Features:
The Effects of Reunification in Former East Germany, by Winston Du
Vanderbilt and The Vietnam Crisis, by Laura L. Grove
The Gilded Age: Allen W. Dulles and the CIA, by Sada O. Stewart
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Cover Photo: People atop the Berlin Wall near the Brandenburg Gate on November 9, 1989 (Sue Ream, Commons Wikimedia).
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Dear Readers,

It seems like only yesterday we published the inaugural issue of the Vanderbilt Historical Review. I am pleased to present the second issue of our journal of history. Our editorial board has selected another series of thought-provoking and engaging historical essays that serve as exemplary models of historical research. I hope readers will enjoy these pieces, which elaborate on an interesting blend of economic, political, social, and artistic issues.

The “History at Vanderbilt” section of our journal features two articles that demonstrate the importance of history and how it connects to our school. The first article, “Vanderbilt and the Vietnam Crisis,” examines the campus’ response to the war using articles written by student journalists at the time in our school newspaper, The Vanderbilt Hustler. The second article is an interview with our very own Dr. Michael Bess, Chancellor’s Professor of History at Vanderbilt. Here, we discuss his recently published book, Our Grandchildren Redesigned: Life in the Bioengineered Society of the Near Future. Other articles cover topics ranging from the economics of reunification in Germany, to the history of unconventional opera in twentieth-century Russia, and more.

In our future-oriented society, history often can be ignored. These articles, however, hopefully can reveal the usefulness of history, which arguably has more potential now than ever before due to new information and interpretations constantly being developed. In only the past decade, historians have witnessed an unprecedented shift in the way we use sources to retell the past. The digital humanities have made archives and countless primary sources available to the general public. With this type of access, I encourage readers to learn more about the past of their families, countries, or religions to understand how we arrived at the present day. This journal can offer a glimpse into humanity’s shared past and hopefully guide us to a better future.

Thank you again to all our readers, editors, and supporters!

Robert Yee
Editor-in-Chief

The Vanderbilt Historical Review is an undergraduate journal of history. We provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to develop skills in historical research, publishing, and editing. To learn more, visit us at www.vanderbilthistoricalreview.com.
Contents

History at Vanderbilt

5 Vanderbilt and the Vietnam Crisis
Laura L. Grove

10 An Interview with Professor Michael Bess
Editorial Board of the Vanderbilt Historical Review

Essays

16 “That’s Leaving It Pretty Much Up To Jane”
Gendered Citizenship, Explicit Feminism, and Implicit Racism in the 1922 Cable Act
Sarah A. Sadlier

25 British Palestine, British Communists, and the “Ideo-Logical” System of Labour Monthly
Emerson Bodde

33 “More Precious Than Peace”
Woodrow Wilson, the German U-boat Campaign, and America’s Path to World War I
Mary E. Gwin

39 Rejecting Reason and Embracing Modernized Art
How Victory Over the Sun Revolutionized the Russian Avant-Garde
Olivia A. Valentine

49 Wiedervereinigung oder Anschluss?
The Effects of Reunification in Former East Germany
Wenhao (Winston) Du

54 The Gilded Age
Allen W. Dulles and the CIA
Sada O. Stewart

62 Thematic Cartography For Social Reform In Chicago, 1894-1923
Rachel Schastok

69 Look Forward in Confusion
An Evaluation of Postwar Europe’s Interaction with the Past
Caley Caiò
This research examines the reaction of students at Vanderbilt University to the Vietnam War during Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency. Vanderbilt's student-run newspaper The Vanderbilt Hustler provides insight into the opinions of individual students and the details of both anti- and pro-war movements on campus. From the evidence, it is argued that although more Vanderbilt students supported the war than opposed it, those students in favor of the cause remained relatively silent. The small demonstrations and acts by the vocal war opposition outnumbered those of war supporters, and in the end, the majority of students remained apolitical, focusing instead on on-campus activities.

Controversy over the Vietnam War raged throughout the United States during the 1960s and early 1970s. Shifts in public opinion became increasingly evident as the Johnson administration escalated the conflict. By the end of Johnson's presidency, it became clear there was great opposition to the war and the principles for which it stood. Such opposition arose especially on college campuses around the country, as liberal youths demonstrated their sentiments through both verbal and physical protests. While this was the case at many universities, southern and politically conservative schools like Vanderbilt were exceptions. There were students and faculty members at Vanderbilt who detested President Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War, yet most students supported his policies. However, support lay at a shallow surface level for the most part. Hence, Vanderbilt anti-war protests, while relatively small in scale, greatly outnumbered active efforts by the silent majority who supported the war.

The escalation of the war in Vietnam began in 1964 as President Johnson tried to secure re-election. After a successful attack by the Northern Vietnamese, Johnson drafted and Congress approved the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which gave the president the power to use military force in Vietnam without further consulting Congress. A year later President Johnson, in hopes of avoiding a full-scale ground war in Vietnam, launched an intense eight-week bombing raid of Northern Vietnam code-named “Operation Rolling Thunder.” Despite his desire to avoid escalating the war, by 1966 he had found it necessary to place 385,000 troops in Vietnam and by the end of his presidency in 1969 over half a million. With the war intensifying and no end in sight, opposition among Americans steadily increased. College campuses throughout the northern United States erupted in protest, burning draft cards, and harassing industrial and military institutions. Similar demonstrations took place on Vanderbilt's campus, although on a much smaller scale, but as a whole the student body and administration remained apolitical.

Because the Vietnam War controversy was so prevalent in American society during Johnson's presidency, general information on the issue was readily available. However, because of Vanderbilt's limited role in the discussion, student and faculty opinions were much less accessible. Therefore, most of the information concerning Vanderbilt comes directly from the university's archives through the student-run newspaper The Vanderbilt Hustler. The paper provides a number of student and faculty opinions as well as reports of events on
In 1965, the beginnings of an anti-war movement began to surface on Vanderbilt's campus; however, this movement was still greatly overshadowed by the majority of students' overwhelming support for the war. On May 7 Vanderbilt hosted its first speaker on the Vietnam issue: Norman Thomas, a Presbyterian minister and fervent socialist. He spoke to a crowd of 1,000 students in Neely Auditorium about the importance of making peace in Vietnam, and was subsequently met with a "mixed reaction of applause and subdued hisses." This event was the first in a series of live debates and speakers on Vietnam that Vanderbilt would host over the next four years. This series was the university's method of fostering an environment in which students were encouraged to think politically without itself taking a clear stance on the issue, and, initially at least, students took advantage of this opportunity to speak freely. In 1965, a small group of students founded the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) at Vanderbilt. The organization remained fairly small and ultimately dissolved after a few months, but its members attempted to spread their political views. They set up booths in Rand Hall and peacefully passed out fliers to promote the anti-Vietnam cause. However, typical Vanderbilt students of the time came from white, southern, conservative, affluent families, and thus unsurprisingly most favored the war. Such students created a petition advocating for the support of American troops in Vietnam and organized a blood drive to benefit U.S. soldiers in 1965. Recent alumni now serving in Vietnam had written to students emphasizing their need for support and blood, and these students seized the opportunity to help their friends. In the end, the petition received over 2,000 signatures and was accepted by a United States general in an on-campus ceremony that became a pro-war rally. Shortly after the event, The Hustler published an editorial saying, "we support the soldiers fighting in Viet Nam, and to go even further, we favor President Johnson's policy there." More than anything else, these two occurrences highlighted the student body's overwhelmingly pro-war stance on the Vietnam issue.

In 1966, the controversy surrounding the Vietnam War was mounting, yet the majority of students at Vanderbilt were simply uninterested in developing and expressing their political beliefs. Dialogue continued through a new column in The Hustler that provided students of both liberal and conservative views with the opportunity to discuss their beliefs. The Student Political Education and Action Committee (SPEAC), one of the organizations that replaced the SDS, also came out with the University's first radical political paper, Prometheus, to spread its views more effectively. Additionally, the Vanderbilt Committee For Alternatives to War in Vietnam attempted to foster a dialogue on campus by setting up a debate between the pro- and anti-war factions. The members of the student-run organization sent out handwritten letters to countless individuals and clubs around campus asking for volunteers to participate. However, out of the 2,000 people who signed the petition supporting the war months earlier, only 15 agreed to defend their views, while 35 out of the infinitely smaller number of students who protested the war came to share their views. This huge discrep-
ancy in numbers can be attributed to conservative students’ lack of support for their arguments and general apathy toward the issue. The majority of pro-war students’ beliefs were cursory, and therefore they could not defend them effectively in a debate against someone who passionately believed and supported their stance. The president of the Young Republicans Club confirmed this by stating, “many supporters are reluctant to put their views on the line when these views are not well grounded.” Thus, even though students who favored the war greatly outnumbered students who opposed the war, anti-war students, knowing they were the minority, demonstrated their passion and zeal for the issue by expressing their views on campus. Specific opinions about what should be done in Vietnam among those who opposed the war varied, some favoring negotiation, others immediate withdrawal, but they all believed “to be silent is to consent,” so they made their voices heard. However, the majority of students at Vanderbilt remained apolitical, focusing instead on academics and campus life.

Anti-war sentiment on Vanderbilt’s campus peaked in 1967, as liberal students grew more vocal. In October 1967, a full page anti-war advertisement appeared in The Hustler advocating a swift end to the war and listing over 100 names of undergraduate, graduate students, and professors who supported the anti-war cause. While most people on Vanderbilt’s campus supported the war, this advertisement highlighted the growth that the anti-war movement had undergone since its humble beginnings. This is also verified through the removal of advertisements for the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) in The Hustler as student protests at Vanderbilt and other universities, often focused on objections to the ROTC program. In 1965, recruitment advertisements for Vanderbilt’s ROTC program appeared frequently. However, after 1965 they disappeared completely from the newspaper, demonstrating the growing opposition. Not only did the number of protesters grow, but also the degree to which students were willing to speak up and physically act. For example, protesters picketed in front of Alumni Hall during a Naval ROTC drill, yelling at the students that they were making a huge mistake and needed to leave the program while they still could. This was in sharp contrast to prior campaigns of quietly handing out pamphlets in Rand.

Protests also arose in the form of peaceful school-wide “teach-ins” in which professors or guest speakers would discuss the need for peace in Vietnam. Not everyone participated, yet publicity, both good and bad, increased in The Hustler. These protests were able to take place because the Board of Trust at Vanderbilt refused to take a position on the Vietnam War. Instead they opted to “skirt the issue” and allow students to debate and decide for themselves what, if anything, should be done. By the end of 1967, the liberal minority at Vanderbilt had taken advantage of the university’s openness, while the conservative majority tended to ignore the anti-war protests, instead concentrating on their academic careers.

In 1968, students’ limited political interest shifted from the Vietnam War to the upcoming presidential election, yet even on this issue, opinions still remained poorly developed and surface level in depth. Those students who were opposed to the United States’ intervention in Vietnam continued to voice their opinions, though with less frequency, hosting more “teach-ins” and writing articles for The Hustler on occasion. For the most part, students began focusing on the upcoming presidential election as more students’ political interests were too narrow to focus on more than one major issue. This was evident as the Vietnam issue greatly overshadowed the racial issue on campus. Even as Vanderbilt’s administration made efforts to integrate, recruiting the SEC’s first African American athlete Perry Wallace in 1966, students seemed rather apathetic to the issue. As the number of African American students increased, some administrators voiced concerns about those students finding social outlets on campus, but for the most part students seemed not to care. There were very few opinion pieces published in The Hustler concerning the racial issue. If anything, The Hustler simply reported on what was going on in Nashville concerning discrimination, for most politically charged articles focused on the Vietnam War and later the election of 1968.
Vanderbilt and the Vietnam Crisis

In 1968, the administration continued to remain as neutral as possible amid the controversy. It declared that the university would not deny admission to a student based on his refusal to participate in the draft. Such an applicant needed to have settled the issue with proper authorities first, “but once that had been done, [the university] would not refuse him admission or judge him unfairly because of such a past record.”26 Thus it strove to make the Vietnam question a non-issue in campus affairs. The controversy of the draft itself never really took off at Vanderbilt, even among those who protested the war.27 There was a small petition in 1968 that received 20 signatures from students who vowed not to honor the draft, but it received minimal attention as protests revolved around America’s involvement more than anything else.28 Moving away from the Vietnam issue, The Hustler began running numerous articles on student and faculty opinions of the candidates and election process. In March 1968, Robert Kennedy came to speak on Vanderbilt’s campus shortly after he had announced his candidacy for president. He gave a speech to over 12,000 students and locals in which he highlighted the shortcomings of the current government, eloquently vowed to do something about them, and received a standing ovation.29 While the great coverage and student turnout of the event seems to demonstrate a high degree of political interest among students, this interest was fleeting. Robert Kennedy’s popularity among students rose dramatically following his speech only to drop later as the excitement died down and students reverted back to their conservative views.30 Shortly after this event, President Johnson announced that he would not seek reelection, yet somehow this major development was missing from the pages of The Hustler.31 This confirms the majority of students’ lack of interest in political affairs. Thus Vanderbilt’s campus and student body remained relatively inactive and quiet throughout this extremely controversial time.

While a liberal minority did vocalize discontent with the situation in Vietnam, most students supported the war and/or paid little attention to the issue. Consequently, demonstrations on Vanderbilt’s campus remained small in scale compared with the violent outbreaks and large-scale protests at colleges with more liberal atmospheres. Still, because of their vehemence, the students of the liberal minority made their voices heard and garnered some support during Johnson’s presidency. They were able to lead Vanderbilt’s limited political scene, hosting debates and “teach-ins,” bringing in guest speakers, and dominating the columns in The Hustler virtually unopposed. In the country as a whole, focused as it was on the Vietnam War, this minority anti-war movement at Vanderbilt would have had little if any impact. However, strikingly enough, liberals were able to dominate the political scene within Vanderbilt’s community because conservative students’ interest in the subject remained on the surface level.
Endnotes

[2] Ibid., 144-245.
[4] Ibid., 140.
[8] Conkin et al., Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University, 12.
[12] Ibid.
[14] Conkin et al., Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University.
[17] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[27] Conkin et al., Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University, 13.
Dr. Michael Bess, Chancellor’s Professor of History at Vanderbilt University, is one of the leading scholars in his field. He is a specialist 20th- and 21st-century Europe, with a particular interest in the social and cultural impacts of technological change. His most recent book, Our Grandchildren Redesigned: Life in the Bioengineered Society of the Near Future, is a manifesto of biotechnology and its ability to create “superhuman” traits in future generations of human beings. The Editorial Board of the Vanderbilt Historical Review conducted an interview with Professor Bess to learn more about his research and teachings.

By the Editorial Board of the Vanderbilt Historical Review
Vanderbilt University

Our Grandchildren Redesigned (2015)
Source: Google

Vanderbilt Historical Review: Your classes have generated a lot of enthusiasm and interest among students who we have talked to, so we’d like to give everybody a little taste. Could you give a brief elevator pitch about your new book, Our Grandchildren Redesigned: Life in the Bioengineered Society of the Near Future: what it is, what inspired you to write it, and anything else you’d like to share about it?

Dr. Michael Bess: I first got interested in this material back in the 1990s. I was watching Star Trek: The Next Generation and there was a robot character in that show who captured my imagination. His name was Commander Data. I found the idea of a machine that replicates human functioning fascinating: was such a thing really possible at some point in the technological future? Or were we humans so special and distinctive in nature that no machine could ever come close to truly embodying the qualities that make us human? This led me to start exploring a hypothesis: the idea that machines and humans were on a convergent path. Here’s the premise: The machines were getting ever smarter and more capable with the passing of time, and humans were integrating more and more sophisticated machines into their daily lives. Where would this convergence ultimately lead?

Out of this early set of questions, gradually, emerged the research project that became Our Grandchildren Redesigned. I decided that, long before we succeed in creating human-level robots (if we ever do succeed at that), we will have advanced a lot further in the other part of the convergence: altering human biology through the application of biotechnology. So I decided to focus my research on that.

The project ended up taking twelve years to complete, because I had to learn a great deal about basic science, engineering, and medicine as part of my research. This ended up being one of the most rewarding aspects of the project. I was drawn into entirely new areas of knowledge, some of which I hadn’t even known existed—such as behavioral genetics, or machine learning, or the theory of complex adaptive systems. I began teaching seminar courses on these kinds of topics, sharing with my students the new material that I was encountering. This turned out to be a wonderful new dimension of my teaching, because these new courses attracted many students whose majors were in biology, neuroscience, engineering, chemistry, or Medicine, Health, and Society. These students brought with them an expertise that was enormously helpful to me, because they were able to ask informed questions from the perspective of their own disciplinary specialties. So I was learning with my students, and from my students. It was totally exhilarating.

In the end, I concluded that there were three principal forms of human bioenhancement: pharmaceuticals, bioelectronics, and genetics. Of these three, the pharmaceutical domain was
the first to arrive: our society has been exploring the possibility of using drugs to boost human capacities for decades now, and the process is accelerating. Bioelectronics are just emerging now as a new and exciting research field and commercial opportunity: there are technologies that allow paralyzed people to communicate with machines just by thinking commands; there are skull caps that read various aspects of your brain's activity and allow people to control machines; there are devices you can wear to boost your cognitive function; there are virtual reality devices that can transport you very realistically into immersive alternate worlds. Finally, of course, there is the domain of genetics. Here we're looking more toward the future, though genetic medicine is already a major undertaking today. Over the coming decades, there will probably be two pathways for enhancing human traits genetically: one will require making alterations to your DNA, while the other will leave your DNA intact and instead use epigenetic tools to modify which parts of your genome are activated or deactivated. The epigenetic pathway is particularly exciting, because it will be available to people at any point in their lives: it's not something that has to be carried out shortly after the moment of your conception. So, if it pans out, it will allow people to alter the genetic basis of their traits and behavior anytime they wish, throughout their lives.

In my book, I explore the potential consequences, both for individuals and for our society as a whole, if these three domains of bioenhancement do become a reality. I'm basically asking: what happens when millions of people are using these powerful tools to alter their bodies and minds?

VHR: On the note of those philosophical questions, could we ask you about a few that you bring up in the book?

The first is, the idea of the human rights aspect surrounding these new technologies. Obviously things like pharmaceuticals are already at play, and there's an ethical debate that could extend into things like physical rejuvenation, especially considering the health care debate that we have now in socialized health care. What are the human rights implications of these new technologies?

Bess: The most worrisome aspect of these technologies, to me, is the question of who gets access to them. Since many of these technologies will probably be very expensive, it is possible that rich people will be able to obtain these bioenhancements to a far greater degree than poor people. Even within a relatively rich nation like the United States, this disparity in access would pose a serious problem. But on a global scale, it would be even worse, because the disparities at that level are so much greater. My worry is that this could lead to a situation in which the global divide between haves and have-nots becomes much greater than it already is today. And think about it: this would no longer be a divide that you could remedy through improved education and access to food and health care. This would be a divide in the biologically based capabilities of humans: for some people it will mean greater health, greater longevity, greater mental acuity and memory, greater ability to control machines, greater facility of communication. And for others, it will mean missing out on all these advantages. The possibility of a vicious circle would be very real: the gap would just keep getting worse, generation after generation. I doubt that half of humankind will be content to just stand by and let this happen to them. There will be anger, and turmoil, and revolt, unless humankind finds a way to offer universal, subsidized access to these technologies to every person on the planet. That will be a very formidable challenge, indeed.

