (Wide Awake Podcast, 2022). In this instance, Thea acts as an insider's look for viewers into Donaldson's orchestrated backstage persona. It is likely that every facet of a video or social media post has been thought out and is only one small piece of a larger plan to maximize the MrBeast brand.

Moreover, MrBeast's adoption of marketing orientation has prompted him to hire a manager, search for venture capital, and expand his business plan, all of which allude to the fact that MrBeast is a business firm not an individual. The brand "MrBeast" was developed with the target audience in mind. To ensure success, Mr-

Beast continues to use his target audience as he acts as the focal point for his content and associated products. In an interview with Colin and Samir, Deeds notes that MrBeast is "built different[ly]" than other creators because he took everything into account, including the outcomes and implications of the brand's decisions (Colin and Samir, 2022). Even today, MrBeast's backstage persona is not shared with viewers; MrBeast chooses to keep the plans and finances of videos under wraps to maintain the illusion of his frontstage persona. Undoubtedly, MrBeast has a detailed business strategy and the acumen required to lead his brand to continued prosperity.

By adopting marketing orientation and leveraging himself as a brand, MrBeast ventured beyond viral internet content, expanding the scale of viral businesses. With more than 117 million subscribers on his main channel, as of November 2022, MrBeast has expanded to Beast Reacts (19.8 million followers), MrBeast Gaming (29.1 million followers), and MrBeast Shorts (16.2 million followers) (Fischer, 2022). Furthermore, he grew his individual brand by diversifying his revenue streams and leveraging his pre-established internet career to expand into merchandise, restaurants, and consumer goods. At the age of 24, MrBeast has also created multiple international philanthropic fundraisers, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization Beast Philanthropy, a merchandise line, ShopMrBeast, and BeastGames. He is on track to grow a business empire and has both launched and scaled two food companies, the virtual American restaurant MrBeast Burger, which is a joint venture with Virtual Dining Concepts, and Feastables, a "good-for-you snack company" (Fischer, 2022). While his more recent ventures are physical products, his initial and continued success on YouTube is grounded in marketing orientation that has fused him to his brand, making him the key product that can be used to market other related businesses.

Marketing orientation is the key to translating internet fame to the business world. Feastables is a perfect example of MrBeast's marketing orientation because he created and adopted a business plan while bringing in industry experts to ensure his ultimate success and gain social capital. Feastables was co-founded with and financially supported by Jim Murray, the former president of the protein bar company RXBar. MrBeast strategically collaborated with an expert who had experience in an adjacent market. This led to a successful launch in which Featsables profited over $10 million in its first few months (Perelli, 2022). The Feastables team skillfully leveraged the MrBeast brand by integrating gamified commerce, which is the integration of game-like elements into marketing strategies to encourage purchasing decisions. Feastables utilized this concept in the form of a sweepstake. In an interview with Creator Economics, Reed suggests that gamified commerce will be a model for their future ventures. Starting with MrBeast Bars, they plan to continue

expanding their snack selection, as shown by the recent introduction of MrBeast Cookies (Creator Economics, 2022). Feastables partnered with ethical organizations such as Rainforest Alliance to sustainably source their cocoa, TerraCycle to recycle packaging, and Beast Philanthropy who they support with food and cash donations (Feastables, 2022). All of MrBeast's choices with Feastables directly affect his frontstage persona as he has integrated aspects of his personal brand into the business. These businesses reflect positively on the MrBeast brand and serve to further project an inaccurate image of authenticity. This brief examination only touches the surface of the operation MrBeast is running within Feastibles and his other businesses; nevertheless, it shows how diversifying MrBeast's revenue stream enabled him to further his other ventures and in turn, his brand.

CONCLUSION

Overall, MrBeast is an example of how marketing orientation is transforming influencer and creator culture into a means for monetization, blurring the lines between individuals and their vocations. By assuming risk, creating a calculated business plan, and diversifying his revenue stream, MrBeast has proven that creators can have a fruitful career if they treat themselves as a commodity. However, embracing this behavior is often at the expense of one's authentic self. The performative acts of influencers require carefully fabricated personas to effectively create an active fanbase to promote supplemental products and/or services. MrBeast is a prominent example of an influencer who used his personality and marketing orientation to generate wealth among a variety of revenue streams. Given MrBeast's social and financial success, the approach of treating influencers and creators as a business is likely to become a pattern for future creators.

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Music

"We Want Revolution Girl-Style Now!"

An Analysis of the "Riot Grrrls" Movement Through The Lens of Judith Butler's Theory of Gender As a Performative Act

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Abstract:

The Punk Rock scene emerged in the 1970s across regions of the United States and the United Kingdom, propelled by underground movements of musicians, artists, and a growing subculture of individuals who all participated in the advancement of a new genre of music that rebelled against many of society's injustices. Over time however, the punk rock scene became extremely exclusive and overrun by values of misogyny and sexism. In response to the growing sexism and patriarchal presence in the punk rock scene, a new female-lead punk movement emerged in 1991— the self-proclaimed Riot Grrrls movement. Women of the Riot Grrrls movement sought to make conscious stylistic choices in the music they played, the lyrics they sang, the fanzines they wrote, and the conversations they led to reclaim punk spaces as their own. This paper explores how women pushed against the misogynistic structures of the punk scene and against those of larger American society. They fought to share and demand validation for their experiences as women, performing not only as Riot Grrrls but as women who, through the actions they took, built the Riot Grrrls movement by actively experiencing Judith Butler's theory of gender as a performative act.