A second aspect that worries me is the potential for the commodification of human traits. People will be tempted to identify very strongly with the particular set of modifications they have made to their bodies and minds. Since they will be in a position to choose which enhancements to adopt, they will be constantly forced to compare one product against another: I like this technology because it allows me to have these new capabilities; I reject those technologies because they're weaker, or inferior, or less impressive. There will be a strong tendency here for people to forget that it's people they are talking about, and to start comparing one person with another as if they were cars in an auto dealership: this one is better than that one because it has a better performance profile. If this happens, then people will fall into a very dangerous trap: they'll tend to forget the idea of human dignity, which posits that each of us is a unique individual whose existence has infinite value regardless of what traits we have. Instead, people will slip into a mentality of comparing each other according to their different performance profiles. If we do this, we lose the basic underlying attitude of unconditional respect for other people. The principles of "one person,
one vote,” of equality before the law, of equal opportunity, would be threatened, because all these principles rest on a fundamental assumption that each of us possesses infinite, intrinsic, and equal worth simply by virtue of being a human person. So commodification, which seems at first like a rather ethereal phenomenon, actually would pose a very serious threat to human dignity and human rights, which are the foundations of any democracy.

VHR: On the same subject, but in terms of its effect on art and culture, and the idea of memory and recounting the past, what implications does this have for those spheres?

Bess: There’s an interesting gadget I describe in my book, which suggests some of the ways in which human bioenhancement could affect the world of the arts. It’s called “the FeelSpace Belt,” and it was invented about a decade ago by a Dutch designer. He took a belt and put a dozen cell-phone vibration motors on it. Then he connected it to a small device that sensed the earth’s magnetic field. Whichever direction was pointing north, the belt would vibrate softly, indicating to the person wearing it which way was north. This is a very simple gadget, but it allowed the person wearing it to be constantly aware of which way was north. This man was trying to add to his own sensorium this additional dimension: seeing, tasting, touching, smelling, hearing—and now, orienting. The longer he wore the belt, over several months, the more he incorporated this new dimension into his daily awareness. By the end, he reported, even his dreams were tuned to North.

I imagine that biotechnologies will allow us to expand our senses and our aesthetic experience in many ways analogous to the FeelSpace Belt—but with potentially far more powerful results. For example, we may be able to tweak our optical sensorium so that we can sense other wavelengths of radiation including infrared or ultraviolet: we would start sensing flowers in the way that bees do. I have a chapter in the book in which I play out these kinds of scenarios, imagining what new possibilities these added dimensions of aesthetic sensing might afford to us in terms of artistic expression and communication.

VHR: It’s almost ironic in that it’s engineering an intuition.

Bess: Yes, absolutely. It reminds me of another remarkable technology that’s being explored today by a team of Japanese researchers. They’re working on a skull cap system that reads the ongoing activity in your brain’s visual cortex, and translates it into visual images on a computer screen. The idea is basically to be able to “see” on the screen what a person is actually seeing through the normal activity of their own eyes and brain. One possible application, which these researchers are excited about, would be to wear one of these skull caps while you’re sleeping. All night long the machine records the activity of your visual cortex while you sleep. In the morning you wake up, turn on your computer, and get to see some of the visual imagery that accompanied your dreams. So you’re now in a dialogue with your own dreams in a whole new augmented way. You may be able to share those images with other people, incorporate those images into poems, movies, and art.

VHR: These new technologies seem to have a multidisciplinary effect, affecting disciplines as diverse as psychology, public policy, history.

Bess: Yes, they tend to run through the entire gamut of human activities and experience. That’s what makes them so interesting (and challenging) to study: you have to adopt a truly eclectic approach in order to gauge the full range of their consequences. When you mention public policy and history, for example, it calls to my mind the topic I was exploring in class with my students today. I call it “facilitated remembering.” The idea is simple: you don’t need to presuppose the existence of fancy brain-altering technologies—all you need is this phenomenon that’s already happening all around us today, known as “the Internet of Things.” The point here is that we are all constantly creating digital traces of our activities, everywhere we go, with just about everything we do. If we extrapolate a bit from this rapidly rising tendency, you
get a scenario in which the number of documents, records, sources, images, and data available about you are gargantuan in nature. And all this information is easily searchable by increasingly powerful computers. What’s the result? It’s not far-fetched to imagine a future, say, fifty years from now, in which a person will be able to use this enormous database to reconstruct past situations with unprecedented accuracy. In a few moments’ time, I could put together a fine-grained, detailed, and accurate portrait of just about any moment in my lifetime. This could have tremendous repercussions for our sense of who we are: sometimes the conclusions we reach, by delving in this powerful way into our own past, will be flattering or helpful or satisfying. At other times it could prove deeply disturbing: we may discover we’ve been deceiving ourselves about some pretty basic aspects of who we are and what we’ve said and done in the past. Now imagine the effect of this technology of “facilitated remembering” in our legal system and courtrooms. Both the prosecution and the defense will have access to an unprecedentedly rich archive of information about past deeds. It will presumably be much harder for people to get away with crimes they committed, or (conversely) to be falsely accused of crimes. And this profound set of consequences is merely an unintended result of the rapid rise of digital technology and the pervasive role it is coming to play in our lives. These kinds of unintended consequences are a major aspect of my research: my book explores the possibilities of such unwanted side-effects for a wide range of bioenhancement technologies.

“[W]hat happens when millions of people are using these powerful [bioengineering] tools to alter their bodies and minds?”

VHR: Is there anything else you’d like to discuss about the matter?

Bess: The conclusion I reach about all this, in my book, is this: we should go slowly, and with great humility, as we walk down this road. I reach this conclusion because the societal tendency will be to do the opposite: to rush forward headlong, adopting these technologies and developing new ones as fast as we can. The pressure will be enormous to go faster, faster, faster. And yet, I argue, the smarter path is one of humility, caution, and restraint. Why? Because if these changes come too quickly, and our society doesn’t have the requisite time to adapt to them, there’s a risk of our civilization being pulled apart. One of the main lessons I’ve learned as a historian is that massive societal changes that happen very quickly tend to result in profound dislocations in which millions of people suffer tremendously. When change happens more gradually and incrementally, on the other hand, our societal habits and institutions tend to be better able to absorb the change in constructive ways. In other words, I’m arguing that, on balance, reform has been a more constructive factor in history than revolution. Strategies of slow, incremental change have succeeded far better at achieving the aims of historical actors than strategies of sudden, drastic change. I make this claim in the full knowledge that it can be qualified in all sorts of significant ways. Nevertheless, it leaps out at me from the mass of historical events with such intuitive force that I feel compelled to take it seriously. I bring it up here because it has major implications for how our society chooses to pursue the bioenhancement enterprise over the coming century.

Consider the three major revolutionary episodes of the modern era: 1789, 1917, 1949. These experiments with sudden radical transformation certainly brought about far-reaching impacts for the societies in which they occurred. But all three skidded eventually out of control, ultimately failing to realize the intentions of the people who had launched them. The political and civic revolutionaries in Paris ended up on the guillotine or under the iron rule of Napoleon. The Marxist ideals of 1917 became a bizarre Orwellian nightmare under Stalin. The Maoist principles of 1949 reached their apotheosis in the famine of 1958–1962 and vicious factional strife of the Cultural Revolution. I am not arguing here that these three great turning points did not also generate some significant positive effects, both directly and (especially) indirectly. Rather, I am underscoring the fact that, on balance, they failed to realize the goals of the men and women who set them into motion, and ultimately led to disastrous outcomes that shattered millions of lives.

If one compares these titanic upheavals with three major reformist movements that took place during the same era, the contrast is striking. The campaign in the West for equal rights for women has unfolded over two centuries, beginning in the early 1800s. Eschewing violent methods, and adopting instead a tenacious strategy of incremental inroads and reforms, women have succeeded over a dozen generations in utterly transforming their status and power in the social order. This is not to say that full equality has been achieved yet, but if one compares the position of women in 1815 with where it stands today, the difference is breathtaking. A similar strategy—and similar success—have characterized those portions of the working-class movement that rejected revolutionary methods and embraced gradual reform instead. Over the same two centuries, their rights and power in West-
ern democracies have steadily increased, as trade unions, the vote, public education, and direct political influence have slowly transformed their socioeconomic status. Again, the victory is not absolute or complete, but the contrast with the era of Charles Dickens could not be starker. Finally, the position of blacks in America offers yet another vivid example of reformist success. From the appalling conditions of the Reconstruction period to the presidency of Barack Obama, the change process has been long and hard, but a strategy of unrelenting, nonviolent pressure, aiming at one incremental goal after another, has gradually transformed the lifeworld of African Americans. Much remains to be achieved, but young blacks today face a dramatically broader universe of possibilities than their great-grandparents did. Gradual reform, in short, is not just morally superior because of its generally nonviolent character: it is also more effective in the long run, engendering forms of enduring change that penetrate deeply into the fabric of society, altering hearts and minds as well as institutions.

When it comes to the pursuit of the enhancement enterprise, our society would do well to take the comparative history of reform and revolution into account. We should choose the long, slow, plodding road rather than the shining superhighway of radical change. Technological innovation may indeed be accelerating, but we should not allow it to transform our lives more rapidly than our social, cultural, and moral frameworks can absorb. If we permit enhancement technologies to advance too quickly, the resultant stresses could end up massively destabilizing our civilization, perhaps even tearing it apart.

VHR: Thank you very much, Professor, for your time.
For Further Reading


In 1922, Congress passed the Cable Act, which allowed women who married foreigners eligible for naturalization to retain their U.S. citizenship. However, women who married aliens racially excluded from the naturalization process lost their U.S. citizenship. This study examines newspapers, periodicals, and Congressional debate from 1920-1923 to determine the presence of implicit and explicit racial reasoning in commentary surrounding the Cable Act. In doing so, this research builds upon an existing body of literature that addresses the power of racial hierarchy in gendered conceptions of citizenship. In addition, it will consider what scholars have failed to address: the absence of overt racial dialogue in public discourse surrounding the Cable Act.

By Sarah A. Sadlier ’16
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“In 1922, Congress passed the Cable Act, or the Married Women’s Independent Nationality Act. This legislation replaced the 1907 Expatriation Act, which had mandated that a woman must assume her husband’s nationality upon marriage. The 1922 Act declared that all women married to foreigners eligible for naturalization could retain their American citizenship, effectively establishing independent citizenship for women from their spouse. At the time, feminists and their supporters vociferously lauded this perceived victory both for the furtherance of gender equality and the reversal of gendered citizenship. Nevertheless, this legislation perpetuated extreme inequality, since the act did not prevent all women from losing their citizenship through marriage. In fact, many women continued to be denied their citizenship when they married men “ineligible” to apply for naturalization. Though the Cable Act itself did not incorporate any overtly racially exclusive language, well-known naturalization and immigration laws defined those “ineligible” as only non-white groups, such as Native Americans and immigrants from Asia and the Pacific. In effect, marrying a non-white individual barred from U.S. citizenship cost women their rights, personhood, and material opportunity. Some “aliens ineligible for citizenship” could not possess property rights, and as a result, neither could their wives. They frequently faced employment discrimination. Wives of “ineligible aliens” could not vote, and they could even face deportation for legal infractions. First-wave feminists largely turned a blind eye to these proceedings, focusing instead on the victory for women who married white foreigners. The deprivation of women’s citizenship based on the racial background of their husbands stands as

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Silent Sentinels picketing the White House (1917)
Source: Library of Congress

“...I sympathize with the point of view of the women in America who demanded the legislation embodied in the Cable Act... Under the law as it was before 1922, an American man might marry an alien woman. He might go and live with her in her own country. He never lost his American nationality. The American government would protect him. On the other hand, an American who married an alien lost her American citizenship even when she remained here in the United States.”

“...ThaT’s Leaving iT PreTTy Much uP To Jane”
Gendered Citizenship, Explicit Feminism, And Implicit Racism In The 1922 Cable Act
By Sarah A. Sadlier ’16
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a testament to the strength of racial hierarchies in gendered conceptions of citizenship in the first half of the twentieth century.

While this topic remains esoteric, scholars of feminist, gender, and sexuality studies have recently explored the influence of racial hierarchies on women's citizenship. Perhaps the most comprehensive work on women's attainment of independent citizenship is Martha Gardener's *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship: 1870-1965*. Gardener affirms that the “1922 act also reinforced ideas of race difference that were equally important to the way Americans understood both citizenship and marriage... and race status remained a marital quality long after citizenship had become an independent one.” Likewise, Evelyn Glenn, author of *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor*, argues that the Cable Act did not address nationality concerns as much as it did racial fears. According to Glenn, “Race and gender have continuously been organizing principles of American citizenship; concomitantly, race and gender have been primary axes for contesting boundaries and rights.” Despite these significant academic contributions to the literature on race, gender, and citizenship, Ian Haney López's *White by Law* noted that the Cable Act and similar legislation “deserves significant study in its own right.”

If race and gender were the organizing principles behind American citizenship in the first half of the twentieth century, as the aforementioned scholars claim, then where is the racial language in both the legislation and discussion over the Cable Act in the early 1920s? Why did race, if it was such a predominant factor in these gender politics, remain in the semantic shadows? An analysis of newspapers, periodicals, and Congressional debate from 1920-1923 can determine the presence of racial reasoning in commentary about the Cable Act. In doing so, this research builds upon an existing body of literature that addresses the power of racial hierarchy in gendered conceptions of citizenship. In addition, it will consider what scholars have failed to properly analyze: the absence of racial dialogue in public discourse around the Cable Act.

From a twenty-first-century perspective, it would seem clear that the Cable Act was intended to maintain racial hierarchies by strict, punitive control over women's sexual behavior with non-white groups through gendered citizenship; what is less evident is how race was present in debates over women's citizenship when it was almost never overtly mentioned. In this issue supposedly revolving around nationality, historians and political scientists have neglected to properly explicate the paradoxical relationship between implicit racism and explicit feminism. Feminist dialogue over the Cable Act eschewed the patriarchal gendering of citizenship and defined a married woman through her husband’s status. The act prioritized liberation for some instead of all, relegating race questions to the back and bringing political equality of women to the forefront. Yet, in subtly expressing their approbation of the exclusion of “race traitors” from this same freedom that they sought, feminists and their supporters were complicit in the reinforcement of racial hierarchies that fortified the very gendered citizenship and marital inequality that they were attempting to transcend.

**BACKGROUND**

The intersection of race and gender in definitions of citizenship extends back to the founding of the United States. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Congress debated laws of naturalization, defining those eligible for citizenship based on their race. The first act regarding naturalization, passed in 1790, declared, “That any alien, being a free and white person, who has resided in the United States for two years...” While women were not yet deprived of their own citizenship for marrying a non-American, their gender precluded them from passing on their citizenship to their offspring. Citizenship was inherited exclusively from the father, so if a woman wed a free
black man, indentured servant, slave, or Native person, her children would not be citizens. Although this provision did not directly deprive women of their citizenship, it did punish them and their family for marrying outside of their race.

The spate of naturalization laws that followed the first further limited citizenship based on gender. The 1795 Naturalization Act set the requirement for residency at higher than five years and maintained the gendered requirements of the previous act.11 The 1798 law replacing the 1795 Act required fourteen years of residency but still reaffirmed that citizenship could only be inherited from the male line.12 Congressional debates in 1855 led to legislation that provided American citizenship to foreign women marrying American citizens, and in 1907, Congress determined that a woman's nationality was completely dependent on who she wed. A woman marrying a foreigner would assume his nationality regardless of whether or not they were eligible or ineligible to naturalize. Subsequently, the question of citizenship almost wholly depended on an individual's gender and marital status.13

The legislation that would replace this dehumanizing 1907 Expatriation Act—the 1922 Cable Act—arrived at a moment when first-wave feminism was gaining ground in the battle for gender equality. Nearly a year and a half before, the Women's Suffrage Movement had reached victory with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. As one columnist noted in 1921, before the right to vote, "citizenship, as it applied to women, had little meaning."14 The swaths of women now flocking to the poll booths and the political sphere made it necessary for Congress and the American public to reconsider the role of its female citizens and who could possess such citizenship in the first place. This right to political par-

1921, “naturalization laws are still based on the old idea that a woman has no individual rights and that her status as a citizen becomes extinct the moment she enters the matrimonial state.”16 Even for men in 1922, “the idea that a woman entirely submerges her individuality to her husband [was] obsolete,” especially considering that “citizenship is a precious responsibility” and it was “scarcely logical in making these things subservient to any other vows, even matrimony; for one-half of the population.”17 Likewise, feminists invoked their newfound political clout to assert their First Amendment rights: “This is a free country is it not? We are taught to marry those of our choice and should be given the freedom, as much so, as to the church we belong in.”18

While women’s rights were swiftly accelerating, racial resentment was rapidly rising. In the post-WWI period, racial tensions were at a boiling point. White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) organized to prevent immigration of peoples to the United States who were not white, from Western Europe, or Protestant. In the same month as the passage of the Cable Act, the first Anglo-Saxon Club of America assembled in Virginia and began demanding an act to prohibit marital unions between white and non-whites.19 Meanwhile, the Ku Klux Klan had amassed five million members since its revival in 1915, and Jim Crow was in full force. D.W. Griffith’s Birth of a Nation became the de facto anthem of the Klan, focusing on the threat of miscegenation to encourage membership. The alleged attempted rape of a white woman in Tulsa ignited a race riot in 1921 that was the spark for multiple other riots that summer and those subsequent.20 Given this immense organizational and institutional opposition to non-whites, specifically concerning sexual encounters, it is clear that discussion of race was not just explosive—it was everywhere.
Sec. 3. Because of such emergency and to assure an adequate supply and an equitable distribution of coal and other fuel, and to facilitate the movement thereof between the several States and with foreign countries, to supply the Army and Navy, the Government of the United States and its several departments, and carriers engaged in interstate commerce with the same during such emergency, and for other purposes, and for the further purpose of assisting in carrying into effect the orders of the Interstate Commerce Commission made under existing law or under section 2 hereof there hereby created and established an agency of the United States to be known as Federal Fuel Distributor, whose appointment shall be made and compensation fixed by the President of the United States. Said distributor shall perform his duties under the direction of the President.

The Statutes at Large of The United States of America from April, 1921, to March, 1923
Source: Library of Congress

Nonetheless, these stories only focused on women marrying foreigners from predominantly white, English-speaking aliens, such as Great Britain and Canada. For the women marrying non-WASP foreigners, their struggle to decide their own identity remained in limbo. Their stories did not belong in the feminist enthusiastic effusions for the act or anywhere in public for that matter.

Women were not the only ones to contemplate the question of independent female citizenship; John. L Cable, a Republican Representative from Ohio, wrote books on the subject and shepherded his eponymous act through Congress. In order to obtain greater public backing for the law, the male supporters of the Cable Act failed to note its deleterious erasure of the identity of women married to ineligible aliens; they focused on the positive inclusion rather than on the negative exclusion. For instance, one headline blared, "Expatriation will no longer be a penalty for marriage as far as American women are concerned," but it was a penalty for some American women. The namesake of the legislation explained that an "American citizen who marries an alien girl still retains his citizenship so also should the American girl who marries the alien man," yet Cable could not even bring himself to publicly discuss the racial qualification to his statement.