The punk rock scene emerged in the 1970s across regions of the United States and the United Kingdom, propelled by underground movements of musicians, artists, and a growing subculture of individuals who all participated in the advancement of a new genre of music that rebelled against many of society's injustices. Beginning as an inclusive space for all who believed in values of anti-authoritarianism, anti-establishment, anti-patriarchy, and nonconformity, the underground movement flourished with art and music produced by individuals defying the mainstream. Over time, the values of the punk scene and the spaces that they inhabited became extremely exclusive, and by the late 1980s, punk became extremely male-dominated and misogynistic (Dunn and Farnsworth 138). In response to the growing sexism and patriarchal presence in the punk rock scene, a new female-lead punk movement emerged in 1991—the self-proclaimed Riot Grrrls movement. Through assembling all-female bands who wrote and performed their own music about the female experience, developing networks of women who wrote about topics of the feminine reality that mainstream media discouraged in their own self-produced media form called fanzines, and creating spaces for women to have their voices be heard, the Riot Grrrls movement was born. By sustaining punk's original value of a "Do It Yourself (DIY)" ethos, the movement became a mechanism for women to not only reclaim the punk scene as a space for themselves too, but to push against larger misogynistic and gender social structures, encourage female empowerment and unfiltered discussions of the female experience, and participate in conscious performative acts of experiencing gender as women in spaces that validated their experiences. Influential bands like Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, and Slant 6, and women who drove the developing network of artwork, zines, and conversations surrounding Riot Grrrls lead the movement forward through intentional acts of performance on and off the stage that redefined social conceptions of gender construct and the social norms of what it meant to be a woman in 1990s American society. Women of the Riot Grrrls movement sought to make conscious stylistic choices in the music they played, the lyrics they sang, the fanzines they wrote, and the conversations they led to reclaim punk spaces as their own. Women pushed against the misogynistic structures that the punk scene had become and against those of larger American society, and fought to share and demand validation for their experiences as women, performing not only as Riot Grrrls but as women who, through the actions they took, built the Riot Grrrls movement by actively experiencing Judith Butler's theory of gender as a performative act.

The punk rock scene first emerged in the mid 1970s in two cities separated by thousands of miles: New York City and London. Bands like the Sex Pistols, the Clash, and the Raincoats pioneered the emergence of punk rock music and its

growing subculture in London, while bands like the Ramones and Blondie were pivotal in the development of the underground scene in New York City (Dunn and Farnsworth 137), which soon grew to develop across the U.S. While the music of these underground scenes and the subcultures they developed differed in various ways between the U.K and the U.S, many fundamental values of punk remained the same. One of these characteristics was the notion of having a "Do It Yourself (DIY)" attitude to all forms of production and proliferation of the music and developing scene of these punk rock subcultures (Rosenberg and Garofalo 809). To this theme, there was a large importance put on assembling your own band, writing, recording, and producing your own music, as well as on performing live and coordinating and promoting these performances independently across the underground punk scene that deviated from the "mainstream." Across the various developing punk rock scenes, a large characteristic of the music was to reflect values of self-empowerment and defying authority (Rosenberg and Garofalo 809), which was observed through this DIY ethos in which musicians created, produced, and published their own music without the influence of power structures of the music industry's capitalistic entities—reflecting anti-authoritarian values that were further perpetuated in the music itself.

When punk first emerged in the '70s, it was a field of music created by those alienated from "mainstream society" *for* those alienated by "mainstream society." The music and the subculture that followed it focused on challenging social stereotypes and inequalities, targeting social issues like sexism and gender inequality through the themes of the music and the values of its participants. Craig Lee, guitarist of the band The Bags (lead by frontwoman Alice Bag), is quoted to state the following in his novel *Hardcore California: A History of Punk and New Wave:* "In Los Angeles circa 1977, female bass players were almost a requirement, and it seemed that it was often the women who dominated and controlled the Punk scene. This equality of the sexes was just another breakdown of traditional rock and roll stereotypes that the early scene was perpetuating" (Lee 20). As Lee describes, the punk scene initially pushed against social gender constructs, and defied many of the gendered and sexist ideas that existed within other "rock" genres of the time. Women like Patti Smith, Debby Harry (of Blondie), Poly Styrene (of X-Ray Spex), and Joan Jett, Sandy West, Cherrie Currie, Lita Ford, and Jackie Fox (all five members of the all-female band The Runaways) were leading figures of the punk rock scene and were vital to the advancement of punk sound and the values the movement stood for. Punk rock originated as an underground scene that welcomed all who believed in its cause and was defined by individual performative choices on and off the stage through the lyrics sung, the music performed, the clothing worn, and the conversations initiated

across the underground scene.

Over the next decade, however, punk rock strayed from its original values and became extremely noninclusive, succumbing to the entities that the movement initially stood up against. Punk rock, specifically in areas on the West Coast of the United States, in the late 1980s became extremely male-dominated, noninclusive, and, in many spaces, extremely sexist. Spaces once led by both men and women punk rockers alike now pushed women to the back of the room. As Dunn and Farnsworth describe a quote by activist Anne Elizabeth Moore who experienced these changes in the punk rock scene first hand, "Writer and political activist Anne Elizabeth Moore recalls finding herself 'at the back of the club with other females holding their boyfriend's jackets' while the boys slam danced and played in the bands (Personal interview)" (Dunn and Farnsworth 138). What once was a space to fight against injustices now became a space taken over by them. In rebellion, the Riot Grrrls movement was started by a group of young women in Olympia, Washington in 1991 who united to discuss how to combat the sexism that was growing in their local punk scene (Dunn and Farnsworth 136 and 139). This first meeting grew into multiple "Riot Grrrl" chapters that formed across the United States throughout the 1990s, connected by a growing network of self-produced journal media called fanzines in which information on upcoming conventions and performances, and stories and opinions of women involved in the movement were shared. The women who developed the movement did so in the actions they took to redefine what being a woman meant in the punk scene, and in larger American society. Using punk rock and the resurgence of its initial values of "Do-It-Yourself" ethos, self-empowerment, and inclusivity as mechanisms to reclaim punk spaces and defy the gendered norms that American society perpetuated, women of the Riot Grrrls movement consciously participated in performative acts of individually defining what it meant to be women and demanded social validation for the real female experience.

These actions by the women of the Riot Grrrls movement can be analyzed through the lens of Judith Butler's theory of gender as a performative act. According to Butler's phenomenological and feminist theory, the existence of gender is not solely constructed by social structures, but, while influenced by such, is also determined by individual performative acts and behavioral choices that affect the ways in which individuals live and experience gender. As Butler described in their essay titled "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," "Gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed. It seems fair to say that certain kinds of acts are usually interpreted as expressive of a gender core or identity, and that these acts either confirm to an expected gender identity or contest that expec-

tation in some way" (Butler 527-528). As Butler describes, the phenomenological being of gender itself is derived from intentional performative choices of individuals experiencing gender, while also acknowledging the influence of social structures and constructs like those surrounding gender in American society in the 1990s.

The reality of what gender is is not strictly defined as a non-pliable structure, but instead can be shaped by influences of time and place, and more importantly, by intentionality of individuals performing its reality; as Butler states,

> [G]ender is no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. (Butler 520)

Gender in conception is able to be molded and shaped by those experiencing it, and the ability to do so is an important concept to understanding the ways in which women of the Riot Grrrls movement individually influenced the reality of gender through their intentional actions.

Gender as a performative act is an integral idea to the conceptualization of the Riot Grrrls movement. The acts performed by the women of the movement were deliberately female in the ways in which they expressed their stories of what the female experience was like, and in how they chose to define the narrative of what it means to be a woman in the punk rock scene and in larger American society. Women of the movement and their actions and performances pushed against the gender constructs of social structures, and in doing so, built the foundation of the movement through which gender is experienced through performative acts.

Butler's theory of gender as a performative act is apparent in the choice of the movement's name: Riot Grrrls. Choosing to be called "Riot Grrrls" is an act of self identification, reclaiming the term "girl" in a way that empowers the individuals who identify with it. In mainstream society, "girl" is commonly associated with misogynistic gendered norms—that girls have to be petite, quiet, childish and obedient. The act of reclaiming the term is an act of autonomy that displays the power women have to define what being a "girl" means, and the power they have to choose how to act like a girl—that in itself is a reflection of Butler's theory of gender as a performative act. As Gottlied and Wald write in their chapter titled "Smells Like Teen Spirit: Riot Grrrls, Revolution and Women in Independent Rock" as part of the larger book collection of chapters titled *Microphone Friends: Youth Music and Youth Culture*, the act of calling themselves and the movement they've created "Riot Grrrls," and intentionally writing the word "girls" as "grrrls" actively redefines the term and the gendered construct that society normally associates with it: "Instead of tirelessly insisting on the right to be called 'women,' as mainstream feminism has long been advocating, riot grrrls foreground girl identity, in its simultaneous audacity and awkwardness—and not just girl, but a defiant 'grrrl' identity that roars back at the dominant culture" (Gottlieb and Wald 266). The act of choosing the self identification of "Riot Grrrls" acknowledges the socialized gender construct that being a "woman" is constructed by this time and place in history, but determining that the phenomenological act of being woman, while influenced by these social and cultural structures, is defined by those experiencing gender and the power individuals have in making conscious decisions in what being a woman conceptually means.

The composition of the music itself that defined the female punk rock movement is also reflective of gender performativity. Characterized by loud feedback-distorted power chords on the electric guitar, driving baselines, equally loud and driving fast-tempo drum beats, and vocalized and spoken-word lyrics focused on the female experience, music of the Riot Grrrls movement was written and performed by all-female bands and reflected an act of redefining what it meant to be a woman in the punk rock scene. Lead singer of the band Bikini Kill (Figure 1) Kathleen Hanna describes her belief in how assembling all-female bands like those of the Riot Grrrls movement are ways in which women can take ownership and autonomy of their own bodies, as she is quoted in the collaborative zine produced by Bikini Kill in 1990 called *Bikini Kill: A Color and Activity Book* (Figure 2): "It's a good way to act out behaviors that are wrongly deemed 'inappropriate.' This is a refutation of censorship and body facism. This can deny taboos that keep us enslaved…To discuss in both literal and artistic ways those issues are really important to girls. Naming these issues, specifically, validates their importance" (*Bikini Kill Color and Activity Book*). The act of women picking up an instrument and writing and performing their own music was an important component to defining "girl power"—determining "female" as a gender that could encompass being able to portray the power, strength, and talent it took to perform punk rock music.



Figure 1. Bikini Kill performing at one of their first live shows, photographed by Allison Wolfe and retrieved from NPR article titled "All Songs +1: Kathleen Hanna And The Return Of Bikini Kill" by Katie Presley and Bob Boilen.

The lyrics of these punk songs were also extremely important to the gender performativity of the Riot Grrrls movement. Songs of the movement were inundated with powerful words that told women's stories, bringing to the forefront topics of female experience and struggle, like that of sexual violence and eating disorders, that mainstream media refused to validate, and statements demanding revolution in the ways the public viewed and treated women. Dunn and Farnsworth describe the power Riot Grrrls music had in defining gender identity in the following quote:

> Riot Grrrl bands played aggressive punk rock with a pronounced feminist agenda, placing gender issues at the forefront. Directly challenging the physical marginalization of women in the punk scene, bands like Bikini Kill encouraged women to come to the front of the stage, where they passed out lyric sheets. For Riot Grrrls, the response to traditional patriarchy—in the immediate punk community and in the larger society— was 'girl power.' Songs focused on issues central to Riot Grrrl such as rape, domestic abuse, women's health, sexuality, and, above all, female empowerment. (Dunn and Farnsworth 140)

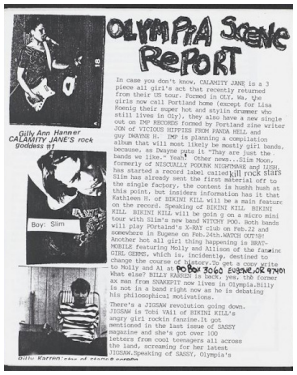
Autonomy in not only the act of picking up a guitar and singing punk rock songs but also in the choice of lyrics and stories shared through punk rock sound reflected women of the Riot Grrrls movement actively experiencing and redefining gender through acts of female empowerment. This idea of gender performativity in the choice of lyrics being shared can be seen in the following lyrics from their song "Double Dare Ya:"