This rhetorical tactic of aversion seemed to function perfectly, as support for these women's independent citizenship was nearly unanimous. The vote for legislation in the House of Representatives only had nine opposed. Likewise, a Texas newspaper observed that the proposed "changes in naturalization laws to require alien women to become citizens in their own right are entirely approved by the press, and that American women shall not lose their citizenship when married to aliens is greeted as a means of righting an injustice." A North Dakota newspaper proclaimed that the "most important discrimination against women under our federal law has just been wiped out by the passage of the Cable bill which
provides for the independent citizenship of married women.”27 “Wiped out” is certainly not the phrase that American women married to ineligible aliens had in mind, except perhaps to say that they were eliminated from all the dialogue surrounding the passage of the act. Legally, politically, and socially, they found themselves muted by the overwhelming support for the act.

The majority of newspapers did not include any direct reference to the Cable Act’s exclusionary racist caveat.28 Moreover, even publications in the South, the West, the Midwest, and the Southwest that did only mention the ineligibility of women who married ineligible men at one sentence at the end of the article, without explanation of who was racially eligible for citizenship and who was not.29 The only article that cited race explicitly in this situation was “a woman citizen shall not lose her citizenship by marriage to a foreigner unless such foreigner himself is not eligible to citizenship. Under regulation of the citizenship laws, all white persons and negroes born in Africa are eligible to become citizens.”30 Nonetheless, even this statement did not explain the harsh exclusion of other groups from this opportunity, since it only names the in-group.

The coded mention and dismissal of the Cable Act’s racism illustrates the subtle role of race in justification of feminist endeavors. An Oregonian reporter noted the legislation’s “exceptions and privileges do not extend to an American woman who marries an alien ineligible to citizenship… I believe the benefits of this new legislation far outweigh any of its disadvantages. It certainly recognizes the entity and individualism of woman as has never been done before.”31 The author recognized that the legislation was an improvement for some women but not all. He acknowledged the presence, as did many others, of the very gendered inequities that their independent citizenship project had attempted to undo. Yet, to him, the dehumanization of women who married outside of established racial boundaries was worth the personal rights gained by women marrying WASP males. His implicit assent to the racism underpinning the act juxtaposes his explicit approval of its feminist overtones, speaking to how individualism was only available for those buying into the idea of whiteness-contingent citizenship.

This emphasis on individualism and independence pervaded feminist appraisals of the Act. It was popular in periodicals and newspapers to focus on the female identity and its ability to exist separately from that of her husband. One female Washington newspaper columnist tackled this question of “how to be human though married” in its discussion of “the problem the present Republican congress has helped the women of the United States to solve. Jane Doe has been declared an individual.”32 Like many newspapers of the era, this publication proudly propped up the ability of every woman to maintain her individuality—and by extension, her nationality—in spite of her marital status. “Jane doesn’t believe that loyalty to country can be secured by proxy through a husband. She thinks that women should speak for themselves on the matter of citizenship. And now Congress agrees with her,” proclaimed the author. This bold spirit of feminism speaks to the progress of women in attempting to eliminate gendered citizenship.

Yet, those trying to destroy this form of gendered oppression were also responsible for reinforcing it in their support of punishing those “race traitors” marrying ineligible aliens. The columnist illustrates this paradoxical logic when she writes, “Under the new law an American woman will not lose her citizenship through marriage unless she formally renounces her government. An exception is made in the case of women who marry aliens ineligible to American citizenship. That’s leaving it pretty much up to Jane.”33 The writer never directly refers to race, but the message is clear: If a woman marries a non-white ineligible for citizenship, that was her poor decision, and she must suffer the consequences. Weddings an alien “outside the race” was tantamount to formally renouncing your government while marrying an alien who met citizenship requirements did not impinge on one’s loyalty. Some could “speak for themselves on the matter of citizenship”; others could not. Thus, in this framework, feminists pushing against gendered citizenship and deprivation of identity through marriage undermined their argument by forcing these same policies on women who they saw as having the audacity to violate established racial hierarchies in the United States—namely that of miscegenation. Just as Martha Gardner observed, “The movement to recognize sexual equality under the law and the movement to define the racial and ethnic parameters of the nation were at once contradictory and mutually reinforcing. While one called for inclusion and the other exclusion, arguments for sexual equality were rooted in racial hierarchy and arguments for racial determinism often had sexual fears at their root.”34 This shows that “Jane” never truly had a choice; these arguments had “pretty much” left it up to the racialized system, propped up by feminists, to dictate whether or not she could participate as a citizen.

Those suffering the consequences of Jane’s dilemma were largely left out of the press, but the tale of one woman’s loss of identity is sufficient to demonstrate the dehumanization of those electing to betray the racist feminist stance. Of the hundred of newspapers reviewed for this study mentioning the words “citizenship” and “marriage,” only one 1922 case pertained to a woman who married an “ineligible.” According to the North Dakota publication, Mabel Kawabata “threw away her citizenship when she married Roy Kawabata, under the new laws governing the citizenship of married women in the United States.”35 The use of “threw away” underscores the author’s conviction that Mabel’s act of marrying an ineligible alien was wasteful, shameful, and unnecessary. Her offense was so egregious in the author’s eyes that the author erroneously called her the “Jap” Mabel Kawabata, refusing to
acknowledge that she was white because she had married a
Japanese man. In the author's eye, she had not just forfeited
her citizenship, she had forfeited her white identity.

This privilege was so significant that Mabel sought to termi-
nate her marriage so as to preserve her citizenship. She sued
for an annulment of her marriage with Roy when she learned
that he had fraudulently concealed his ineligibility for citi-
zenship, and as a result, her citizenship had been taken—at
least, those were her stated reasons. The ensuing court case
revealed that if the two were to divorce, she would be able to
regain her citizenship because of the change in her marital
status. The court refused to grant the annulment solely on
Mabel's claims of fraud, but reflected on Mabel's sad life and
those like hers:

It would seem that, if such unfortunates feel that they
cannot, after their liberation face the world unless again
in the possession of their citizenship; that if they regard
themselves without it as unable to survive in the waves
of scorn which they encounter as they again take up the
voyage on life's ocean, if they consider themselves with-
out it as a pilotless bark on an angry sea—can it be said
that it is not fraud to take such a privilege from one who,
so far as the record shows, is a reasonably good citizen?

This poetic description of the trials and tribulations of a
woman denied her independent citizenship because of her
spouse presents an extended metaphor indirectly referenc-
ing the racism that Mabel would experience as a non-citi-
zen married to a racial Other. The "waves of scorn" would
be directed at her for multiple reasons. Although unstated,
perhaps the largest reason for earning the contempt would
be for her abandoning her race and her nation for an ineli-
gible alien. This scorn would be so derisive that some would
be "unable to survive." The "angry sea" alluded once again
to the racist masses who could identify her as a traitor for
forfeiting her citizenship. Such people would include one
newspaper columnist, who wrote of women who married:
"America is but the land of her birth; some other nation that
of her choice. How utterly inane, then, to talk of according
her continued citizenship privileges." Expatriation was not
just a statement of political alignment; it was a punishment
for marrying those outside of the white race. In fact, "a pilot-
less bark on an angry sea" is almost certainly doomed. Thus,
the court recognized that a life without the privilege of citi-
zenship and the taint of racial mixing was no life at all.

CONCLUSION

While proponents of racist policies were strident elsewhere,
such as in debates about anti-miscegenation laws, they were
largely silent in discourse on the Cable Act. Given this obser-
vation, scholars could contend that this illustrates the weak-
ness of racial hierarchies in the construction of gender, sexual-
ity, and citizenship in 1920s America. Nevertheless, a closer
reading of the rhetoric in Cable Act conversations hints at
the subtle yet sinister power of race to reinforce gendered citi-
zenship and patrol women's marital unions. Proponents of

the Cable Act focused on the benefits of inclusion of women
married to eligible aliens, a whitewashed picture that served
to highlight the feminist achievement of greater rights on the
coattails of Women's Suffrage successes. Feminist support-
ers praised this political gain and women's ability to shape
their own identity directly while only briefly alluding to the
deprivation of some women's rights because of the inelig-
ility of their spouse. Their exclusion was justifiable because
this legislation seemingly benefited the feminists' cause, and
it also punished those who, like Mabel, made the choice to
"betray their race" by engaging in a sexual relationship with a
minority ineligible for citizenship. The power of this implicit
racial argument inadvertently reinforced the very gendered
citizenship and racialized importance of marriage that femi-
nists had sought to obliterate.

One central question remains: why did discussion around
the Cable Act reveal implicit racism instead of explicit rac-
ism? I propose two theories, both of which could be partially
answer this confounding query. The first is that the feminist
rhetoric of equality necessary for the passage of this bill was
not coherent with the inequality of racism. Subtle language
was imperative because one could not logically endorse
egalitarian principles in the same bill that obviously pro-
moted undemocratic exclusion. The second related theory is that more explicit appeals were not required because people were familiar with the racist policies underlying citizenship requirements. Facialy neutral phrases like “ineligible for citizenship” indirectly referred to racist naturalization legislation that had established a racial hierarchy that most were familiar with and supported. In either case, this study contradicts the literature that largely labels the pre-Civil rights era as a time of old-fashioned, overt racism and racist appeals.

Historian Tali Mendelberg contends that political communication today still makes race implicit and gender explicit to further racist agendas. She states that this trend began in the 1930s but was not firmly entrenched until the 1960s, a view commonly espoused by other scholars studying the phenomena of racist implicit messages. Other scholars have also contended that since the 1960s, when racial egalitarian principles became the norm, implicit racial communication has allowed political campaigns to “prime racial stereotypes, fears, and resentments while not appearing to do so. When an implicit appeal is rendered explicit—when others bring the racial meaning of the appeal to voters’ attention—it appears to violate the norm of racial equality.” Alternatively, my study suggests that infusing gender legislation and debate that seemingly is racially neutral with concealed racial meaning was even an effective form of political communication forty years before the Civil Rights Era. While the norm of racial equality certainly did not exist in 1922, the normative expectation of rhetorical equality existed for feminists and their supporters. They nominally emphasized the humanity of all peoples but were willing to narrow the definition of what peoples constituted humanity if it benefited their agenda.

The appeal of implicit racism in the support for and text of the Cable Act—an act ostensibly made to promote sexual equality and non-gendered citizenship that actually reinforced the role of race in limiting both—somewhat parallels the white support for facially neutral yet racially exclusive policies today. One such example would be supporting Voter ID laws, which contain no explicitly racial language and are explicitly intended to eliminate voter fraud, but are widely known to disenfranchise people of color. Clearly, the power and utility of this implicit racial language seen almost one hundred years ago in the Cable Act’s citizenship discourse has not faded.

A 1920 pamphlet discussing married women’s right to citizenship noted, “good citizenship demands a knowledge of the issues as they arise. To understand any important issue one must know its origin, its age, theories about it, policies that have in the past shaped themselves around it…a knowledge of history gives force to counsel, provides inspiration, and, above all, gives to present politics its proper setting.” Similarly, this study has endeavored to propose a theory about the mutually reinforcing nature of racial hierarchies and gendered citizenship. Racial thinking twisted the liberal ideal of independent citizenship to make it contingent on a person’s whiteness, which could be invalidated through marital mixture with ineligible minorities. Thus, documents about the Cable Act suggest that feminism could only extend so far in 1922. Feminists made compromises to achieve their political objectives, and if Jane Doe defied the hierarchy that they helped enforce, she could lose her racial identity and white privilege. The explicit feminist arguments that simultaneously justified her forfeiture were implicit, but that did not make them any less powerful—or racist.
Endnotes


[4] Native Americans were not granted citizenship until the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act. Some Native women had obtained citizenship by marrying white men or other special statutes, but an overwhelming majority of Native peoples were not considered citizens. See Bruyneel, Kevin. “Challenging American Boundaries: Indigenous People and the ‘Gift’ of U.S. Citizenship,” Studies in American Political Development 18 (Spring 2004): 30-43.


[25] Ibid.


[28] “Wives Now to File Citizenship Papers New Law Calls for Petition Separate from Husband’s,” Times Picayune (New Orleans,


[35] “Peculiar Case of Jap Woman Will Test Naturalization Law,” Grand Forks Daily Herald 41, no. 300 (October 15, 1922): 3, http://infoweb.newsbank.com. [36] It is my claim that Mabel was white. Neither the court documents nor the newspapers specifically state her race. However, she was a citizen prior to her marriage to Kawabata, and her maiden name was Mabel Jones. There is no remote indication that she was Japanese. Furthermore, the newspapers always identify Roy Kawabata as “a Japanese” in a particularly pointed way to indicate his difference from Mabel. Based on these factors, it is most likely that she was white. For more evidence, see “No Marriage Annulment in This Case,” The Bismarck Tribune (July 3, 1922): 2, http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/55703069/. [37] Kawabata v. Kawabata, 189 The Northwestern Reporter 237, Supreme Court of North Dakota (June 30, 1922). [38] “Why American Citizenship for Women Residing Abroad?” Colorado Springs Gazette (June 27, 1922): 4, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

**British Palestine, British Communists, and the “Ideo-Logical” System of Labour Monthly**

The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) offers an account of the Mandate of Palestine strikingly divergent from the rest of British society. Through their ideology, the CPGB constructed a narrative of Palestinian issues focused on British policy, which was identified as the imperial-capitalist activities of a scheming “British imperialism.” With this ideological center, a discussion emerged that orientalized the Arab nationalist as a progressive revolutionary, differentiated between reactionary Zionist and average Jewish settler, and opposed partition as imperialism. Running throughout these themes was an optimism for Arab-Jewish unity, a conclusion shared with official British government observers. The British Communist view on the Mandate is marked out as radically Communist and distinctly British.

By Emerson Bodde ‘16
Case Western Reserve University

Arab recruits line up in a barracks square in the British Mandate of Palestine (1940)
Source: AP

“His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people… it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.”

Those were the words, set forth in the Balfour Declaration, which came to haunt many a British politician in the course of the British Mandate of Palestine. Balancing British obligations to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine and respecting the rights of Palestinian Arabs was simple for the British Zionist-idealists, difficult for the realistic Briton who recognized the ever-escalating violence between Zionist and Arab, and nearly impossible for the actual British officers working on the ground in Palestine. But regardless of their opinion on the matter, British politicians and officers were legally and ideologically restrained into an acceptance of this framework, and could only hope to make it work or get both Zionists and Arab nationalists to agree to change these terms and expectations. Yet some Britons did not feel bound to the Balfour Declaration or the strictures of the British government, instead approaching each with extreme hostility? One such interesting example of an anti-British, British opinion on the issue of Palestine was that of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB).

Formed in 1920, primarily as an affiliate of the USSR-led Comintern (Third International), the CPGB was the main Communist Party of Britain. Like the other Comintern parties, the CPGB was strongly influenced by the official opinion and ruling policies of the Soviet party, meaning that dramatic shifts in Soviet foreign policy found their expression in CPGB-related media outlets. The British Communists offered a unique and interesting perspective on the conflicts and dilemmas of British Mandate Palestine primarily through the CPGB-linked journal *Labour Monthly*, the organization’s main media outlet. Whereas the typical British politicians, such as Winston Churchill and Ramsay MacDonald, opined on Palestine with the legal, moral, and political restraints of the Balfour Declaration and strong Zionist sympathies, the CPGB worked within the parameters set by official Soviet opinion, Soviet foreign policy, and Communist ideology. Given this constraint, *Labour Monthly*’s coverage of Palestine centered on the specter of “British imperialism” in regards to Palestinian and Zionist policies, essentially reifying it into the ideological center of gravity which structured the British Communist coverage of Palestine. Combined with a distinction between “Zionist” and “Jew,” this ideological basis produced the themes of a direct anti-racist Soviet fetish for the oriental peasant, a near-constant opposition to the idea of partition, and an ever-present optimism in the ability of Jew and Arab to unite in anti-imperialist struggle against capitalism and the British Empire. From the postulate of “British imperialism,” the CPGB developed a self-consistent “ideo-logical” system. Though the CPGB was constrained by Soviet policies, the relative consistency of those policies over the course of the Mandate allowed British Communists to develop a coherent ideological critique of Zionism and British imperialism that incorporated the Marxist-Leninist interpretations of capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism, which nonetheless proved capable of being flexible enough to adjust to the Comintern policy of favoring the creation of Israel in 1947.
Before one can investigate the various opinions offered by the British Communists, it is important to consider relevant policy changes brought about in the Soviet Union and imposed on Soviet-supported parties through the institutions of the Comintern. The first and most relevant to the Palestinian case was the “Popular Front,” established in 1934 in reaction to the fascist victories in Italy and Germany, which supported political alliances with non-Communist political groups, such as the Labour Party and Liberal Party, for anti-fascist cooperation and action. At first, that meant reconciling with social-democratic parties (like the Labour Party) once derided as “social fascists,” but the growing Nazi threat loosened the standards over time to allow the moderate left and basically any anti-Nazi factions (such as the Liberal Party). In the Palestinian case, that included working with liberal bi-nationalists like Hebrew University President Dr. Judah Magnes within the goal of countering Nazi influence in the Zionist and Arab camps. The Popular Front tactic also presaged the eventual shift of Communist expectations onto the Jews as the leading anti-imperialist force in Palestine, rather than the Arabs.

This trend of Communists shifting from a temporary alliance with Zionists to seeing Zionists as the key progressive force is most noticeable in the answers and opinions given on the question of Zionism. In 1937, Communist M.P. William Gallacher regarded Zionism as having “always been nothing but a harmful reactionary illusion;” as late as 1943, Rajani Palme Dutt, one of the lead theoreticians of the party, noted “the reactionary character of Zionism” and that the CPGB’s task with Zionists was “one of very patient enlightenment and not primarily polemical propaganda.” Up until 1948, the source of progressive revolutionary potential had always been the Arab, with Jews cited as a misled minority and Zionists as a distinct group which manipulated the Jews. However, as Soviet support skewed towards supporting the Zionists and Jewish statehood through partition, as well as the logic of Zionist independence weakening the British Empire, the CPGB changed its attitude towards Zionism as reactionary. Whereas the 18th Party Congress rallied for Arab-Jewish unity to “end the Zionist policy of Jewish exclusiveness in industry and agriculture [and subject Jewish immigration to Arab-Jewish agreement],” the 19th Congress of 1947 dropped all reference to the term. Whereas Zionism was once a main target of the CPGB when it came to Palestine, blame now shifted to “British imperialism,” because with the end of World War II, Zionist national aspirations threatened Western integrity; now, anything that threatened Zionist aspirations would be reactionary. Thus, when the Arab states invaded Palestine against the Zionist militias (who were supplied by Soviet-backed Czechoslovakia), the Central Committee deemed it a “reactionary war conducted by the chieftains of the Arab League under British control [which] is entirely against the interests of the Arab masses.” When the winds from Moscow blew, they could be noticeably seen in the changed media coverage and political pronouncements of the CPGB.