> We're Bikini Kill and we want revolution Girl-style now!
> Hey girlfriend I got a proposition goes something like this:
> Dare ya to do what you want / Dare ya to be who you will
> Dare ya to cry right out loud / "You get so emotional baby"...
> Double dare ya, double dare ya, double dare ya
> Don't you talk out of line / Don't go speaking out of your turn
> Gotta listen to what the Man says / Time to make his stomach burn
> Burn, burn, burn, burn…
> Girl, You're a big girl now / You've got no reason not to fight
> You've got to know what they are /'Fore you can stand up for your rights
> Rights, rights? / You do have rights! ("Double Dare Ya" Genius.com)

Bikini Kill's "Double Dare Ya" is just one example of how lyrics propelled ideas of gender defined by the girls living it, rather than solely structured by society's norms. Through the lines "Dare ya to do what you want/Dare ya to be who you will" followed by the satirical lines "Don't you talk out of line/Don't go speaking out of your turn/Gotta listen to what the Man says/Time to make his stomach burn," the women of Bikini Kill push against society's gender norms that expect girls to be obedient and docile to male dominance, and encourage women to be empowered to participate in performative acts like talking out of line and speaking out of turn to create their own, self determined, female gender identities.

Picking up a guitar, singing empowering lyrics like Bikini Kill's "Double Dare Ya," and encouraging other girls to do the same were self-empowered performative acts of gender. These performative acts defined how women could exist and be perceived in the punk rock scene, stating that women were just as loud, strong, and musically talented as any other gender in their abilities to command punk rock spaces.





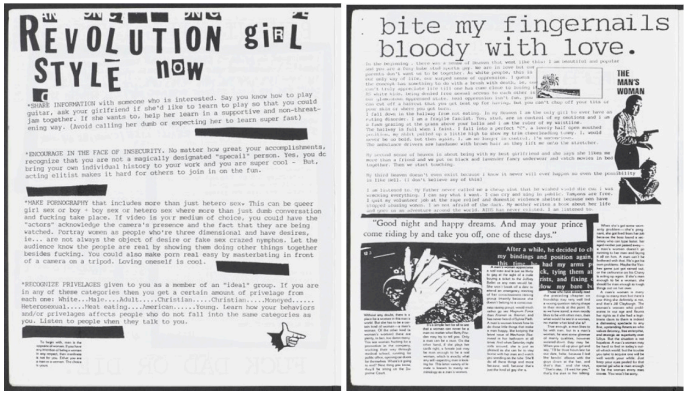


Figure 2. Images of pages from Bikini Kill's collaborative zine produced in 1990 called *Bikini Kill: A Color and Activity Book*, retrieved from digdc.dclibrary.org archive titled "DC Punk Archive Zine Library."

Alongside the punk rock music that propelled the Riot Grrrls movement forward, the driving force behind the movement was the self-produced journalist-style media called zines that connected individuals across the country to the movement and to each other. Through the "Do-It-Yourself" ethos that persisted from the original punk scene in the '70s, zines were artistic forms of media and creative outlets through which women took part in communicating ideas and stories of the female gender. Through depicting issues they experienced in their daily lives, reflecting on music and art forms that portrayed these experiences, and promoting information about performances and Riot Grrrl conventions where women could come together to share these experiences with each other, zines provided means of gender performance through gender-associated commentary (Figure 3). Recorded in an article by Rosenburg and Garofalo, a member of the movement named Lisa from Olympia, Washington provided in an interview her thoughts on the importance of zines to the Riot Grrrls movement and girls' experiences as a whole: "Zines are so important because so many girls feel isolated and don't have other girls to support them in their beliefs. Zines connect them to other girls who will listen and believe and care if they say they've been raped or molested or harassed. Zines provide an outlet for girls to get their feelings and lives out there and share them with others" (Rosenburg and Garofalo 811). Through zines, women performed gender through their writing. They shared stories of first-hand accounts of what it was like to be women in American society, and took power in defining their narratives by being the ones to share them through completely self-produced writing and artwork. The autonomy

individuals had over writing down their experiences through artwork they produced completely by themselves facilitated the empowerment women experienced of being able to share their own stories, having their voices be heard, and connecting with other women who experienced similar things. The act of artistically expressing female experiences through zines and through conversations with one another was an act of performing gender—these stories are key to the experiences of women, and experiencing them together was to experience gender together. Zines called for respect and validation for the experiences shared as female experiences, to not undermine them like mainstream media did, but to accept them as such and work towards enacting social reform to change the inequities of many of the commonalities women share through their experiences with misogyny and sexist social structures.



Figure 3. An example of a zine cover written, drawn, and produced by Lisa Jervis, titled Bitch, retrieved from Rosenberg and Garofalo, "Riot Grrrl: Revolutions from Within," Signs, Spring, 1998, Vol. 23, No. 3, Feminisms and Youth Cultures (Spring, 1998), pp. 809-841, The University of Chicago Press.

These zines were vital to creating the network of communication between individuals of the movement. Through this media form, which soon took to internet chat rooms circa 1994, individuals who identified with the movement began to connect with one another to share music, artwork, and experiences with one another. The Riot Grrrl chapters that started across the country and the conventions each

area would hold became safe spaces for girls to unite and be their authentic selves – to participate in performative acts on and off the stage that realized their female identity.

An important aspect to discuss in regards to these spaces is the ways in which racial identity influenced individuals' gender identities and the ways in which women of color identified with the movement. These spaces while majority female were also majority white, leading to many women of color experiencing the movement and coinciding gender performativity differently. While some identified with the movement, others felt that it did not advocate for their experiences. In her paper titled "Riot Grrrl, Race, and Revival," author Mimi Thi Nguyen discusses the implications of race on the Riot Grrrls movement, and states, "It is as such that race as a reminder of hard histories – within feminisms too – operated as an obstacle to hoped-for collectivity, knocking the promise of girl love and punk rock revolution askew." (Nguyen 179). While the Riot Grrrls movement looked for unity among women in revolution against misogyny and inequitable gendered norms, the performative acts of gender that built the foundations of the movement did not represent the identities of all women. Generalized experiences for "all" within a gender identity is not truly reflective of every individual's experience of that identity, and itself is a concept that Judith Butler warned against. The Riot Grrrls movement, much like the larger feminist movement that the Riot Grrrls is in conjunction with, is not truly reflective of adequately advocating for the experiences of everyone within that gender identity, especially in regards to gender experiences of women of color. Future analysis of first-hand accounts of women of color who interacted with the Riot Grrrls movement and other scholarly sources analyzing the experiences of women of color with the female punk scene is important to further understand how gender was performed and experienced by individuals of the movement and influenced by other social structures.

The music, art, and values of the Riot Grrrls movement remain today as integral pieces to the progress of our understanding of gender as a phenomenological entity and as influenced by social and cultural structures of the time and place in which gender exists. That is to say, the work of the women involved in the Riot Grrrls movement and the works they produced constituted intellectual works through which their gender was performed, and these works should be valued as such. Following mainstream media coverage of the Riot Grrrls movement by companies such as Seventeen and The Rolling Stones, Corin Tucker of Heavens to Betsy stated the following on the mainstream medias' portrayal of the movement:

> I think it was deliberate that we were made to look like we were just ridiculous girls parading around in our underwear. They refused to do serious interviews with us, they misprinted what we had to say, they would take our articles, and our fanzines, and our essays and take them out of context. We wrote a lot about sexual abuse and sexual assault for teenagers and young women. I think those are really important concepts that the media never addressed. ("What got lost")

The mainstream media portrayal of the Riot Grrrls movement was shaped by the exact entities that the movement fought against—social gender norms that were perpetuated by mass media by calling these girls who had intellectual, real and raw stories to tell about their experiences as women "ridiculous girls who paraded around in their underwear." Tucker emphasizes how the Riot Grrrls movement, and the music, art, and zines that were created within it, are all pieces of intellectual work reflective of the ways in which women of the movement made deliberate "performative" choices to represent what being a woman was like against the gender constructs that social structures like mass media emphasize. It is not only the act of these women emphasizing the meaning of their gender by the performances they created, but also in the stories they shared and the conversations they initiated. These women were not just "parading around in their underwear" or "picking up instruments they didn't know how to play," they were acting to change the ways in which the female gender was perceived by displaying it as it truly exists through individual performative acts of gender.

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Anthropology

R.A. Reichard's Bone Mill

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Class of 2024

Abstract:

This essay explores the history of R.A. Reichard's Bone Mill and its lasting impact on the ecology of the land neighboring the current Lehigh Parkway. During its heyday, the mill produced fertilizer, tallow, and hides from animal bones and sold these products to the local community. The mill caused harm to the local environment during its operations, and its foundational remains still stunt plant growth today.

MLA Style

Do you have skeletons in your closet? Reichard's Bone Mill could've used them to create fertilizer or poultry feed. Nestled right off of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Cedar Creek, close to the Lehigh Parkway, lie the remains of the once flourishing bone mill. At first glance, one may notice a seemingly untouched meadow and floodplain landscape, but signs of industry peek out; a bridge remains across Cedar Creek as well as a concrete floor under some of the grass and soil on the landscape. Meadow plants prevail and insects seem to thrive even into the cold weather, still buzzing and ringing in mid-November. Scat on the ground suggests white tail deer thrive in the environment, taking over land that humans once occupied. Foundational bricks of the feed and hide buildings now lie covered in moss on a hill bordering a residential building. The old Lehigh Valley Railroad tracks are not visible at the location of Reichard's mill, but the path it had taken is noticeable by the long strip of flat land extending past the area in both directions. A mere five-minute walk toward a nearby apartment complex reveals the bones of the once bustling tracks.

Sewage lines still in use today poke out of the ground around the business that had disappeared; signs of Reichard's are still visible in the crumbling water tower next to the creek, whose borders have been clearly altered by man with steep stone brick walls on the sides, rather than riparian buffers. Some of the plants that have crept over the abandoned site include a plethora of invasive species like mugwort and multiflora rose, which stand in competition with the native species in the area. The land is also plagued with litter; a purple plastic spoon sits oddly against century-old brick. The old stone, plants, and plastic stand in juxtaposition and create curiosity about the past. With the help of historical maps and articles, the image of the once-thriving business begins to unfold.

In a key article entitled "Family's impact once evident in Allentown," local historian Frank Whelan responds to a written inquiry searching for information on historical sites, including Reichard's Bone Mill. Whelan explains that "Reichard's Bone Mill" is the informal name for Robert A. Reichard Inc., a local bone mill whose primary function was turning animal bones into fertilizer, along with processing tallow and hides. George J. Reichard founded the business in 1889, and operations officially began in 1900. Whelan wrote that the mill had a yearly output of "4,000 tons of poultry food, 10,000 tons of commercial fertilizer, and 5,000 tons of lime," making a profit even in Depression years– from a humble mill from the Lehigh Valley (Whelan 2003). In 1973, the Reichard family sold their business to the Lebanon Chemical Company, a competitor that made chemical fertilizer. Unlike Reichard, Lebanon Chemical Company survives today under the name of Lebanon Seaboard Corporation (Holzer 2003).

As demonstrated in the figure below, the old mill is located at 19th and Law-

rence Street, or along the present day Martin Luther Drive.



Figure 1. (Above) 2023 Google Satellite Image of the Site Location; the red highlights where the mill and its associated buildings had stood. (Google Earth, 2023).

A Morning Call article in 1992 details that Lawrence Road was renamed to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to honor King and the history of the black community that had existed along Lawrence St. (Alu 1992). Before anti-discrimination housing laws were passed in the 60s, the area was a haven where black and white families resided. Black families were not able to purchase properties anywhere else in the city before the 60s due to discrimination (Alu 1992).