If one ignores the case of Soviet foreign policy impacting this late period, very consistent themes can be detected in the period prior to 1948. One of the more interesting themes that ran through the CPGB coverage of the Palestinian Mandate that contrasted with all the other political opinions was a sort of “Soviet-oriental fetishism,” derived from its political roots in the semi-rural Russian Revolution, which combined with an equation of non-Zionist Jewish and Arab interest. According to the Comintern, the peasant was an agent of progressive socialist revolution, meaning that the British communists saw just as much progressive character in the fellahin as in the western European Jewish settler or Russian peasant. Thus, while the Arab Palestinian was still seen as a “non-modern peasant,” this endeared the Arab to the Soviet understanding of how actual socialist revolutions are made, i.e. that it was made in Russia with mostly peasants. Perhaps the most direct case of a Communist defense of “the Arab” can be found in a book review of Ernest Main’s *Palestine at the Crossroads* by former British colonial officer for the Palestine administration, Thomas Hodgkin (under the pseudonym “British Resident”). While complimenting Main for being openly imperialistic in his argument for British rule and a Jewish majority in Palestine, Hodgkin takes umbrage with Main’s serious racism towards the “backward” Arab:

> Few Arabs, [Main] says, have any political consciousness. Yet it is curious that these politically unconscious Arabs should have carried on a six-months’ general
strike against the Government… it is unfair to say that ‘the Arab, largely due to his antecedents, has little talent for constructive team-work’ without mentioning the fact that under the British Mandate [the British have] effective control, both central and local… consequently no genuine opportunity has been given the Arabs for showing their ‘talent for constructive team-work.’

In this, Hodgkin countered the typical colonial logic that the observed depressed state of the colonial subject, rather than being some sort of natural state, was actually the result of the colonial process itself which vulgarized the colonial Other. Main’s comments that the Arab was “venal” or that they did not appreciate scientific agriculture were also countered by Hodgkin as being blind to the important factors of capitalism and Ottoman/British imperialism:

In so far as Arabs are venal, and many are not, that is to be explained by the fact that they have lived for four hundred years under Ottoman rule when to be corruptable had high survival value… Scientific agriculture is beyond the ken of the majority of Arab peasant farmers only because they are too heavily burdened by debt, land shortage, and high rents to be able to afford to introduce improved methods of farming.

From the British Communist perspective, the colonial-orientalist denigration of the Arab as backward was rejected on the grounds that such orientalism ascribed that backwardness as something essential, when the truth was the backwardness of the impoverished Arab peasant was produced by imperialism and sustained by “British (capitalist) imperialism.”

The constructed progressive character of the Arab is especially notable in comparison to the mainstream referent of “progress,” the Jew, and the relation between these two abstracted peoples. For example, the Zionist Labour PM Ramsay MacDonald envisaged the Jew as a cultivator of the land who increased the wealth of Palestine “a hundredfold.” The Communist view on the matter was similar, but put the (political) progressive focus on Arabs. The Arab would fight for the “progressive struggle” and the Jew was progressive in its role as partner and supporter to this principally Arab struggle. However, while McDonald meant Zionists when he said “Jews,” the Communists differentiated the Zionist from the non-Zionist Palestinian Jew. The Zionist Jew was a violent reactionary, antithetical to the progressive Arab struggle, but the Zionists as a whole were not representative of the Yishuv, the Jewish population of Palestine. As British

Aided by this differentiation of Jew and Zionist and the denigration of those Zionists, the CPGB milieu was arguing that the proper orientation of the Yishuv was not in an alliance with “British imperialism.” The progressive struggle was on the side of the Arab and imperialism only endangered the Yishuv. The Zionist alliance with Britain brought danger in that it made the Yishuv collaborators, and thus targets of the Arab revolution. The Arab hates the Jew, not because of their desire for a national home, but because they are under the auspices of an imperial power that institutes policy “without consulting the wishes or interests of the existing inhabitants.” In the British Communist imagination, the national home project, as British-sanctioned, was a principal stumbling block to Jews realizing that their best situation was a revolutionary alliance with the Arab nationalist struggle.

The specific character and benefits of this proposed Arab-Jew alliance were also outlined. For instance, the Jew could further his/her own struggle against international anti-Semitism by taking part in a progressive Arab-Palestinian state: the Palestinian Jew’s role was “as loyal members of an Arab state,” through which they could win over allies for a campaign against Jewish persecution in Europe. Even as late as 1944, the CPGB argued for the Arab states to unite into a political federation, with Palestine and its significant Jewish minority as a vital component: “there can be no successful Federation without the collaboration of Palestine Jewry which can play a vitally important part in Arab progressive advance and development.” Before the Soviet shift towards a pro-Israel position in 1947, the end goal of the British Communists was an egalitarian, multi-ethnic society in Palestine, linked to similar states in an Arab federation. The Jews would benefit the Arabs by being innovative carriers of capital and the Arabs would benefit the Jews by introducing them into an egalitarian, presumably non-capitalist Soviet society.

“When the winds from Moscow blew, they could be noticeably seen in the changed media coverage and political pronouncements of the CPGB.”
Communists, in this respect of capitalist-colonial imperialism, equaled capitalism by other means and capitalism/terms, for Lenin and those influenced by his thought, imperialism operated on a national basis.

Imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism... on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist associations of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolist possession of the territory of the world, which has been completely divided up.

This analysis came from his experiences in World War I, “a war to decide whether the British or German group of financial plunderers is to receive the most booty.” Put in simple terms, for Lenin and those influenced by his thought, imperialism equaled capitalism by other means and capitalism/imperialism operated on a national basis.

The influence of Lenin's intellectual legacy on the British Communists, in this respect of capitalist-colonial imperialism, is apparent both in their assessment of the British motives in colonial dealings and in the idea that there are competing capitalist empires at play. Through nearly every report on Palestine in Labour Monthly, the lens of analysis used by the British Communists saw the Mandate of Palestine as beholden to British imperial need. In recommending partition, the Royal Commission meant “not only to prevent the people of Palestine from realizing national independence, but also to keep open and intensify the enmity and hatred between Arab and Jew that have been so sedulously fostered by British imperialism.” The main way the British built up and colonized Palestine was through Zionism, which “has always been nothing but a harmful reactionary illusion. In actual fact it has represented and carried through an invasion of Palestine, not in the interest of the Jews, but of British imperialism.” Just as Lenin laid out in Imperialism, the Zionist-Palestinian project was a project of capitalist market-seeking:

The British empire, in their ruling policies throughout the Mandate period (Labour governments included), had been carrying out the capitalist expansion of British markets and economic forces and imperial needs, like the Baghdad-Haifa oil pipeline, to maintain this position against competing French interests in the region. Indeed, these expansions were in competition with the American and French capitalist empires as well. In terms of competition against the Americans, the British fought for control over their tool in Palestine, the Zionists, “for American imperialism has used Zionism in the past as a means of penetration in the Near East. The Labour Government by this policy tries to check this destruction of its monopoly of exploitation in these Near Eastern countries.” Palestine was thus a small part of a much larger socio-economic system and great power dynamics, according to the Leninist British Communists.

“British imperialism,” however, was not construed as some sort of natural economic force or general trend, but practically seen as an agent with a significant ontological status. For the CPGB of Labour Monthly, “British imperialism” plotted, schemed, and planned, along with specific Zionists with whom it cooperated; it worked in the Mandate to stop national liberation by dividing people “along racial, religious, or cultural lines.” This vague entity also desired and “was only concerned with fulfilling her pledges to the degree that they did not conflict with her Imperialist aims.” In both the
phrasing and logic of their arguments, these British Communists attributed an almost material reality to the entity known as "British imperialism." This was the main phrase, as a sort of center of gravity, around which the CPGB's coverage revolved and through which the CPGB tarnished an enemy by association.

For most of the Mandate, the second main target of British Communist critique in Palestine was the Zionist movement, which was differentiated from the Jews of Palestine: "British Imperialism also has its agents and allies in Palestine... Britain has used the Zionist movement as a buffer against Arab aspirations: and this has driven the Arabs into armed revolt." Th  is was the reactionary Zionist leadership were some of these "agents of British imperialism," such as Chaim Weizmann, who was "attempting to make the Yishuv into a tool which may be used to prevent the Arab people from striking once again for their National freedom... Such a policy must be opposed by every progressive, for it spells disaster for the Yishuv." Through the construction of a reviled agent known as "British imperialism," acting as a sort of “floating signifier,” the British Communists created an ideological enemy which could “float” to different referents. When the hated term was aligned with British policy’s cooperation with the Zionist leadership, it served to simultaneously portray Arab nationalism as inherently progressive and to distinguish the Yishuv from the plotting Zionists, who were lackeys of imperialism. And, just as flexibly in the late 1940s, those roles could be reversed to tar Arab leadership and portray all of Zionism as progressive in 1948, “floating” the vague signifier to besmirch the Arab states.

PARTITION OR SOLIDARITY?
Another key theme in the British Communist coverage of British Mandate Palestine was a strong criticism of the proposed policy of partition, which was seriously considered after the Arab revolt of 1936 and the subsequent unrest. Besides propounding the principle of self-determination, that any division of Palestine could only be justified by the (impossible) agreement of Arabs and Jews to agree to partition, Hodgkin also critiqued the dominant narrative of two peoples who are “incapable of living together as a single united people” as overly simplistic. Such a narrative was akin to “speaking of it as though Arabs and Jews were two naughty children who had to be shut up in separate rooms by Britain in order to produce peace.” Another dimension of the partition plan, specifically the “transference” of peoples into the different states, warranted special ridicule from Gallacher:

What a blessed word—‘transferred.’ Driven off the land they have owned and cultivated for generations, they will be “replanted” somewhere, maybe to starve and die. “Transferred” and “replanted.” How is it possible that such barbaric treatment of a great people (however simple their economy may be) can be contemplated? Between Hodgkin and Gallacher, partition of Palestine was not just a stupid or ineffective policy for the region, but it was antithetical to their moral of national determination, to their anti-imperialism which was truncated by the preservation of Arab-Jewish rivalry, and to the human decency which is appalled by the terror that is contained in softly spoken words like “transfer.” Partition was just “British imperialism” by another name and method, and thus was not to be tolerated by the British Communists.

Palestine claimed by the World Zionist Organization (1919)
Source: Oosthoek-Times Wereldatlas (1973/1977), map 87 (Lebanon, Israel, Nile delta)

There was, however, one last consistent theme in the British communist coverage of the Palestinian Mandate which marks them out, not as Communists, but as British: their overriding optimism in the possibility of Jew and Arab unification in a progressive national liberation movement. In an economistic vein of social theory, Ramsay MacDonald had said of Palestine that Jewish workers could not defend their wages if Palestine is “to be divided into two working-class nations, one with a substantially lower standard of life than the other. So the Jewish worker is helping the Arab to raise his standard... economic contacts are bringing the races into...
In comparison, the more politically and revolutionarily oriented social analysis of the British Communists asserted and predicted Jew-Arab unity through their common political interests. Indeed, the CPGB kept writing as if the revolution was around the corner, with each new crisis being the spark to set off the process of unification. In the first instance, it was the partition proposal; partition revealed to the Jews that the Zionist leaders were mere tools of “British imperialism,” and showed Arabs another instance of imperial imposition. Once the threat of partition proved to be an unsuitable route for unity, the CPGB contended that anti-Semitism and the fascist threat would unite Arab and Jew:

The menace of Fascist penetration makes it imperative for the progressive forces among the Jews and Arabs in Palestine to come together for a unified struggle against the Fascist axis and its agents in the Arab and Jewish camps... Arab Jewish workers’ unity would rally round itself all the progressive forces among Jews and Arabs in the spirit of world unity against Fascism and for a democratic Palestine with equal rights for all.

Historically, this too failed to prompt the creation of a progressive alliance among Arab and Jew to run out “reactionar-

ies” like Ben-Gurion and the Mufti, but it also failed at the more basic level. The spark of bi-national unity never caught flame.

The reason for this failure is that the Communists were simply unable or unwilling to comprehend and communicate the possibility that Zionism was a popular idea, that the creation of a Jewish state was possible, or that Zionist leaders might have grander aspirations than Dominion status in the British Empire. In their Leninist worldview that focused on giant political entities, where the “American,” “British,” and “Nazi” capitalist empires were all that mattered, the creation of a small and relatively independent and self-determined colonial state like Israel was unthinkable: “The present Zionist policy, the Weizmann-Ben-Gurion policy, is bankrupt because these leaders tried to create something which is impossible (a Jewish majority and State in Palestine) relying wholly on a treacherous ally who assured them that this was possible.” Because “British imperialism” was treacherous and would not actually abide an (impossible) Zionist state, this thus positioned the possibility of a progressive revolution in the Arab nationalist project. The overriding optimism of the British Communists paralleled that of the Zionist-Labourites like MacDonald; whereas MacDonald posited the natural economic unity of Arab and Jewish interests, Communists like Panner were assured Arab and Jew would have to come to the realization that their revolutionary-political interests aligned. Whereas MacDonald could not imagine the ability of Jews to close their economic prosperity to themselves, Panner could not appreciate the popularity of the Zionist project or its feasibility. This was the sense in which the British Communists were British: assuming some unrealistic ideological axioms, a utopic union of Arab and Jew was thought inevitable. Even in this extreme and niche perspective of the British Communists, Zionism was underestimated in favor of an optimism for a leftist political program that necessitated cross-ethnic unity and opposition to imperialism.

CONCLUSION

One would be hard-pressed to find a more niche group within Britain to comment on the issues of the Palestinian Mandate than the Soviet-backed Communist Party of Great Britain. Through their Soviet-communist ideological restrictions, which greatly differed from the ideological restrictions acting upon a more mainstream British political tendency, the CPGB constructed a political narrative and terminology that squarely focused the Palestinian issue on British policy. That policy, identified as the imperial-capitalist activities of a scheming, desiring agent called “British imperialism,” was the center of discussion and which logically placed the Arab nationalist as a progressive revolutionary and Zionist as reactionary agent of British imperialism. Such themes that grew out of this basic narrative were a strange Soviet-orientalism, which fetishized the Arab into communist revolutionaries, a differentiation between reactionary Zionist and average Palestinian Jewish settler, and an opposition to partition, be-
cause partition was an imperialist tactic. Undergirding all of this, ultimately, was an overriding communist optimism in the ability of Arab and Jew to unite, a conclusion shared with other British observers, but reached through a much different ideological process.

However, the abrupt shift towards a pro-Israel position reveals the larger moral and historical lesson of the British Communists, which is that a political account, constructed on the shifting sands of pure ideological theory, can be made logical and consistent, but can also be easily directed towards other goals; “British imperialism” as a floating signifier with vague meaning could be re-assigned to a different referent to criticize different actors. When deconstructing the political opinions of a historical subject, one can discern this “ideo-logical” manner in which those subjects construed and viewed the world and the process by which such a subject could justify, to themselves, a seemingly radical shift to an opposite conclusion. The British Communists could abide a shift from anti- to pro-Zionism not because they simply “changed their minds,” but because the ideological framework they worked from was flexible enough to justify such a change, despite previous hopes in the ability of Jew and Arab to unite in common struggle.
Endnotes

[9] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., Preface to the French and German Editions.
[20] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
The early 20th century is portrayed as the era of American isolationism, and the United States’ official policy of neutrality for most of World War I is frequently attributed to the country’s economic interests and substantial population of European immigrants. However, German submarine warfare from 1915-1917 endangered American trade, incited public outrage, and created enemies in both major political parties. Why, then, was US entry into the war delayed so extensively? This paper examines the diplomacy of President Woodrow Wilson in the context of ongoing U-boat warfare and critiques his attempt to balance his personal vision of peace with his public responsibility to defend American interests from German aggression.

It would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs,” remarked Woodrow Wilson before his presidential inauguration in 1913.1 He entered office with one of the most progressive domestic agendas in American history, including plans to introduce a graduated income tax, implement strict child labor laws, and limit the political power of special interest groups. Unfortunately for Wilson, the outbreak of war in Europe quickly came to dominate his attention, and his presidency was ultimately defined by the choices he made for the United States in World War I. Although popular sentiment, economic issues, and Wilson’s advisers all pressed him to enter the war early on, he refused to capitulate for almost three years. Until the German U-boat campaign reached a level of insupportable ruthlessness in 1917, Wilson prioritized his own vision of world peace over his responsibility to protect American interests abroad. In doing so, he demonstrated the rigidity of his personal moral code and his inability to reconcile his view of peace with the assertive action expected of a rising world power.

FASHIONING AMERICAN NEUTRALITY
When war broke out in Europe in July 1914, Wilson initiated a policy of neutrality that was designed to maintain peace within the United States. He justified this policy largely from a social standpoint, assuming that the United States “could never take part on either side without bringing on a civil war at home.”2 The 1910 census revealed that Wilson presided over the highest proportion of foreign-born citizens in the nation’s history, many of whom had British or German origins.3 Thirteen and a half percent of Americans were immigrants, and Wilson was concerned that any policy other than neutrality would fragment the country and disrupt his efforts to achieve peace. Furthermore, despite initial popular sentiment that may have favored one side or another, “it was thought possible to be sympathetic yet completely neutral.”4 Though they were unaware of Wilson’s underlying motives, it was relatively easy for the American people to subscribe to his policy of neutrality. At least at the beginning of the conflict, domestic interests did not clash with Wilson’s attempts to bring Europe to the peace table.
the alternative—not selling contraband to either of the pow-
ers—would have restricted American economic growth, an
unattractive prospect for Wilson and his advisers.

While the majority of Wilson’s inner circle was sympathetic
toward the Allies, Wilson insisted that no policy other than
strict neutrality was sustainable. As he explained in an address
to the Daughters of the American Revolution, the US should
keep its distance from the European conflict “not because it
does not understand the quarrel…but because America had
promised the world to stand apart and maintain certain prin-
ciples of action which are grounded in law and in justice.”
Wilson detested the idea of war, and although he could not
forcibly bring the Europeans into peace negotiations, he did
have the power to direct American foreign policy and keep
the US out of the hostilities. By limiting American involve-
ment to trade interests only, Wilson prevented Americans
from rushing into the war, maintaining the domestic tran-
quility that he hoped would serve as an example to his Eu-
ropean counterparts. As Wilson tried to personally mediate
the peace between the belligerent powers, his citizens largely
dismissed the war as a short-lived scuffle. The majority of
them perceived it as yet another senseless conflict plaguing
Europe, and the American ambassador to Britain, Walter
Hines Page, wrote to Wilson that “again and ever I thank
Heaven for the Atlantic Ocean.” This traditional sense of
American isolationism, among other political factors, led
Wilson to institute and maintain the policy of neutrality for
as long as he could.

AGGRESSION ON THE HIGH SEAS
However, it was only a matter of time before Britain and Ger-
many antagonized Wilson by challenging American neutral-
ity. Britain announced its intention to make the North Sea
a mine war zone in November 1914, and Germany issued
a similar declaration for the waters surrounding Britain
and Ireland three months later. This disrupted the “relative
placidity” of American-German relations, and it was inter-
preted by Wilson as “an extraordinary threat to destroy com-
merce.” Germany’s public image degenerated in the wake
of the Belgian occupation, when German soldiers terrorized
the population and displayed no respect for the country’s
declared neutrality. To Americans, it seemed that Germany
“had deliberately trampled on the rules of civilized warfare,”
and many became more outspoken in favor of the Allies.
More so than Britain, Germany’s behavior in the war of-
fended American citizens, and the challenge of maintaining
popular support for neutrality began to take a personal toll
on Wilson. As he confided in a letter to his friend Mary Al-
en Hulbert in early 1915, “every bit of my strength has been
used, and more than exhausted, by our friends, the people
of the United States.” It was becoming progressively more
difficult for Wilson to promote an attitude of peace and non-
involved in the US. While he viewed America’s role in the
war as that of a peaceful ideal for the belligerents to emulate,
his people saw the US as a world power capable of interven-
ning by force to bring the president’s ideals of law and justice
to the forefront.