Reichard's business was likely set apart from this diverse community, or any community, due to the odorous nature of bone mills (Landry 2020). The business placement near Cedar Creek was strategic; Cedar Creek and its water were essential to the Reichard's business, as they used steam to heat and process their product. The bone mill is also strategically sandwiched next to the Lehigh Valley Railroad (LVRR), specifically the Barber Branch (Sanborn Map Company 1911). The LVRR was initially created in 1835 to transport anthracite coal across the region, but soon, the railroad transported much more than that, connecting goods and people as far as Buffalo, New York (Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society 2019). The Barber Branch that neighbors Reichard's Mill was first mapped in 1862 (Aschbach 1862). The LVRR was just as essential to Reichard's operations as Cedar Creek was, as it helped to transport coal to fuel the industry. Unfortunately, after WWII, the increased reliance on cars and the decline of anthracite coal led to the subsequent demise of the LVRR (Hellerich 1987).



Figure 2. Map of Lehigh Valley Railroad throughout Allentown and surrounding areas (Alter 1884).

History of similar bone mills can provide insight into R. A. Reichard's operations. Baugh & Sons, a family owned bone mill from South Philadelphia, has similarities to Reichard's business (Everline 2015). Baugh & Sons created a bone-based fertilizer, tallow, and more, just like Reichard. Both businesses are located strategically next to a river, which would help to supply the business with water and an avenue to dispose of waste (Everline 2015). Baugh & Sons rendered their bones in big acid chambers and then ground the bones in mills to create their fertilizer; evidence later mentioned shows that Reichard likely used more of a boiling method than chemical, but the two processes are still similar. Both Baugh & Son's and Reichard's family businesses were quite successful, leading to familial wealth until they were sold, and both businesses processed fertilizer and tallow and sold their fertilizer to nearby Pennsylvania customers (Everline 2015).

Another similar mill, The Narborough Mill, can provide more insight. The Narborough Mill ran from the mid to late 1800s in England and relied on whale-bone and collections made by "bone wagons" from local slaughterhouses and farms. (Turner 2023). While using whale bones would be absurd for a mill in Pennsylvania, as Allentown does not line the coast, it is plausible that Reichard's bone mill sent a wagon around the town–with the prevalence of nearby agriculture, there would be plenty of sources for bones. A Morning Call article from 1923 hints at this practice

by mentioning that Reichard picked up a dead horse and bull from a local farm (The Morning Call 1923). Narborough had a railway close by that also transported collections of bones to them and subsequently helped to ship out their product (Turner 2023). Similarly, Reichard's business stood directly next to a rail line, so one can assume that the railroad helped to supply them with bones and ship their goods out, just like Narborough.

Because of similar collection methods, location, and period, the Narborough Bone Mill can also give us insight into how Reichard processed their bones. The Narborough Mill processed their bones by boiling and drying them to make them brittle and remove the fat. The separated fat could be skimmed from the top of the boiled water and taken to make products that were fat-based, like tallow (Turner 2023). The treated bones could be chopped and processed into smaller chunks before the final step of putting them through grinders and millstones to make a fine powder or meal. (Turner 2023). Because Reichard's bone mill operated at a similar time as Narborough, they likely used similar practices; plus, Reichard's Sanborn Fire Insurance insurance maps detail similar technology. The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps detail the use of steam and water from Cedar Creek, which was likely used to boil and treat bones in the rendering building.

We can also make inferences about Reichard's business model through historic insurance maps. A blurb at the bottom of a 1911 insurance map reads:

"… HEAT STEAM. POWER STEAM AND ELEC. FUEL COAL. 2 SMALL F. PUMPS. WATER TANK, CAPCY 2,500 GALS. REACHES TO TOP OF ROOF. V. PS AS SHOWN AND 200' 2'' HOSE ON PREMISES. ALL WATER SUPPLIED FROM CEDAR CREEK. TO HAVE: NIGHT AND SUNDAY WATCHMAN, BEYER PATROL CLOCK, 10 STATIONS, HOURLY ROUNDS. 8 CHILDS HAND EXTGRS (EXTINGUISHERS). 2 CHEMICAL ENGINES EACH WITH REEL AND 50 GAL. TANK ATTD AND 150' AND 100' 1 ¾" HOSE RESPECTIVELY ON REELS. LIGHTS ELEC…"

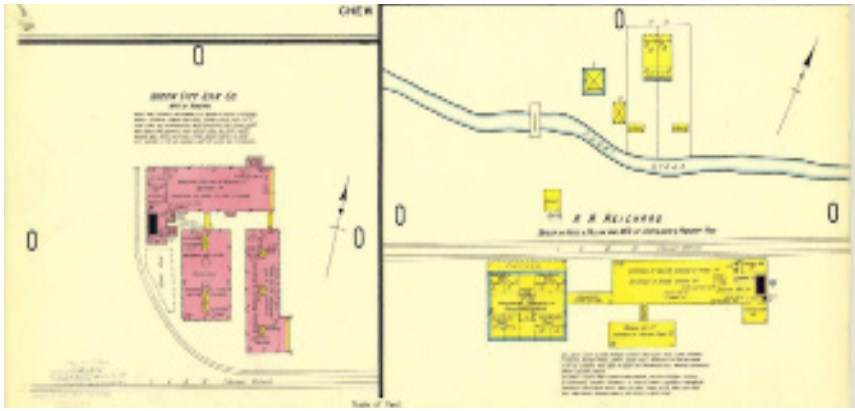


Figure 3. Sanborn Map Company's Insurance Map of Reichard's Business in 1911 (Sanborn Map Company, 1911)

From this informative blurb and the map above, we can gather that the business, at any given time. could be resourcing 2,500 gallons of water from Cedar Creek for their operations just as a fire suppressor and likely used much more beyond this (Sanborn Map Company 1911). Some of this water was turned into steam, which helped to heat and power the facility, along with electricity. Their fuel was coal, most likely anthracite, sourced from the railroad. For safety, they had hoses to put out fires, and watchmen to guard the business and ensure protocol.

We gather more information about the business by observing the documented structures on the map. North Cedar Creek on the map lay three structures and two sheds, and an office with scales lay below the creek but above the railroad. These scales near the office suggested that some patrons of the mill came in person to buy feed or fertilizer and that it was priced by pound and weighed next to the sales office for convenience. Below the creek and the LVRR lay three large buildings: one labeled "phosphate building," one labeled as a warehouse for "poultry feed," and one labeled "main building, " which were connected with two passageways. The main building is labeled to have two floors; the first has an engine room that is used for storage of tallow, grease, and hides, and the second floor is the steam room which contains tankage and dried bones. This leads us to believe that the second floor was where the rendering took place, and the bottom floor was where they stored finished products. The slaughterhouse is also connected to this building, though the level or story is not specified. The slaughterhouse was used to process the animal carcasses before their bones were rendered; animals were not likely to have been slaughtered on the premises. There was also a watch tower to the right of the main building for patrol and safety.

Changes in production can be noted in the differences between this 1911 map and 1932 map. From Frank Whelan, we know that this business was successful throughout its existence, even during the Great Depression. This is mirrored in the 1932 map which has much more construction visible compared to 1911.

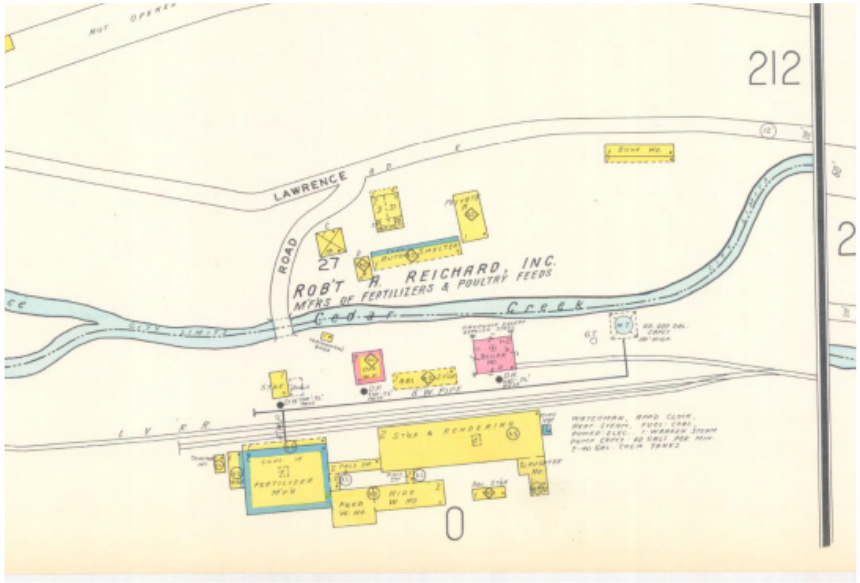


Figure 4. Sanborn Map Company's Insurance Map of Reichard's Business in 1932 (Sanborn Map Company, 1932)

In 1932, the map of Reichard's property above Cedar Creek shows the addition of a wide road that crosses the creek rather than just the small bridge in 1911. New structures appear like a private residence, an auto shelter, and a bunk house, as shown in figure 4. The auto shelter was likely for automobiles that the company owned and for employee parking. The bunk house was perhaps housing for temporary employees who could not afford housing during the Great Depression, or most likely for bachelors.

More new structures appear below the creek but above the railroad: a new brick exterior to the office, a water tower, a watchman shed, and more. The watchmen shed was likely implemented in the case that they hired multiple watchmen, so some could rest while the others took rounds. Below the creek and the railroad show even more additions, like a new warehouse for feed and tractor storage. The original feed warehouse is now labeled to have storage for hides. Some of the building labels have changed, but most likely have not changed purpose since 1911, as the phosphate house is now labeled "Fertilizer Manufacturing" (Figure 3) and the

main building is now labeled "Storage and Rendering" (Figure 4). An increase of storage buildings and employee bunks suggests that the business was so successful that demand increased, therefore so did supply and employees needed to keep up with production.

The Reichards and their products of fertilizer, poultry feed, tallow, and hides were well received by the community. A Morning Call article notes that while the Reichard's only produce 2% of the fertilizer in Pennsylvania, 40% of the 400 bushel growers in Pennsylvania are loyal customers. (The Morning Call 1931). These loyal customers likely attended R. A. Reichard's annual "Bumper Crop Banquet," where they awarded a potato and corn king for farmers who could grow the most bushels of those crops for the season. (The Morning Call 1931). They also offered $4,000 in prizes in their fourth annual banquet in 1931, which converts to over $77,000 in prizes today. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023). This speaks to Reichard's success and loyalty to his customers; his prize money was extremely generous, and the farmers competing for the prize helped to prove the effectiveness of Reichard's fertilizer. Reichard himself published booklets and "growing guides" to help farmers find the right fertilizer for them and offered a local expert for customers to call; whether a generous move or a strategic business practice, customers took advantage of it (Reichard 1930).



Figure 5. Cover of Reichard's Growing Guide from 1930. (Reichard 1930)

Due to the success of the business, it remains a mystery as to why Reichard sold the business to Lebanon Chemical Co in 1973. Perhaps it was because the business was passed down a generation and the sons not having the same passion of the father. R.A. Reichard's Bone Mill was not the original name; it was first George J. and Sons, as George J. Reichard was the founder before passing it on to his youngest son, Robert Alfred. (Holzer 2003).

New technologies may also be to blame for why bone based fertilizers were outcompeted, as a chemical fertilizer company, Lebanon Chemical Company, bought out Reichard (Holzer 2003). Phosphate beds were discovered in South Carolina and Florida by the mid-20th century and were a more potent resource than bonemeal. Production of fertilizer also became more of a high-tech process with the ability to extract nitrogen from the atmosphere (Landry 2020). These mined and chemical-based fertilizers that were more potent and affordable than bone-based fertilizers put lots of family companies out of business (Everline 2015). Subsequently, the Lebanon Chemical Company left Reichard's mill abandoned until around 2003 when they demolished the buildings and gave the city the land to expand the Lehigh Parkway (Holzer 2003).