Nothing caused him greater concern than the emergence of
U-boat warfare. On March 28, 1915, the British ship Falaba
was sunk by a German submarine, killing one American.
Wilson assumed that the American casualty was unfortunate
collarage damage from a German attack on Britain, but still
condemned the nature of the act. He and his advisers viewed
U-boat warfare as a violation of international law, since the
U-boats sunk ships without searching them first for contraband or sparing the lives of non-combatants. Wilson ordered his first Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, to procure an explicit affirmation from the German government that the U-boats would not harm neutral vessels. Bryan was instructed to use an “earnest, though of course entirely friendly” tone in his note, a strategy designed to appeal to the Germans on a moral level. “My idea,” said Wilson, “is to put the whole note on the very high ground—not on the loss of this single man’s life, but on the interests of mankind which are involved and which Germany has always stood for.”

Wilson did not want to acknowledge a deliberate violation of American neutrality, knowing that it could force him to take undesirable military action in retribution. He instead chose to display borderline naïveté in his dealings with Germany, ignoring his legal adviser Robert Lansing’s conviction that the submarines were designed to provoke war. In a pattern that would last for months to follow, Wilson refused to react decisively to German aggression, snubbing both the counsel of his advisers and the tide of public opinion.

**THE CRISIS ESCALATES**

Though Wilson could somewhat ignore the loss of one American life in the *Falaba* sinking, the *Lusitania* tragedy demanded a response. Sunk by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915, the enormous British liner resulted in the deaths of nearly 1200 people, including 128 Americans. The news provoked unparalleled outrage in the United States; one contributor to the *Literary Digest* commented that “condemnation of the act seems to be limited only by the restrictions of the English language.”

The *Lusitania* attack was denounced as a “foul deed of enormous barbarity” by the *Philadelphia Press*, and former president Theodore Roosevelt was quoted as saying, “[it is] inconceivable that we should refrain from taking action on this matter.” Wilson and his advisers agonized over an appropriate response to Germany, understanding the inflammatory sentiment of ordinary citizens, yet still wishing to maintain American neutrality. He ultimately decided to write a series of notes that reiterated his expectations of neutral trading rights and reprimanded Germany for violating them. Considering the magnitude of the incident, this was a weak diplomatic response from the Americans. Though Wilson preached his commitment in the *Lusitania* notes to hold Germany to “a strict accountability for any infringement of [neutral] rights, intentional or incidental,” rhetoric alone was not a practical method of ensuring future German cooperation. Instead of employing decisive action to censure Germany for its transgression, Wilson chose to pursue a feeble strategy of letter-writing just to emphasize his dedication to staying peaceful.

Wilson’s inflexible foreign policy, as well as Germany’s continuation of U-boat warfare, set the two nations on a diplomatic collision course. In the month following the *Lusitania* crisis, Lansing, the newly promoted Secretary of State, and Edward House, Wilson’s two principal advisers, helped him make two critical decisions that would impact the way he dealt with subsequent developments in the war. He decided to pursue independent policies with the Allied and Central Powers, a departure from his original plan to send one consistent message to all belligerents. Additionally, Wilson accompanied his verbal condemnation of U-boat warfare with “an implied threat of war,” which he never came close to issuing to the Allied Powers. His seemingly harsh response was motivated by an interest in preserving America’s public image. Wilson and his advisers thought that “any appearance of concession or compromise [to Germany] would taint the reputation, the dignity, or the honor of the nation.”

In the third and final *Lusitania* note, published in July 1915, Wilson wrote that he was “keenly disappointed to find that [Germany] regards itself as in large degree exempt” from international codes of conduct. Wilson apparently no longer saw the Germans as a willing partner in peace negotiations, and began to shift his focus to protecting American interests. He asserted his intention to continue fighting for freedom of the seas “without compromise and at any cost.” Germany’s U-boat campaign would repeatedly test his commitment to those words.

In spite of Wilson’s emphatic claim, he did not react to subsequent German U-boat crises with the strength he had implied. On August 19, 1915, the British ship *Arabic* was torpedoed and sunk by a submarine in what Wilson interpreted as “a clear affront to his principles.” Still hoping for the opportunity to mediate a peace settlement, Wilson did not want to take any deliberate action to insult Germany, compromising the very dignity and honor that he’d recently sworn to protect. Frustrated by the president’s pacifism, House complained that “further notes would disappoint our people and would cause something of derision abroad. In view of what has been said... it is clearly up to this Government to act.”

House voiced a concern shared by many Americans, who thought Wilson’s adamant peace strategy was no longer compatible with defending US interests abroad.
Wilson, however, resisted bringing his Cabinet together to discuss the incident. As he explained to Lansing, “haste in the matter would be likely to give the country the wrong impression, I fear, with regard to our frame of mind.”30 This comment notwithstanding, Wilson's reluctance to act decisively should not be interpreted as an attempt to defend Germany from his hawkish advisers. He was equally annoyed by the crisis, telling his fiancée, Edith Bolling Galt, that “the Germans are blood-mad. You notice the Arabic was bound out from Liverpool.”31 To Wilson, Germany was exhibiting unjustifiable obstinacy in its efforts to disrupt neutral trade, even attacking ships traveling away from the Allies. But unlike Lansing and House, the president retained the hope that he could “bring [the Germans] collectively to their senses, to a realization of moral obligations, and to a recognition of the interests of humanity.”32 His own preoccupation with morality and justice mistakenly led him to believe that the fighting Europeans shared his principles, and—more crucially—that they valued them more than actually winning the war. This assumption was far too idealistic, and Wilson's ongoing efforts to mediate a peace settlement did not quell the submarine warfare.

Continued interference with neutral trading rights finally provoked Wilson to alter American policy, at least in practice. Though he maintained an official stance of neutrality, he acknowledged in November 1915 that “we have it in mind to be prepared, not for war, but only for defense.”33 Wilson unveiled his plan to Congress in December, stating, “[the war] has extended its threatening and sinister scope across every quarter of the globe, not excepting our own hemisphere.”34 Clearly, he anticipated a time when American involvement in the conflict could no longer be postponed or evaded. Though Germany had disavowed the sinking of the Arabic and stressed that German U-boat commanders would not cause similar incidents, Austria-Hungary's U-boat warfare independently antagonized the United States. The sinking of the Italian Ancona, for example, was perceived by Wilson as the “wanton slaughter of defenseless noncombatants,” and the Central Powers' refusal to terminate their submarine policy weighed heavily on the president.35 He consulted his advisers, who suggested severing diplomatic relations with Germany entirely. Lansing in particular thought that the ongoing negotiations with the German ambassador were utter nonsense; he expressed to Wilson that he found them “purely dilatory and offering] no possible middle ground for an agreement.”36 Still, Wilson's foreign policy remained a strategy of patience and indecision, much to the chagrin of his peers. While they advocated an offensive strategy and saw it as long overdue, Wilson's foreign policy remained fully reactive. Other than committing to his vigorous defense preparation plan, he maintained the status quo and resisted deviating from the official position of American neutrality.

The attack on the Sussex on March 24, 1916 marked a turning point in the crisis. All evidence seemed to indicate that Germany was responsible for torpedoing the boat, and the affair incited public outrage akin to the Lusitania. Unlike the Lusitania incident, however, Wilson was slow to denounce Germany for its actions, and Britain consequently felt betrayed by his lack of immediate response. A letter from Page informed Wilson that the British had “made up their minds that we can be of no use for any virile action... because we are so divided and so 'soft' that, when action is required, we do not even keep our own pledge, made of our own volition.”37 Lansing, too, could not understand Wilson's continued hesitation to condemn the latest U-boat attack. “We can no longer temporize in the matter of submarine warfare,” wrote Lansing, “when Americans are being killed, wounded, or endangered by the illegal and inhuman conduct of the Ger-

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### THE TIPPING POINT

Late the following January, Germany announced its intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare, a policy that, in effect, it had been pursuing throughout the war. A formal declaration, however, marked the end of possible negotiations between Wilson and the German government. Wilson, who was still trying to mediate peace between the belligerents, saw the announcement as “a terrible shock” and
thought that unrestricted submarine warfare “was equivalent to declaring total maritime war against all neutral powers.”

Wilson seemed to be the only one still surprised by Germany’s tactics, and he was gravely offended by the Germans’ “campaign of terror.” This led Wilson to finally sever diplomatic relations between the United States and Germany, almost a full year after he had initially threatened to break them. Unrestricted submarine warfare was seen as the ultimate violation of American neutrality, and no letters from Wilson could have satisfied the American people as a response to the policy. On February 3, 1917, the president informed Congress of his decision to terminate diplomatic relations with Germany, Wilson had “no alternative consistent with the dignity and honor of the United States but to take the course which [he] announced that it would take” after the Sussex. A remark about handing the German ambassador his passports was met with “a furious round of applause.”

Though Wilson had long resisted pressure from his advisers and the public to punish Germany for its disgraceful wartime practices, the peak of the U-boat campaign finally toppled his pacifism.

From the break in diplomatic relations, it was only a matter of time before the US formally entered World War I. The brutal U-boat campaign continued; in the first three weeks of February, the Central Powers sunk 128 ships (40 of which were neutral), destroyed over 250,000 tons of goods, and cost the American Line $3,000,000 in damages. Germany continued to sink American vessels well into March. Meanwhile, US news coverage grouped the attacks together, creating the illusion that the Germans were actively attempting to provoke the US into making a declaration of war. Attacks on the clearly marked American oil tanker, the Healdton, and on the armed American steamer Aztec led Wilson to call for a Congressional assembly.

The Germans’ apparent disregard for neutrality, property rights, and even human life repelled Wilson from any further attempts to negotiate with them. “It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars,” Wilson explained to Congress, “but the right is more precious than peace.” He emphasized America’s role as a peacekeeper, and its responsibility to defend human rights in the face of German aggression. Simply maintaining armed neutrality was no longer realistic. As Wilson said, “Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations.”

In his mind, American involvement in the war was the only morally justifiable choice; the US could no longer serve as a passive example of peace, but rather had to take an active role in shaping it. The U-boat campaign left Wilson no choice but to declare war on Germany. Despite his own peacekeeping initiatives, reluctance to join the war, and noncommittal diplomacy, there was a point when even Wilson could not postpone American involvement in the conflict.

Unrestricted U-boat warfare was the catalyst for Wilson’s severance of US-German diplomatic relations, but only because it was preceded by two years’ worth of assaults on American neutrality. Wilson kept the US out of the war for as long as he believed that there was a chance, however small, of negotiating peace between the belligerent powers. In doing so, he left the ultimate decision of peace or war with Berlin. Germany did not share Wilson’s desire to terminate the war for any cause other than victory, and when the military found a naval strategy that worked—submarine warfare—they exploited it without regard to the violations of international law that Wilson found so reprehensible. It is important to remember that Wilson’s split from Germany was not motivated by a handful of incidents that provoked outrage in the US. There were hundreds of sunk vessels, thousands of lives lost, and too few concessions on the part of Germany to sufficiently minimize the risks of U-boat warfare to neutrals.

Wilson grappled on a daily basis with his desire to mediate peace and his responsibility to protect American interests, but his cautious diplomacy gave the Germans the power to control the situation. He did not adequately supplement his tough rhetoric toward Germany with force, damaging his credibility and inaccurately representing the wishes of the American people. Wilson’s foreign policy was dictated by his ideals of peace and justice, while Germany’s was motivated by the life-or-death reality of fighting a world war. While the idealistic president made every effort to prevent engaging the US in the conflict, he ultimately could not defend his vision of peace against Germany’s frequent assaults on American lives and property.
“More Precious Than Peace”

Endnotes

[7] Ibid., 47.
[17] Ibid., 62.
[19] Ibid., 136.
[21] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., 158.
[27] Ibid., 252.
[40] Ibid., 268.
[41] Seymour, American Neutrality, 50; Doenecke, Nothing Less Than War, 250.
[42] Doenecke, Nothing Less Than War, 252.
[47] Ibid., 282.
[49] Ibid., 374.
The elemental makeup and design of the Russian futurist anti-opera play, Victory Over the Sun, set an artistic precedence during the years leading up to the Russian Revolution. The Russian Avant-Garde movement, which played a pivotal role in Victory Over the Sun’s entrance into the artistic field, utilized numerous mediums in order to create such a piece. By the combined efforts of a librettist, artist, and musician, the genesis of Victory was born, thus shaping a parallel revolution to that in Russia.

The Russian Avant-Garde can be showcased by its unique artistic makeup and the birthplace of suprematist ideologies. This style of artistry is what set it, as a whole, apart from all other forms of art because it became its own artistic revolution. Its paintings stripped away artistic form to create a sense of oneness in the viewer, of being complete and spiritual in a new way. It ended up pushing the norm and status quo to reveal new beginnings and rejections of things past in terms of culture, art, and music. Thanks to the combined efforts of Kruchenykh, Malevich, Matyushin, and even Mayakovsky, they created Victory Over the Sun, which is considered to be the most influential of early 20th-century Russian futurist operas. This opera helped artists think outside of the box in terms of how the fine arts were viewed and depicted, thus creating a unique form of abstract art. Its creation mirrored a time in Russia’s history that was full of civil war, protests, and uprisings, so its message on destruction of what currently was with man was not well-received not only because of the content, but its unique style made it difficult to decipher from the common viewer. However, its debut revolved around a complicated artistic era full of people trying to make sense of what was proper and allowed, and what was to go against the establishment of the Tsar. It was Victory Over the Sun’s abstract makeup and composition which helped to inspire and influence an entirely new way of thinking in terms of fine arts in Russian artistic culture, and thus opening new doors to Russian artists during this artistic era. It became essential to reject the artistic status quo and favor a new era of modernity, embrace a different sense of spirituality and relationship to art, and start an artistic revolution not only in the hearts of artists, but in their minds.

THE ANTI-Utopia Scene

The audience paid nine roubles to watch a curtain get ripped in two at nine o’clock at night on Tuesday, December 3rd, 1913 (or the 5th of December). Victory Over the Sun debuted at Luna Park Theater in St. Petersburg. The ripped curtain revealed a portrait of the three men behind the construction of the world’s very first “Futurist Opera”: Mikhail Matyushin (the composer), Aleksei Kruchenykh (the librettist and creator of its strange dialect), and finally Kazimir Malevich (the designer). However, this was not a normal “portrait.” They were being represented as cutout shapes of all different designs, and the audience immediately knew they were in for something quite interesting. This “opera” could be considered a type of classical text, featuring an idea of “destruction” as its main theme. Its performance succeeded Vladimir Mayakovsky’s A Tragedy, which many critics viewed as sort of a prequel to Victory in terms of style and, in some instances, content. Tragedy featured only one person, Mayakovsky himself, and was performed once. It was no coincidence that these two plays were performed in the same place, one day after the other; however, while Tragedy was considered a monodrama, Victory was entirely futuristic. Victory was dynamic and aggressive, and Tragedy was solely based around Mayakovsky and his many portrayals of others.

Victory can be defined as a relatively ingenious, absurd, and short play with only two brief acts. The play had an all-male cast with no names or developed personalities for the characters, but, most importantly, there was no recognizable plot throughout the play except to “capture the sun by strong men of the future.” This play embraced the Future and modernization. However, Victory portrays the future as a very bleak society in Russia if it is to continue on its current path. It was considered to be the most “audacious and successful the-
"atrical event" in comparison to recent futurist operas, and also seen as a contemporary anti-utopia. Victory was hardly an opera: it featured more speaking than music, for which there was only a piano present. Many saw it as an "anti-opera" because it not only challenged art and how it was being portrayed, understood, and performed, and expanded upon music by creating an explosive style all from a piano, but also how the concept of how an opera was to be presented. The play was rooted in an iconoclastic, anarchic, and futurist ideals based on Russian folklore, especially in terms of the sun. The sun represented beauty, harvest, and tranquility to the Russian people and their culture. Victory, however, took the symbolic form of the "sun" and transformed it into showing a destruction of nineteenth-century Romantic idealism since the sun brings rebirth and a new day, and by destroying it, it ends. Not only did the Futurists go against the past, but they were also challenging symbolic ideas that were accustomed to these traditional folklores by giving them new meanings and understandings, rather than going with the usual interpretations. The creators of Victory used a cacophony of anti-representations of the "sun," because the sun played a significant role in Slavonic mythology. They looked to Snegurochka or "Snow Maiden" (turned into a play by Aleksandr Ostrovsky and Tchaikovsky in 1873) as an influence. Where Snow Maiden ended on the longest day of the year with the sun shining out, Victory actually captured the sun, leaving the world in darkness. It was important for the Avant-Gardists to show a destruction of Russian tradition and make way for the future.9

This play was used to target "old" traditions and belief systems. Not only was it about flipping traditions, but it was also about the "emancipation of man from his dependence on Nature, which the urban-minded Futurists believed had been superseded in the twentieth century by the machine." Kruchenykh claimed that Victory was a misogynist play that was constructed "in order to pave the way for a male epoch."10 It rejected traditions in the fields of art, literature, and even music, in order to help invite a more futuristic and modern idea into society. During the birth of the play, the three architects wanted to use this play as a way of attacking the traditional style of the Russian Theater so that they could establish their own form of Russian Futurist theater. This would allow them to portray other plays from Mayakovsky and Khlebnikov.12

According to Kruchenykh's reflection on the play in his 1960 essay titled, About the Opera, 'Victory Over the Sun,' he alludes to the insufficient funds for producing it, and how its creators used the Union of Youth (a pro-futurist group of young adults founded by Matyushin) to perform the roles of the play—the main roles going to the two best musicians of the group.13 The costumes that Malevich designed were made out of a solid wire frame and strong cardboard, which is what Malevich painted on. Although his costume designs contained shocking color schemes, he lacked the funds to acquire all the paints for it, and thus his costumes were barren. However, according to newspapers at the time, the sets created a "tunnel vision" effect for the audience's viewing and mind penetrating pleasure.14

There were only two general rehearsals for Victory (including the dress rehearsal), and Kruchenykh mentioned how Matyushin was ecstatic over how effective the student actors were under such short notice and little funding by the Union of Youth. In contrast, he reflected on how in the original production, Malevich was quite displeased that he was not able to design or paint on a grand scale or paint in color, due to their lack of funds.15

THE ELEMENTS
Victory was, by all means, a very strange performance that was not received well by its audiences or critics due to its strange language, music, costumes, and set designs. However, the ideas behind engineering it had to originate somewhere. Therefore, where did Victory's origins lie and how did it come to fruition? To explore this, it is important to take note at what it is most remembered for, and that is its strange dialect and most importantly, the artistic set designs by Malevich.

Rejecting all forms of reason and tradition in art, literature, and music was essential to creating Victory. Many artists and
librettists during this time period strove to be different, and underwent personal “revolutions” in portraying their work. This change was being achieved through “alogism,” a term coined by Russian director Nikolai Evreinov, where one aspired to be different, imagined surroundings were different, and people were all born with a desire deep in their souls to be different. It is similar to the idea of theatrical instinct, which Evreinov also coined.16 Many of the Russian Cubo-Futurist artists during this time, which many would eventually become Suprematist artists, even attributed their work to that of the “renewal of artistic languages and emphasised the specific features of their aesthetic achievements”217

It was believed that the “alogical universe is as spontaneous as the nature of play” and that the process of acting in a play, “whether in theater, poetry, or their everyday routine, can be compared to a cognitive process, as a means to investigate the rationally unknowable.”218 Alogism was a form of abstraction, a foreshadowing to Dada and suprematist art that was highly unpredictable and indistinguishable at first glance, but deeply symbolic and rigid in its meanings. It was also viewed as a balancing act between the normal, and the absurd.19 It can also be seen as a riddle to the viewer, with no correct answer because there is no clear way of defining any answer. This new way of thinking of leveraging two opposites became an inspiration to Kruchenykh, Malevich, and Matyushin, whose work paved the way for the most famous Russian futurist opera.