While Reichard's Bone Mill seemed to positively impact the community and its employees, the same could not be said for its impact on Cedar Creek and the surrounding environment. Before Reichard built his mill, and even before the LVRR existed, the environment likely mirrored what can be observed around the rest of the local environment and Lehigh Parkway: forested hills and floodplain near Cedar Creek. These trees had to be clear-cut for the building of the railroad, which surely disturbed the local animal and plant life. Due to the foundational remains from the mill, combined with the occasional mowing along the route of sewer lines, the previous woodland has been replaced by a meadow today; the pavement prevents plants like trees from rooting deep, and the mowing chops saplings. The artificial meadow seemed to be thriving on our last visit, for the most part. Most of the flat land was covered in native grasses, some goldenrod, and other field plants. We observed wooly caterpillars and grasshoppers and heard the calls of insects and songbirds ahead. Piles of droppings were plentiful and differing in shape, signifying a diversity of species populating this area if they are comfortable defecating here so frequently. One scat we observed often was that of a white-tailed deer; their heavy presence was later confirmed when we spotted two does watching us from the top of the surrounding hill. There is a diverse number of species and interactions in this stretch of edge, and assuming that the factory procedures and human activity probably scared critters off, it is lovely to see them reclaiming the industry area. Visible stone bricks are embedded into the hillside, now taken over by thistles, white snakeroot, and several

trees including black walnut.

Some fencing and several invasive species border the creek, including multiflora rose, amur honeysuckle, and mugwort. Luckily, many native nettles can be spotted in the floodplain area, but the sea of invasive plants is concerning. Invasive plants pose a threat to native plants by invading their habitats, niches, and by spreading population rapidly (U.S. Forest Service 2023). Invasive plants also rarely have native pests, so they can outcompete and threaten native plants (U.S. Forest Service 2023). Most invasive plants have been brought to the United States accidentally through worldwide transportation, and it is possible that invasive plants may have hitched a ride on the LVRR back in the day from a different state or area that was plagued with an invasive plant. Some invasive plants were introduced purposefully through agriculture, erosion control, or plant cultivation; mugwort, a commonly spotted plant around Reichard's rubble, was introduced as a medicinal plant to the U.S. and quickly became invasive (Schneck 2020).

Reichard left his impact with the stone structures that stay embedded in the land, as well as the altered creek banks that are still made of stone around the area today. These structures and construction likely displaced species that we see inhabiting the land today, and other business practices of the Reichard's led to alteration and pollution that we see the land and organisms healing still recovering from. For starters, the mill utilized thousands of gallons from the creek in their operations and constantly had 60,000 gallons of creek water on hand. (Sanborn Map Company 1932). This could have dramatically affected Cedar Creek's water levels, harming species that require certain depths to survive and other businesses along the creek that required a certain water flow (Clean Air Task Force 2004). Power plants, a similar polluter to Reichard's Mill, also drain bodies of water for their operations. Draining thousands of gallons from a stream like Cedar Creek can damage aquatic life by altering water level and flow, entraining them while draining water and lowering populations, and more (Clean Air Task Force 2004). Dumping processed water into the creek can prove dangerous too.

Around the time of the mill's operation, it was a common practice to dispose of waste products into bodies of water; it was likely that Reichard's business disposed of animal remains and wastewater into the creek (Ridlington 2021). Dumped carcasses and waste could harbor bacteria and nutrients that the organisms in the creek were not prepared for. Animal processing plants are still a major cause of pollution today despite regulations from the Clean Water Act. (Ridlington 2021). The Clean Water Act was not initiated until the 1940s, so one can imagine the damage sustained in Reichard's heyday that led up to the Act's introduction (EPA 2023). Wastewater from slaughterhouses contains high levels of nutrients like nitrogen and

phosphorus, which leads to eutrophication, a process in which an excess of nutrients fuels algae that cause toxic algal blooms (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2023). These algal blooms eventually die and get eaten by bacteria, which deplete the remaining oxygen from the body of water. This lack of oxygen then suffocates aquatic organisms, like fish, and leads to catastrophic outcomes and feedback loops of destruction (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2023).

Reichard's business likely affected the larger Allentown community by its waste contribution into the creek, making it less safe and healthy, and depleting part of the water level. The smell of the slaughterhouse waste in the water must have been pungent and affected any residency or operation that bordered the creek as the waste passed. No doubt other businesses were doing the same, so it was not just him to blame, but practices like his led to growing concern about stream health and the privatization of the Lehigh River (Pennsylvania Conservation Heritage Project 2023).

Humans will always alter the environment because they are a part of the ecosystem, so what we do will always have an impact. R.A. Reichard's Bone Mill shows us how the past still affects our human environment today, and his business is not the only one to have lasting effects on the environment. The industrial revolution in America permanently altered our landscape and way of life. A prime example of this is the anthracite coal mining operations that fueled Reichard's business; they drastically affected the surrounding environment during their prime and still cause harm today. Coal mining often has permanent, irreversible effects on the landscape, wildlife, and surrounding geology (Turka 2005). Coal mining destroys surrounding rock and land to obtain coal, causing catastrophic results. Pollution from debris, mining equipment, or mine drainage can pollute the soil and waterways, affecting not only wildlife but also local community water sources (Turka 2005). The primary method of mining anthracite coal in Pennsylvania is underground mining, which leaves a byproduct called tailings– the leftovers from separating coal from unimportant minerals. These tailings are often toxic and potentially pollute local water supplies for humans and wild organisms (Environmental Protection Agency 2022).

A significant problem left from underground mining that still plagues Pennsylvania communities today is acid mine drainage (Environmental Protection Agency 2022). Acid mine drainage is mine polluted water that exits underground and abandoned mines and enters the local watershed. As its name suggests, the drainage is acidic and may affect the water PH as well as add heavy metals from the mining operations. My hometown still feels the effects of these operations today, as I live about an hour south of Centralia.

R.A. Reichard's operations may have been reduced to rubble in our current

times, but their lasting impact can be seen, quite literally, in the land and the local community. Although they caused harm to the local environment by altering it for their business practices, they were faithful members of their community and popular amongst growers. Perhaps many folks in the future will turn in disgust at our current care for the environment, inspecting the rubble of businesses that had thrived during my life. The next time you venture into a park, keep your eyes peeled for signs of the past. Is that stone brick out of place? It probably has a story like Reichard's.

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