The contrasting ideas of harmony and dissonance were present in alogism, futurism, cubism, and suprematism, and structured Victory Over the Sun. Cubism, an artistic movement in Europe in the early 20th century, encompassed pioneering artists such as Pablo Picasso, and it became the predecessor to futurism. It dealt with a unique portrayal of space, volume, and mass, which would surround the subject matter on the canvas, and it can also be viewed as the stepping-stone for abstraction. Its later counterpart, futurism, was slightly different. Futurism was practiced on all mediums of art. Specifically in Russia, this movement focused on literature and the visual arts, such as Malevich’s set designs and costumes and Kruchenykh’s script for Victory Over the Sun. This movement, a branch off of cubism, is what helped to inspire the idea of Suprematism, coined by Malevich in 1915 after being inspired by the futurist opera.20

According to Russian poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, “Kruchenykh wrote his drama ‘by means of war’ (by analogy with ink) using war not as a subject, but as a medium and metaphor for futurist creativity.”219 It was geometrically engineered; it relied on the dynamics of the set where the theatrical effects were expected and specifically designated at times.

The language of Victory Over the Sun did not sit well with both the audience and its critics because its script completely rejected reason. Instead, it encompassed a new literary technique, called zaum. The term was coined and created by Khlebnikov (as seen in the prologue for Victory Over the Sun) and further enhanced and minimalized in terms of the linguistic structure by Kruchenykh.22 Kruchenykh, being heavily influenced by this new style of literature, used it to compose the entire script for Victory. This new literary phonetic helped push for the futurist movement in the Russian Avant-Garde revolution.

Zaum, which can also be referred to as “beyonese” as it coincided with the emergence of alogism in the visual arts, was considered to be a magical language. It combined the unconscious with intuition of speech, and then it would completely reject the predicted pattern of speech. It “colored many themes and motifs of [Kruchenykh’s] multi-layered transnational poetry.”23 Instead of relying on what was said, it focused on how it sounded and looked on paper. Therefore, the combined ideas and efforts of physical phonics and visual aspects encompassed this new language. Kruchenykh was influenced by the Slavic languages, especially those used in folktales, legends, or myths.24 The Slavic language in the script started to become very minimalistic, and it continued to become that way until it was reduced to its beginning phonetic elements.

The entire dialogue for Victory Over the Sun was written in zaum, where compositionally nothing made sense, but linguistically it sounded beautiful. This was the effect that Kruchenykh aimed for when he was writing its script. Initially, it was the use of language, rather than the subject of art, that was the focus. However, set designs set Victory apart from other futurist works being rendered at the time.25 The abstraction the play presented is how it is best remembered.

Artist Kazimir Malevich, having been heavily influenced by alogism, showcased it in his paintings, costumes, and set designs for Victory Over the Sun, and his influence was also present in artistic movements surrounding cubism and futurism. The painterly construction of the play was transformed into abstract shapes and anatomical structures, and
the play itself was considered to be “an incidental experiment of the dramatic genre.”

THE GENESIS OF SUPREMATISM AND MUSIC

*Victory* was created during the summer of 1913 when both Malevich and Kruchenykh joined Matyushin at the “All Russian Congress of Futurists.” Collectively, Futurists believed in the idea of speed and technology, where the future would rely on faster means for production and a better standard of living. Artistically, they rooted themselves first by expressing their ideas through means such as literature and poetry, but it eventually branched out to art, sculpture, and the performing arts. This futuristic collaboration of ideas and thoughts were not universally accepted, and thus it gave rise to a whole slew of new ideologies, art, and thinking. They sought to make something that would stand out and have some sort of remembrance, and thus the ideas and configurations behind *Victory* were created. Nonetheless, all of the Russian futurists were influenced, in some way beforehand, by the ideas of Cubism.

There are conflicting reports between historians in regards to when suprematism was actually born. Was it during *Victory*, or was it after? For example, the Northwestern University Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures notes how Malevich’s famous *Black Square* and suprematism were both during the play. However, Kruchenykh noted in his reflection that, “there was no non-representational art or *Suprematism*, as [Malevich] called it, in the production of *Victory*, and nor could there have been, because constructed figures of people *moved* on the stage—they spoke... acted, and moved according to the needs of the articulation of their joints.” Therefore, all suggestions that have pointed towards Malevich’s backdrop from *Victory* being the beginning of suprematism are false, simply because it was merely an inspiration for *Black Square* and an entirely new way of artistic thinking.

Suprematism, according to Malevich, was “[the] end and beginning where sensations are uncovered, where art emerges ‘as such.’” It was an abstract art system that completely disregarded any sort of pictorial method that had been recognized in previous works of art, such as with cubism. The suprematist movement had three phases, where two of them dealt with colors and shapes, and the third had black and white with shapes. This new artistic revolution was based around geometric forms. Malevich believed that the square represented the absolute basic and most pure of all art forms. Not only did these geometric forms shape the “subject” of the painting, but the placement, color, and direction were all specific with each aspect meaning something else. Each part of the painting had its own story to tell, whether the shape was up high or down low on a canvas, the size of each shape meant something, and so on. These intentional artistic representations were part of a spiritual connection that the artist made with his or herself in regards to the message they wanted to portray.

Before a suprematist artist sought to create art through paint on a canvas, a spiritual connection that connected an idea surrounding the artist’s spirituality and his or her own self-thought had to be envisioned. In one of Malevich’s pamphlets from the 1920s, he mentioned how he had started to retreat into his domain of thought, and that he would continue to journey there in the infinite space of the human skull until it was no longer possible. Instead of viewing art as having a subject matter that told a story to the viewer, it became a journey that the artist took into their mind. This brought out something pure, natural, and unique in each artistic creation.

Instead of having a blatant subject matter that had been recreated many times beforehand, suprematist art encompassed multiple aspects in terms of capturing emotions, philosophic issues, and concepts. Each creation was created for the viewer to come to their own conclusion, rather than it being obvious at first glance. This would not only allow the artist to travel on a journey while creating it, but it allowed the viewer to journey towards discovering what the painting meant to them.
Spirituously, Malevich believed that this two-dimensional form of art was a way for the human mind to ascend into a fourth dimension and reach a celestial path. The idea behind this was an echo from the opera, because like an ouroboros, the final end result for the meaning behind a picture is endless. He believed that:

art is the ability to create a construction that derives not from the interrelation of form and color and not on the basis of aesthetic taste in a construction's compositional beauty, but on the basis of weight, speed, and direction of movement.

This philosophical belief was especially present in Victory Over the Sun. Victory focused around the key concepts of weight, speed, and direction. It relied on weight, speed, and direction, rather than whatever color was being portrayed at a specific time. The effects in the play and the way the stage directions and set designs moved with one another created a literal visual of performing arts to the audience.

According to Malevich's artistic philosophy, if an artist continued to paint according to laws directed by someone else, then that art was neither truthful nor sincere. The artist had to break free from the confines of artistic laws. Only then would the artist begin to paint on a canvas, or sculpt with hands, with a sound mind and a pure spirit. An artist that continued to adhere to teachings in a school that only abides by a will of repetition towards repeated subject matter, which, in Malevich's mind, diminished the meaning behind the painting because its message was not unique or truthful:

This is possible when we free all art of philistine ideas and subject matter and teach our consciousness to see everything in nature not as real objects and forms, but as material, as masses from which forms must be made that have nothing in common with nature.

Continuing to allow the artist to see a repetitive subject does not create new art. Instead, its value became diminished. To Malevich, it was better to see the subject just as the artist saw a new blank canvas. It would become a new opportunity to explore something unique. The radical notion that the subconscious dominated the human consciousness helped to manipulate suprematist art under Malevich. This not only helped to construct a new thought process, but, in Malevich's eyes, a new individual.

The reason that cubist, futurist, and suprematist art was not understood by the people was that they were so used to the ideas and concepts of antiquity found in the likes of Renaissance art, with the creation of the perfect form of man, that they were not able to understand the beauty of modern art in a new stage. Bringing back things from the past, in Malevich's mind, meant that those in a younger generation would only be subjected to repeated forms, instead of breaking free and seeing past it with a more modern eye. Malevich said in an essay, “Art should not advance toward abbreviation or simplification, but toward complexity.” This showed how he aimed for his audience to think of his paintings, rather than have the intelligence of the viewer be dwindled due to antiquity.

With suprematist and futurist art, however, the art depicted was simple, yet its meaning was hidden and riddled with complexities for the viewer to comprehend and figure out. The ideas of suprematist art further pushed the concept of futurist art out of the way, which allowed for this new philosophy of art to blossom.

Malevich's famous original Black Square painting, inspired by the backdrops he created in Victory, was nothing more than a black square on a white canvas. With this creation came about a trio of paintings to make a set, with the Black Square, Black Circle, and Black Cross, which all represented the basis of suprematist art. This trio of paintings by Malevich all linked to this notion of spirituality, where linking to something higher than what was presented at face-value held the most artistic value. The first Black Square (painted in 1915) was directly influenced by the set designs he did for Victory, since there were no colors for the original performance. However, in this trio of paintings (circle, square, and cross), the square was only second to that of the circle. He is known for Black Square, since it was painted and then recreated multiple times, but the circle is what blossomed from Victory. The “sun” was a black circle, and thus, having it on the top right corner of the canvas instead of in the middle shows space and a disconnection to reality. If it were positioned right in the center, it would reflect unity. Having it off to the side represented discord and separation—both key aspects taken from the destruction in Victory.

Malevich's work contained prominent military aspects that were present in his alogical/zaum paintings such as Englishman in Moscow, which, according to critics, represented war through fragmentation of the subject material. The fragmentation, the distortions, and the idea of the actual sun being eternal showed how war could have an everlasting negative effect on victims. Malevich's works demonstrated how
the culture of war affected his life and artwork, but they were probably not ironic representations of each other.46

Nonetheless, the establishment of suprematism cannot be discussed without the mention of musical “advancements” from Victory, courtesy of Matyushin. He was considered a Renaissance man, involved in music, art, literature, and education. Kruchenykh reflected on Matyushin being a “first-class violinist, artist, sculptor... he was very close to literature.”47 In regards to Victory, he wrote the score for it for piano since it was all they were able to acquire at the last minute, and male singers (since it was an all-male cast) so only the bass and baritone were present.48 The music was looked at as the final touch for Victory’s futuristic aspects, and considered “anti-music.” It was greatly influenced by and often compared to Stravinsky’s explosive and atonal Rite of Spring which came out six months earlier in 1913.

There are two versions of the score for Victory: the first published in the libretto for the play in 1913, and the second is considered the most complete. Matyushin’s student, Maria Ender, wrote a handwritten transcription of the fifteen-page original manuscript.49 Ender’s version had many discrepancies, and many questioned whether or not musical creditability should be given to Matyushin for Victory. Also, only a few pages of the manuscript for Victory have been found, making Ender’s version more widely used and accepted in reproductions of Victory.

Matyushin reflected upon the performance of Victory a month after its debut in an essay titled “Futurizm v. Peterburge.” He recalled how they found seven enthusiastic students, but only three had vocal experience and only two were experienced singers that took the main leads. The management for Luna Park only allowed them two days for rehearsals, which was not enough for this ensemble of students to tackle such a confusing and difficult piece of work. He wrote, “it was a complete scramble for everyone to learn their part. The grand piano, a substitute for the orchestra, was broken, repulsive-sounding, and was only available on the day of the performance.”50

Kruchenykh, Malevich, Matyushin, and other avant-garde artists were affected by the civil society and public culture before the Russian Revolution really set in 1917, and in many ways, welcomed the revolution.51 The Romanovs celebrated their tercentenary, completely oblivious to the Revolution that would come in four years. During this time, however, the avant-garde artists were fully immersed in their own revolution.52 Russian artists were trying to break free from the continuum of art and create their artistic revolution at the time. The continuing rejection of Western art and aesthetics of antiquity were frequent at the time under the avant-garde artists, and it was particularly dominant in Victory. The ideas gathered settled around this radical notion of antagonistic artistic appeal of rejecting the well-known and breaking free of traditions in order to find a set path towards modernism. However, nationalistic trends were woven in their work. Their concern over national traditions in Russia was a fundamental aspect of life during this time, and these trends were so important to the artists that they could not be denied in their play.53 After the Russian Revolution of 1917, resurrecting Victory seemed to be the appropriate path to take.

THE RESURRECTIONS
The first reproduction of the play was done in 1920 by the members of the Posnovis, or Followers of New Art. This group was determined to bring new types of art to light, so they used Victory Over the Sun as their gateway and opportunity to do so. It was presented on February 6, 1920. Malevich supervised the construction of the sets and costumes. Along with this presentation, Nina Kogan presented the world’s first “Suprematist Ballet” that was inspired by Malevich’s Black Square.54 However, as the Posnovis gained confidence, they changed their name to UNOVIS (Utverditeli novogo iskusstva - Champion of New Art, 1919-22), and Malevich was so pleased with this, that he named his first daughter Una, after it.55
A few years later, *Victory* was resurrected again, however this time by Lazar (El) Lissitzky. He was mentored by Malevich, and became an artist, designer, photographer, typographer, and much more, and was viewed as an important proponent of the suprematist movement. His version of *Victory*, however, did not take off as he would have liked. He went on to conceive a “marionette version,” but this project never got past a few publications of ten color lithographs of figures and costumes in 1923. Lissitzky’s analysis of *Victory* was that it celebrated man’s technological advances and capabilities. He wrote, “the sun, as the expression of old world energy, is torn down from the heavens by modern man, who by virtue of his technological superiority creates his own energy source.”

Between the 1920 revival and the 1923 attempt, it was not until 1980 that *Victory* resurfaced again. *Victory* was performed multiple times throughout the 1980s and ’90s. To differentiate from the original production, these performances had the colored costumes that Malevich intended for the characters to wear. *Victory* appeared in 1980 when it was re-created by Robert Benedetti for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Three years later, it was performed at the Berlin Festival, in Amsterdam, the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York, and lastly, in Washington, D.C. Afterward, *Victory* popped up in Tokyo, Toulouse, and Munich. There was even a 1989 production in Leningrad, a new staging at the Kunstlerhaus in Vienna in 1993, and then one in Moscow in 1997. The last time it was staged and performed was in 1999 at the British Premiere, which was directed by Julia Hollander.

Hollander’s production of *Victory* was beneficial to the history of the play, in having a well-translated libretto made by historians and linguists. In her production, she wrote a note in the program, discussing the similarities between the production in 1913 and the one in 1999. She wrote that in 1913, Europe was on the brink of the first World War, and then discussed a conflict that was occurring in the Balkans and how that would lead into another war for the Russians. Her idea of the play was different than that of Lissitzky, because while he viewed it as a metaphor for man’s technological advances, she viewed it as a dark prophecy for the Russians. Hollander’s production also featured Jeremy Arden, who “composed” the music for the play. Musically, this play featured violins and a piano. In regards to the costumes, they were colorful and were slightly different from Malevich’s original designs. These actually allowed the wearers to move, which was important for Hollander’s rendition of *Victory*, which was the most interactive rendition between the cast and the audience.

In an interview with Hollander and Arden in 2008, they discussed how their production of *Victory* came to light. It was through the inspiration of a collection of Malevich paintings that the idea to bring the play to life again became aroused. Essentially, art historians knew of this play only through Malevich’s works, but “theatre practitioners were generally unaware of it.” As with the original production, Hollander was not granted much money for his production, and struggled just like the original artists did—but, she and her crew had a six month time frame to pull this production off. The students they were going to use in their production were conservative, and not fond of improvisation, which was highly important to the foundation and text of *Victory*. Instead, the students were used for music only, and Hollander hired professional actors to portray the characters. At the end of the day, however, they all had to collaborate and discard the idea of improvisation, because no one was up for the challenge.

Hollander made sure that her representation of *Victory* had her own mark on it. With this being her first dive into the absurdity of the avant-garde, she tried to imagine what it was like “to be them, telling a story.” She felt inclined to use Malevich’s costumes and the *Black Square*, but she did not want hers to be as provocative as the original production. To differentiate even more, her production did not feature an all-male cast; of the singers brought in, two of them were female. Hollander’s *Victory* also consisted of a bizarre laser light show that was orchestrated to move with the sound of the music vibrating off of the instrumentalists. Arden mentioned how the music was difficult to compose because Matyushin’s work was only available in fragments. He had to look back at other futurist works in order to compose something for the violinists.

The public opinion and reviews for *Victory* solely depended on the time in which it was being performed. Its original production in 1913 garnered harsh criticism from newspapers and journalists. To start off the futurist movement, Mayac-
kovesky’s Tragedy received the first review, which was incredibly critical. His play was called a mockery that should not have even been called a play, and, at one point when Mayakovskysaid he was going to hang himself, the audience egged him on.68 The other reviews in Bartlett were similar, but about Victory. The majority of the reviews also mentioned how it was a mockery to opera as well. They would remark how the play was boring, yet wild and senseless. Some would comment on how the audience did not fill up all the seats and became bored. Many also stated that it was just impossible to discuss what had taken place at Luna Park. Even at the end, when the writer/director was supposed to come out, he never showed.69 The reviews for the 1913 performance made Victory seem exactly like what Hollander was trying to do in her revival of it. Maybe the futurists behind Victory made the play in order for there to be audience interaction. Maybe they knew that what they wrote would not be accepted, and so they hoped for the audience to shout or get involved with what they were doing. After all, that would also go against the entire idea of an “opera” where the audience sits and listens in enjoyment. With Victory being the “anti-opera” that it was, the audience involvement might have been exactly what the futurists were hoping for.

The other performances from 1920, and then the revivals in the ‘80s and ‘90s, all garnered some attention, but none were like the original. Reviews for the 1920 performance are scarce, but a mention of Victory was in an article in 1939. It talked about how the reviewers tore apart Mayakovskys Tragedy much more than they did Victory, which meant that the tragedy was better to Kruchenykh.70 Kruchenykh also mentioned how Victory was understood a little better in 1920 than it was in 1913, but that might have been attributed to the war and the revolution, and maybe the Russian people were able to connect with the absurdity of it all.71 This suggestion that it was viewed better seven years later also contributed to how it was viewed in the ’80s and ’90s.

In 1981 at the Hirshhorn Museum, Victory was performed in English instead of Russian. It had seven other performances the week before which had gathered many people. The reviews said how Victory had a very cult-like feeling to it since it was always talked about, but hardly ever seen. This performance was not an exact reconstruction of the 1913 Victory, but its revival almost half a century later was remarkable. The review by Anna Kisselgoff was quite positive, in saying, “Victory Over the Sun” can still startle us with the power and freshness of its original concepts. Even as a historical reconstruction, it remains outside the theatrical mainstream.72

Now, almost fifty years later, Victory had started become more appreciated, and accepted, than ever before.

Hollander’s revival in 1999 garnered some mixed reviews, mostly of her [direction/performance/etc.]. Andrew Clements from The Guardian wrote that it wasted everyone’s time, energy, and money.73 In another review, Isobel Hunter commented that the program should have had notes about what was original or not, along with mentions on Kruchenykh and his work, rather than solely devote much of the play to Malevich’s works.74 Hollander, however, remarked in her interview that the audience loved the performance:

They loved it and the fact that you could surprise them, right behind them. ‘Oh a brilliant circus artist is doing her thing.’ No, they responded really well to that. Some people entered and exited. The instrumentalists, for example, arrived and put down their music stands and did their thing.75

She felt that they could have taken Victory even further, but Ardens believed that their performance felt right. It was archaic and abstract enough for them to really feel like they had captured the original production’s intent.76

Since its first inception, Victory Over the Sun was meant to be the kick-starter for the Russian futurist movement, but it became something even more meaningful, not only to the futurists, but in terms of where it stood in history as a whole. Though not accepted at first, its purpose for being an “anti-opera” as well as a machine to help launch futuristic ideas and later the philosophical and artistic suprematist movement, helped to invoke, influence, and inspire an entirely new revolutionized view surrounding art. Victory provided an entirely different outlook on symbolic life in the Russian culture, as well a way for the Futurists to push aside traditions and spark their own artistic revolution. Nowadays, it is a play that is very rarely produced and witnessed, and yet it is only known for its artistic advancements, instead of its linguistics and atonalities. Those who get the chance to be a part of its reproductions found themselves facing challenges similar to those that the original creators faced, but also that it has become a much more accepted and respected type of work. The creators certainly left an interesting yet lasting mark in their time for history. In the end, “all is well that begins well, and has no end—the world will perish but there is no end to us!”77
Endnotes


[7] Ibid., 3.


[9] Ibid., 7-8.


[19] Ibid., 117.


[21] Ibid., 124.

[22] Bohmig in Bartlett, 111-112.


[27] Bartlett, 3.


[29] Kruchenykh in Bartlett, 98.


[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 17.

[33] Ibid., 33.

[34] Ibid.


[37] Malevich, 119-120.

[38] Ibid., 123.


[40] Malevich, 121.

[41] Andrea Crane, “Malevich and the American Legacy” exhibition at Gagosian Gallery Madison Avenue, pt. 1, as filmed by Gagosian Gallery, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdH-w61w&list=PLzrcuYhjOShXIkac0sa5pbHy551dEsUcH.


[44] Crane, “Malevich and the American Legacy.”


[46] Ibid., 128.


[51] Aaron J. Cohen, *Imagining the unimaginable World War, modern art, & the politics of public culture in Russia, 1914-1917* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 16-17; Bartlett, 3.

[52] Ibid., 2-3.


[56] Ibid., 10.


[58] Bartlett, 10.

[59] Ibid., 10.


[61] Ibid.

[62] Julia Hollander in an interview with Sarah Dadswell, which took place at the Department of Drama, University of Exeter, 21 April, 2008, and was recorded by Peter Hulton, Director of the Arts Documentation Europe. Interview published in Bartlett, 263.

[63] Hunter, “Zaum and Sun: The 'first Futurist opera' revisited.”

[64] Hollander, Arden, and Dadswell, in Bartlett, 263.

[65] Ibid., 268-269.
[66] Ibid., 271.
[67] Ibid., 274-77.
[70] Kruchenykh in Bartlett, 98.
[71] Ibid., 102.
[74] Hunter, “Zaum and Sun: The ‘first Futurist opera’ revisited.”
[75] Hollander, Ardens, and Dadswell, in Bartlett, 280.
[76] Ibid., 277-284.
[77] Kruchenykh, Malevich, and Matyushin, Victory Over the Sun, as translated in Bartlett, 45.
This paper examines the structural changes in East German institutions that occurred in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the years following German Reunification and how they represented a western “takeover” rather than a honest East-West integration. We delve into the long-term impacts of these changes. Finally, we conclude that such West German policies had a detrimental effect on eastern Germany today.

In recent German history, the period marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) is known by historians as Die Wende, or “the change.” The word “change,” however, is not necessarily imbued with good connotations. While many believe the crowning achievement of Die Wende, one Germany in Europe, to be unequivocally good, some citizens of the former GDR would disagree. Recently, east German politician Matthias Platzeck went so far as to label German reunification not as a “reunification,” but rather as an “Anschluss,” or annexation of East Germany by West Germany.1 It was certainly controversial and arguably extreme to reference Hitler’s annexation of Austria in 1938. However, there is some truth to this statement. In many ways, German Reunification did lead to symbolic “takeovers” of East German institutions, from political to economic, by West German values.

“ARTICLE 23. KEIN ANSCHLUSS UNTER DIESER NUMMER”
Mr. Platzeck’s choice of words was hardly a new complaint. In the run-up to the historic 1990 free elections in the GDR, the Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS; legal successor of the former ruling communist party, the SED) widely distributed election posters, some with pictures of a telephone, captioned “Article 23, no annexation under this number.”2 (This was meant to be witty wordplay: the German word for annexation, Anschluss, also translates to “telephone connection.”) For the states of the GDR, reunification under Article 23 of West Germany’s Basic Law meant immediately adopting the entirety of West Germany’s constitution and legal system, abandoning all East German legal theory and precedent.3 Such a method of reunification was somewhat alarming, especially in light of the more amiable alternative allowed by Article 146 (which would have allowed the reunification process to draft a new, integrated constitution for all of Germany).4 Fearing the impending takeover that Article 23 represented, the PDS promised, if elected, to block any such attempt.

On a deeper level however, the PDS’s campaign slogan also represented a critique of the dynamics of the election itself. Most of the campaigning during the election was done not by East German candidates, but rather by West German interlopers. West German political parties such as the Christian Democratic Union (Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands, CDU), the Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, or SPD), and the Free Democratic Party (Freie Demokratische Partei, FDP) “sent in all their big guns: Chancellor Kohl, former chancellors Brandt and Schmidt.”5 Throughout the GDR, “the complaint went up... that the democratic renewal in the country was being hijacked by the seasoned politicians from the west.”6 Evidently, political power in the East was to be transferred quickly into hands of west Germans. This is confirmed by the result of these elections, which was a landslide victory for the Alliance for Germany (a coalition led by the CDU calling for speedy reunification). The new government promptly implemented the very thing PDS supporters had feared: a process of reunification under Article 23.

“SYSTEM-IMMANENT”
After reunification, former East German political and bureaucratic institutions were usually completely uprooted or radically restructured according to Western models. The signs of a takeover are quite apparent: most individuals who had been working for East German public institutions until October 1990 lost their jobs or were demoted.7 These newly “vacant” high-level political and bureaucratic positions were then redistributed to a significant number of West German administrators. Originally meant to be temporary, these
For East Germans at the time, this unprecedented level of systematic takeover (and simultaneous alienation of the old bureaucrats) was rather uncalled for. Many felt its political expediency to be a slap in the face. As former GDR foreign intelligence chief Markus Wolf dryly notes in his autobiography, “Eastern diplomats [who had negotiated reunification] lost their jobs because they were, in the new jargon, ‘system-immanent,’ while the [very] Western diplomats with whom they had until recently held negotiations moved on up the career ladder.” Simplicity, everything about east Germany had to be “westernized.” Old GDR document troves such as the Stasi files offered a “reservoir” of legal options for Westerners to disqualify, as well as sometimes criminalize, any of the old elite considered to be “expendable.”

The breadth and depth of these transformations suggest, whether good or bad, that reunification was going to entail a full promulgation of West German academic standards rather than just an integration. By 1994, over 13,000 positions at universities in east Germany had been liquidated, and 20,000 more people (including 5,000 professors) had lost their jobs. Many teachers and academics were fired “despite the fact that they had proven professional qualifications.”

Perhaps one of the greatest scars of east-west inequality from the reunification process can be found in the incorporation of the militaries of the two former German states. The GDR’s National People’s Army (NVA) “had a reputation of being the second best equipped and trained armed force in the communist bloc.”

With national fervor from reunification running high, along with an acute need by the West German Bundeswehr for more recruits (it “struggled” to meet its recruiting goals), former NVA soldiers expected to be welcome into the unified Bundeswehr with open arms. However, the opposite was true. Most former NVA officers had their ranks “reduced by one or two levels.”

All East German soldiers were classified as those who “served in a foreign army” until 2005, and even today are not fully considered “German soldiers.” They have no military funeral honors.

One former NVA artillery colonel summed up his frustrations succinctly in an interview: “I feel like a second-class person.”

During reunification, a common education commission was established to “supervise the unification of the two education systems.” However, instead of creating unified standards and curricula for both German States, the commission was more concerned with adjusting the eastern education system to western standards. The election of the CDU “ensured that the most significant change to the education system would be the importation of federal West German structures.”

Experts from the old federal states (West Germany) were appointed to serve at former East German education ministries, while professors from West Germany were nominated heads of newly created or restructured east German university departments. This meant power over German academic institutions now lay squarely in the hands of West Germans.
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS: “40 YEARS FOR THIS?”
The most pronounced takeover by the west was perhaps economic. In a scene from Goodbye Lenin!, the protagonist looks for GDR-era Spreewald pickles at his local corner store, which had overnight “turned into a gaudy consumer paradise” in which the consumer “was king.”24 He, like many others during the period, is unable to find any. After 1990, products in the GDR had been quickly replaced “by western alternatives more attractive to the population,” a development of great detriment to East German consumer industries.25 Even the old East German currency itself was replaced by its western alternative: the Deutsche Mark. A popular, but economically disastrous, 1:1 monetary exchange rate between the currencies had been instituted, resulting in former East Germany being rendered “completely uncompetitive,” according to the former president of Germany’s central Bundesbank Otto von Pöhl.26 To make things worse, unions in the East strove to close east-west wage differentials, leading wages to rise from 30% of western levels to 40% of western levels in just 1990.27 Such a drastic wage hike only served to intensify the shock of the currency alignment in summer 1990 that precipitated a lengthy recession.

Discussions of economic policy during reunification were often incredibly lopsided. Due to the “confusing times” of political transformation in the GDR, eastern industry interest groups were “truly poorly organized” compared to their West German counterparts. As a result, the Treuhandanstalt, an agency which had been tasked with privatizing the former GDR state-owned companies, was given policy directives “that represented Western interests.”28 This meant it often sold its interests off at bargain prices. The West German insurance company Allianz, for example, was able to “preempt its competitors” when it bought 49 percent of the former state insurance system. Nearly half the state-owned gas monopoly was sold to Ruhrgas AG.29 Businesses which the Treuhandanstalt could not sell were liquidated.

For most struggling East German businesses, West German ownership was hardly a helping hand. Investors were “often less interested in keeping businesses running than neutralizing their remaining potential for competition and getting hold of their customers and real estate.”30 In other words, taking over a business came first, responsibility for it came second. Often this meant factory closings. In one case, the West German steel giant Krupp acquired, with “brazen business acumen,” a competitive steel mill in east Germany. It shut the plant down not long after. The Treuhandanstalt, as it turns out, had not built the “smallest security” into the sale contract for the plant. “No promise from Krupp was enforceable,” German magazine Der Spiegel reported.31 Such results led to much anger among East German: in one instance unionized steelworkers rallied outside of the Treuhandanstalt’s Berlin office, holding a banner that asked: “How much further will the Treuhand continue this game with our jobs/workplaces?”32

At the same time, east German attempts at business creation had unusual “difficulty in the face of experienced west German competition.”33 The result of this was the loss of “millions of jobs in industry and agriculture” and deindustrialization of seventy percent, a scale which “didn’t happen anywhere else in Eastern Europe after the Wende.”34 By comparison, not even post-WWII Germany had seen such decreases in industrial production.35 East German industry was simply overrun by that of West Germany. Meanwhile, some west Germans “earned themselves silly from unification in this manner: banks and industrialists, insurance companies, realtors, lawyers, and notaries.”36

The effects of deindustrialization and economic depression are quite apparent. Unemployment in former East Germany rose steadily from 10.2% in 1991 to a staggering 20.6% in 2005, compared to a mere 4.8% rise in western Germany.37 Economic indicators were bad across the board. As Markus Wolf comments in his autobiography: “life in a reunified Germany has proven less glamorous than expected—work is often difficult to find [and] rents are excessive and hard

“Former East German political and bureaucratic institutions were usually completely uprooted or radically restructured according to Western models.”
to afford.”38 The hardships east Germans faced had become so normal that portrayal in German films was not uncommon. In a comical scene from Goodbye Lenin!, the protagonist goes rummaging through dumpsters near his apartment for old Spreewald pickle jars that he can refill and pass off to his mother. His neighbor, Herr Ganske, passes by and nonchalantly misinterprets the situation. “So they've driven us to this,” Herr Ganske sadly remarks with little shock, “rooting around in the garbage.” He grouchily responds to the protagonist's request for pickle jars with: “Sorry young man, I'm unemployed myself!”39 While a fictional depiction, it not only shows the economic realities of east Germany post-reunification but also how alienated older former East Germans were by the newly reunified society. In a later scene of Goodbye Lenin!, venting neighbors moan their economic problems in disbelief: “40 years for this?”40

RESTITUTION BEFORE COMPENSATION

Some East Germans found no economic respite even in their own homes. For many, the new “Restitution before Compensation” policy could have very well represented literal annexation on a property-by-property basis. Described as a “legislator-organized East-West real estate war” by its opponents, this new policy tried to sort through successive waves of property confiscations that had occurred in the old GDR (sometimes by the GDR state itself) on western legal grounds.41 One of its results was that a significant number of west Germans who had left the GDR decades ago were able to successfully reclaim their former homes, driving out long-time east German residents in the process. During the 1990s, claims under this policy by west Germans threatened the homes of some five million east Germans.42 As Der Spiegel reported in 1992, in East Berlin alone there were more than 110,000 restitution applications.43 The results of the policy were appalling. In tiny Berlin suburb Kleinmachnow, 8,000 of the 11,000 residents were forced to leave their homes after unification. Nationwide, almost 4 million of East Germany’s 17 million population were eventually displaced.44 Such drastic loss of property (and with it a sense of security) exacerbated economic uncertainties for a number of east Germans.

CONCLUSION

Strictly by definition, the reunification process was not an annexation of East Germany by West Germany. No military force was involved, and many in the East are still, with some reservations, quite happy to be part of one unified Germany. However, it is irrefutable that reunification came with significant degrees of westernization in many institutions of the old GDR, whether political, military, academic, economic, or legal. Moreover, it came at a serious cost, whether physical or psychological, to East Germans. Many continue to feel a sense of “second-class citizenship” in their “new” country.45 While slowly healing, the scars of reunification, or Wiedervereinigung, will certainly continue to persist in German society for decades to come. 111
Endnotes

[1] “Reunification Controversy: Was East Germany Really Annexed?,” Der Spiegel, August 31, 2010; N.B.: Throughout this paper, I will use East Germany when referring to pre-unification institutions and east Germany for groups post-unification and may still be geographically split today.


[4] According to the translation approved by the Allied High Commission: “Article 146. This Basic Law ceases to be in force on the day on which a Constitution adopted by a free decision of the German people comes into force.” German History in Documents and Images, Documents (1945-1961), 4.5.


[6] Ibid., 58.


[16] Ibid.


[25] Osmond and Alsop, German Reunification, 73.

[26] Ibid., 168.


[29] Osmond and Alsop, German Reunification, 79.


[33] Osmond and Alsop, German Reunification, 79.

[34] German History in Documents and Images, Documents (1989-2009), 5.9.

[35] Tamás Vonyó, “The wartime origins of the Wirtschaftswunder: The growth of West German industry, 1938-55” Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte 55 (2014), 19; See Table 2, Total Industry section. Output for 1948 was about half of that of 1938.


[38] Wolf and McElvoy, Man Without A Face, 388.

[39] Goodbye Lenin!

[40] Ibid.


Allen W. Dulles spent his tenure as the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) entrenched in secret power struggles that would ensure his ultimate power over the foreign and domestic affairs for the United States. Throughout his childhood, Dulles learned to use political power in order to get ahead, and to use secrecy to make unilateral decisions. After analyzing examples of his treatment of various foreign affairs disasters, as well as his manipulation of American media and politicians, Dulles is exposed as a man whose legacy lives in the CIA, as a legendary figure who is in fact much more of a crafted legend than a man of truth.

"As director of the CIA, Allen Dulles liked to think he was the hand of a king, but if so, he was the left hand—the sinister hand. He was the master of the dark deeds that empires require."

Allen W. Dulles served in many capacities for the CIA over a course of eight tumultuous years, most notably as the Director of Central Intelligence. Looking at the CIA website, one would see a host of accomplishments listed—Dulles "gave President Eisenhower—and his successors—intelligence about Soviet strategic capabilities and provided timely information about developing crises and hot spots."

In fact, his statue in the lobby of the Original Headquarters bears the inscription, "His Monument is Around You," implying his legacy is the CIA campus and as it exists today. But, what is that legacy? Under his reign as the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), Dulles planted stories of successful missions in the press, lied to the presidents he served, and focused much more on protecting the aura surrounding the CIA than gathering true intelligence.

As written in Legacy of Ashes, "The myth of a golden age was of the CIA's own making, the product of the publicity and the political propaganda Allen Dulles manufactured in the 1950s." How, though, did Dulles craft a flawless, genius image for the CIA? What methods did Dulles use to manipulate the press, the public, and even the other branches of government to bring forth an agency with "a great reputation and a terrible record?" Dulles made the CIA seem like an elite agency full of top agents resulting in high risk, high reward missions—how is this reconciled with the reality of the CIA under Dulles' reign?

INTELLIGENCE IN YOUTH
To begin, it is vital to identify the significance of developing and running an intelligence agency in an open democratic system. Sun Tzu, author of The Art of War, insists the best (only) way to fight a war is to know the enemy. In fact, "So it is said that if you know others and know yourself, you will not be imperiled in a hundred battles; if you do not know others but know yourself, you will win one and lose one; if do not know others and do not know yourself, you will be imperiled in every single battle."

Allen W. Dulles did not see it this way, however. To him, intelligence was simply a buzzword used to convince those around him that he was fighting the good fight. Walter Bedell Smith served as the fourth Director of the CIA, directly preceding Dulles in the position, which worked out in Dulles' favor as Dulles shone in comparison to Bedell Smith's control. He also gained a head start in his conquest for unquestioned power. Though Bedell Smith left to become the Under Secretary of State, under his direction "the agency carried out the only two victorious coups in its history. The declassified records of those coups show that they succeeded by bribery and coercion and brute force, not secrecy, stealth, and cunning. But they created the legend that the CIA was a silver bullet in the arsenal of democracy. They gave the agency the aura that Dulles coveted." Dulles leaned on this legacy, and used his power and manipulation within the CIA as the ultimate form of intelligence. His spies were within the agency and his family, he developed a network of people who helped him lie and manipulate the press, the US citizens, and the
President of the United States, always remaining at the top of the pyramid, alone, and responsible for all of the success he reported, and the disasters looming beneath.

From a young age Dulles was exposed to government and competition, both of which inspired his rise into power through the 1950s. Dulles’ immediate family was not wealthy. However his ancestry did boast “three secretaries of state and other holders of important positions in diplomacy, government, the law, and the church.” John W. Foster served as the Secretary of State under Harrison, and Robert Lansing acted as Secretary of State for Woodrow Wilson, setting the precedent that befriending and reaching high ranks of the government was a family expectation. There were certain standards of education and lifestyle that were acceptable for a Dulles. This pattern of success created a culture in which idleness or laziness were not accepted—in fact the family dynamic was “robust to the point of being somewhat spartan.” However spartan it was though, it worked as Allen W. Dulles learned from a young age to use his strengths and leave his weaknesses behind. Born with a clubfoot, Dulles’ sister never remembered it as a handicap, rather just a part of his childhood that Dulles never received sympathy for, in “an attempt to toughen the boy to the rigors of life.” The Dulles’ were never to receive sympathy or seem weak in the eyes of others; instead they were to be the leaders of the community, scholars, moral examples. Allen W. Dulles took this education very seriously; though deemed the “charming rascal of the family,” he was never a slacker, and was successful through childhood, in part due to competition with his brother John Foster Dulles.

In everything from school, “the large amount of reading, learning, and reciting they were encouraged to do at home,” to recreational, leisure trips Allen and John were pitted against one another, partially by family, and in part by each other. Family fishing trips in which Allen would go with “Uncle Bert [Robert Lansing]” and John would ride with “his grandfather [John W. Foster]” took on a severely competitive nature; the boys were not even allowed to speak. Only during the lunch stops was discussion permitted, and then the topics were political concerns and world events—often high-ranking government officials, foreign and domestic, made these trips and there was no filter put on the policy discussions in front of John and Allen. From this young age, the Dulles brothers were taught to debate hotly and hold discussion and power close to the chest.

THE DULLES BROTHERS IN POWER
From this lesson came Dulles’ knowledge that an alliance with his brother could bring him great success, but the competition with his brother was a fine line that had to be maneuvered carefully if he was to ultimately become more successful than John. From being left at home while John went abroad just before he went to Princeton to his entire Princeton experience at John’s alma mater, Allen attempted to outshine, or at least equal John’s accomplishments. Princeton underwent great changes that resulted in the revelation that “Foster’s class had been firmly rooted in the nineteenth century. During Allie’s four years there, Princeton and the world took a last deep breath and then plunged headlong into the twentieth century.” Though, John graduated first in his class, and Allen only ninth, both won prizes for their dissertations, and Allen participated in many more clubs and organizations. Known as a joiner, Allen was a member of the Whig Society, Law Club, the Municipal Club, and Cap and Gown eating club, while John was described as a “poler,” a serious studier. Essentially, every aspect of Allen Dulles’ growing up was emblazoned in competition with his high-achieving brother, and pushed by his successful relatives and family. He was only ever taught that power comes from success, success comes from knowledge, and knowledge was to be acquired through studying books… and people. The complicated competition and companionship of the two brothers can be seen in their hungry desire to play strategic games at all times, most notably chess. This game grew with them through childhood into adulthood; “the Dulles brothers were obsessive chess players… Allen could not be distracted from a lengthy joust with his brother. The Dulles brothers would bring the same strategic fixation to the game of global politics.”

John Foster Dulles and his brother Allen left little to chance when it came to power and control. They believed “democ-
racy was an enterprise that had to be carefully managed by the right men, not simply left to elected officials as a public trust.”21 Since they ran “the most powerful corporate law firm in the nation,” Sullivan and Cromwell, they relied on the men who made up a privileged elite to override and run the inner workings of politics.22 Aside from the agreement to work together at Sullivan and Cromwell, it became clear the brothers had entirely different views on how to play the game of politics. Allen had the “colder eye of the two,” developing a foreign policy much more like Lansing’s than his grandfathers; that is, “[They] reasoned that if a nation is truly sovereign, then only a greater physical force can change its course; questions of right and wrong were on the margin.”23 Though both Dulles brothers were tough lawyers, and power hungry politicians, it was Allen Dulles that became the shark. John Foster Dulles had the mantra, “Do not comply… Resist the law with all your might, and soon everything will be all right;” those were words that he would continue to carry on through his career and inspire Allen in his tenure as CIA director.24

Dulles was power hungry, and had been since his young career start with the government. He quickly made his way through the ranks of politics beginning as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, acting as Director and Secretary.25 Proving himself in that context, and at Sullivan and Cromwell, he began to make a name for himself as republican and interventionist fighting for the election of the party leaders, losing the 1948 election as an advisor to Dewey, but remaining active in the party.26 His most significant career move came at the beginning of WWII, however, when he took the position as the Swiss direction of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).27 It was not long after the end of WWII that he was called upon to move into the ranks of the CIA. And to his ultimate favor, he became Director in 1953, as the first civilian DCI, and just a few years after the passage of the CIA Act which “gave the agency the widest conceivable powers.”28 More importantly, the election of Eisenhower resulted in the brothers becoming “the new heads of the State Department and the CIA” via which they could “direct the global operations of the most powerful nation in the world.”29 Despite any competition, or perhaps because of it, the Dulles brothers had “a unique leverage over the incoming administration, and they were imbued with a deep sense of confidence that these were the roles they were destined to play.”30 Essentially, approval for any mission or operation could be requested and approved, or at least influenced, by one or both of the brothers. They had an ultimate hand in the politics of the newly created intelligence agency, and on foreign affairs of the entire United States.

SECRETS AS CURRENCY: DULLES AT THE CIA
For as much power as Dulles had in this new position as DCI, there was nothing he liked more than secrets, and nothing he disliked more than having to consult other people for authority. Reportedly, Dulles was an expert and spinning situations to always remain in control of his words and his secrets. At his dinner parties, when guests (who all numbered in the high-ranking government of Washington) would try to gather insight into the various crises he would tell stories with casts of characters that included former presidents, foreign diplomats, and evil dictators—not at all replying to the question asked of him.31 Reportedly, without divulging any ounce of covert information to the rest of the party, Dulles managed to leave everyone with “an afterglow, feeling they had been present at a rare inside look into the workings of high affairs.”32 Even in the informal setting of dinner parties,
Allen Dulles remained in control, and he never loosened his façade of power, for fear that the image of the CIA would crash down with it. In work and social situations, "Allen gave the impression of being a gregarious type. He was full of jollity. With his hearty laugh, his tweed coat, and his love of the martini, he cut quite a figure. But he never left any doubt that he was always looking for information rather than giving it out. He was very good at giving you tidbits in order to draw what he wanted from you." These secrets and need for power stretched as far as his personal life in which his marriage to Clover was anything but sacred. He had "as his sister, Eleanor, wrote later, 'at least a hundred'" affairs. He often wrote to his wife insinuating these infidelities occurred in the letters, detailing the beauty of the women he was keeping company with (and his mistresses included his wife's best friend, and the Queen of Greece, to name a few). Though ultimately a part of his private life, this need to be desired, and conquer his every whim shows Dulles' true nature as a control-seeking director of intelligence—a man prepared to lie, cheat, and steal in order to keep what he holds close to his chest, and to acquire every tool possible to defend those secrets.

"Dulles made the CIA seem like an elite agency full of top agents resulting in high risk, high reward missions."

One of the earliest examples of Dulles’ disregard for oversight and second opinions came in the form of Operation Ajax, the name given to the plan for the Iranian Coup in 1953. Frank Wisner said once that the “CIA makes policy by default,” and this was one of those times, as the US government publicly supported Mossadegh, the very leader the CIA plotted to overthrow with the help of the British Secret Intelligence Service. The plan relied very heavily, if not exclusively, on the fact that the US had money to hand out; by bribing various members of Mossadegh’s family and cabinet, the CIA suddenly had influence in Iran. Despite President Eisenhower’s pervasive hesitance to approve the mission, Dulles went full steam ahead. A full propaganda scheme underway, money flowing into Iran, and a new shah hand-picked to take over after the coup, the plan seemed infallible—except, of course, if one of the many Iranian men on the inside of the plan talked, which is how Mossadegh learned of his own coup. The country quickly flew into chaos, with pro-shah forces seeking out CIA officers and agents, and creating a world of violence in the nation. “Dr. Mossadegh had overreached, playing into the C.I.A.’s hands by dissolving Parliament after the coup,” so he was nearly caught, but instead flew to Rome in August 1953. His departure left the operation headquarters in “depression and despair,” the history states, adding, “The message sent to Tehran on the night of Aug. 18 said that ‘the operation has been tried and failed,’ and that ‘in the absence of strong recommendations to the contrary operations against Mossadegh [sic] should be discontinued.’"

Potentially the most amazing part of Operation Ajax is the aftermath in the American media and government, in which Kim Roosevelt (station head of the operation) and Dulles were heralded as heroes. By definition only, the mission seemed to have been fairly successful, if messy—that is, the Mossadegh was out of power. In an interview Dulles engaged in with John Chancellor for the NBC segment “The Science of Spying,” he responds to a question about the details of the Iranian coup by saying “The government of Mossadegh [sic], if you recall history, was overthrown by the action of the Shah. Now that we encouraged the Shah to take that action I will not deny.” Clearly elusive, and as vague as possible, Dulles maintains the success and prestige of the operation by condescendingly keeping the power in his own hands. It was the action of the Shah that created the fall of power, yet it was the benevolent push of the CIA that created the destruction—but the destruction was not his fault, it was the Iranians.

In true Dulles style, he continued with his illusion of CIA power and success by perpetuating the myth of success by
Tanks in the streets of Tehran (1953)
Source: Unknown (Wikimedia Commons)

any means possible in the case of the Guatemalan coup in 1954. With the plan in place for the CIA to overthrow the "democratically elected Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz," the CIA made a list of fifty-eight high-ranking government leaders who were to be assassinated, or "whose removal for psychological, organizational, or other reasons is mandatory for the success of military action." This justification made it clear that the removal of these men in order to replace Árbenz with the "bold, but incompetent' Castillo Armas" was an act of grace for the Guatemalan people by the CIA, or so Dulles upheld. In fact, the CIA waged psychological warfare on Árbenz and the people of Guatemala by dropping leaflets on cities inciting terror campaigns against the evils of Árbenz’s government, in favor of Armas, perpetrated further by radio campaigns. Árbenz played right into the CIA’s hands by fearing rebellion and taking away many civil liberties that had been granted by his administration—becoming “the dictator the CIA depicted.” And as Castillo Armas attacked and eventually took over for Árbenz’s reign, he banned the party system, tortured people, and upended nearly all of the reforms that had taken place during the Guatemalan Revolution.47

To this end, the Operation Success was anything but—however, Dulles once again used his powers of deception to paint a pretty picture for the media. “One of the many myths about Operation Success, planted by Allen Dulles in the American Press, was that its eventual triumph lay not in violence but in a brilliant piece of espionage”—once more Dulles enacted his total control of the media and to some extent the US government (as he and John Foster Dulles ‘encouraged’ Eisenhower to take the steps to enact Operation Success).48 A mere ten years later, Dulles proved his dedication to absolving himself and the CIA of any wrongdoing, preserving the veneer of polish, by saying on air, “Well, only as far as I know we don’t engage in assassinations and kidnapping, things of that kind. As far as I know we never have.”49

Dulles’ aptitude for lying not only encouraged his own power hungry agenda, but also promoted the win at all cost attitude in his colleagues as well. Richard Bissell was chief of clandestine services in the late 1950s, and during the period in which the US engaged in U2 flyovers of the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that the president was to order the missions, “Bissell ran the program, and he was petulant about filing his flight plans. He tried to evade presidential authority by secretly seeking to outsource flights to the British and the Chinese Nationalists.”50 Over the course of the four years the U2 flights took place, many planes flew over the Soviets in an attempt to track the nuclear arms in their arsenal; in the process, however, the Soviets had begun to detect the flights going on.51 With Bissell carelessly demanding another flight, and the Soviets tracking the US movement, it seemed to be a recipe for disaster as Gary Francis Powers took off from Pakistan for what was to be the last flight of the operation.52 When Powers flew over Russian airspace, a missile struck his plane, causing him to have to eject and be captured alive by the Soviets.53 When word came to the CIA that the plane had crashed, it became the job of Dulles to attempt to clean up the mess caused by the secret missions—to even his surprise, NASA came out with the story that a weather plane had gone down in Turkey. Dulles and the CIA ran with this lie to the American public, all in the name of preserving the image of success for the CIA, even when it was his policy that made lying and causing this disaster possible. The government and the CIA even went as far as to say “There was no authorization for such a flight.”54 However, as is typically the case, this caused more problems than it solved as this statement made it seem like President Eisenhower, who had been strategically and circularly informed about these flights, had no control over the CIA.55

Therefore, he had to come clean, and “For the first time in the history of the United States, millions of citizens understood that their president could deceive them in the name of national security.”56 Dulles’ reign of lies had spread like wildfire through the agency, and at this point the CIA had already been heralded as a life saving organization, full of men who understood international affairs to a degree above everyone else. It was disasters like this US incident, and the aftermath that Dulles perpetuated by covering lies and allowing himself and other men to run their operations on their own terms, outside of presidential oversight. However, even Eisenhower was convinced by the lies of Dulles, as in the time immediately after his departure from office he sent Dulles a letter saying, “As I think you know, I wish you and your associates in the Central Intelligence Agency well in the tremendously important job you do for our country”—showing his clear forgiving of the power of the agency. Dulles responds with, “These have been formative years for this Agency.”57 You have given us constant encouragement and support in the collection and coordination of intelligence for national security decisions.”58 Clearly, once again, Dulles tells even the president what he wants to hear—and in the process shows his ability to control many facets of government.
OMISSION OF TRUTH, OR LIES?
In an effort to make Americans forget about the dismal nature of the previous months’ failures, the CIA used the summer months of 1960 to focus on, and throw more resources at the "hot spots in the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia." However, one of the most central missions of the CIA was the assassination attempts of Fidel Castro, for which the CIA secured “another $10.75 million to begin paramilitary training of the five hundred Cubans in Guatemala… on one condition: ‘So long as the Joint Chiefs, Defense, State, and CIA think we have a good chance of being successful.’” To Dulles, the phrase ‘good chance’ was more than enough for him to approve the missions and tell the president the CIA would take the money and do the job. This ignorance to the facts, or perhaps the blinding desire for power and control, ultimately led to the Bay of Pigs invasion, also the downfall of Dulles’ career.

The operation called for 1400 men to be part of the paramilitary troops that were to take out Castro’s army and render him defenseless. However, the “CIA had used obsolete World War II B-26 bombers, and painted them to look like Cuban air force planes. The bombers missed many of their targets and left most of Castro’s air force intact. As news broke of the attack, photos of the repainted U.S. planes became public and revealed American support for the invasion.” Despite this, however, Dulles seemed unperturbed, answering to the news of failed operations with “an oddly bemused look, as if the unfolding tragedy was too remote to affect him.” His behavior strange, and his unexplained absence from the office that day serve only to perpetuate the idea that he acted in a manner to usurp power, and deny negative press. He could not be at fault for the failure of the operation if he, and his best men, were not present. In fact, “Kennedy was to blame by blocking the agency’s last-minute requests for air strikes.” Dulles knew that more troops would be necessary, but Kennedy would end up taking the fall—Dulles was banking on a full-scale invasion of Cuba, and thought his incomplete plan would force the issue. In this case, Kennedy “took full blame for the Cuba fiasco,” again leaving the CIA with a reputation of at least quasi-heroism, though this time, it left Dulles without a job. Near constant bickering and mutual dislike and distrust between Kennedy and Dulles—a power struggle of dramatic proportions—caused Kennedy to declare that he wanted to “splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces and scatter it into the winds.” For the first time, Dulles had to abandon his practice of “denying everything, admitting nothing, [and hiding] the truth to conceal the failures of his covert operations.” Allen Dulles retired as director of central intelligence in 1961; his legacy present in the building of the headquarters of the CIA, as well as in the somehow unmarred record of the CIA under his leadership, in an era when “‘The record in Europe was bad,…’ ‘The record in Asia was bad. The agency had a terrible record in its early days—a great reputation and a terrible record.’”

THE ART OF MANIPULATION: ALLEN DULLES IN POWER
Allen Dulles, with the initial help of his brother, was a master in the art of the manipulation of information. Together, they were able to control arguably the most powerful agency of the government in the 1950s by lying and gathering (or making up) intelligence, and acting on that information with the strength of the United States government behind them. Beyond the control of the government, Dulles relied on the control of the media to help him maintain the support of the public to keep his painted image of the CIA unharmed. Dulles became in charge of Operation Mockingbird—he was able to hire journalists to report the stories the CIA wanted to have reported, the way they wanted to have them reported. Though it must be noted, that journalism houses often operated with the knowledge of the owner that this recruiting was happening. Though there was both domestic and international involvement, the most common form of communication was a mutual relationship between the journalists and the CIA—it was not necessarily an infiltration by the CIA, but it certainly swayed the American public to hear the version of history the CIA wanted to tell. In most cases it worked as follows:

In most instances, Agency files show, officials at the highest levels of the CIA usually director or deputy director) dealt personally with a single designated individual in the top management of the cooperating news organization. The aid furnished often took two forms: providing jobs and credentials “journalistic cover” in Agency parlance) for CIA operatives about to be posted in foreign capitals; and lending the Agency the undercover services of reporters already on staff, including some of the best-known correspondents in the business.

Identification Card of Allen W. Dulles (2011)

Source: The Central Intelligence Agency

Even now, looking at the media coverage, and especially the CIA versions of Dulles’ history paint him as a hero. Dulles led the CIA “when the public viewed the CIA as a patriotic organization of people fighting our Cold War enemies” and during the “hey-day of successful espionage against the Communist Bloc. Dulles presided over the Agency during one of its most active and interesting periods.” Dulles and
his power of persuasion over the CIA allow him to gild his image with the sheen of success over 40 years after his death.

Dulles was an expert at using power in his favor to blind others to incompetence and failures; by utilizing this skill, in conjunction with his complicated relationship with his brother, he was able to create a regime at the CIA that disregarded moral intelligence seeking for a gilded idea of success and power. He cared little for the approval of his higher-ups, though there were few, and he regarded himself as the man most suited to make decisions for the CIA. His childhood led him to live a charmed life—he was able to combine strength of character with precociousness in a way that his family and their dignified friends approved of. Dulles was intelligent, charming, attractive, and used his desire to beat his brother to make it to the top of his class at Princeton, and then to the top of the political world. From playing chess to orchestrating assassinations that were never admitted to the public, Dulles took on the role of the most powerful man in America. He had power of decision and deception that escaped even the presidents he served under. Dulles manipulated the flawless image of the CIA that stands today by using the skills he learned as a child, retaining his ‘cold eye,’ and out manipulating everyone in the government to truth believe the verse that still stands engraved in the lobby of the CIA headquarters: “And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

Dulles knew no truths aside from the ones he fabricated himself, and knew no enemy aside from the ones he crafted in his own war on the world. Dulles did not use intelligence to fight for the preservation of democracy and America—rather, he fashioned intelligence to be able to play the political mas-
Endnotes


[3] Ibid.


[12] Ibid., 17.


[14] Ibid., 18, 24.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 29.

[17] Ibid., 31.

[18] Ibid., 30, 35.

[19] Ibid., 33.


[21] Ibid., 3.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Srodes, Allen Dulles, 43.


[27] “A Look Back... Allen Dulles Becomes DCI.”


[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., 2-3.

[32] Ibid.


[35] Ibid.


[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.


[42] Ibid.


[45] Ibid., 110.

[46] Ibid., 113.


[53] United States Department of State, “U-2 Overflights and the Capture of Francis Gary Powers.”


[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.


[58] Ibid.


[60] Ibid., 187.


[62] Ibid.


[64] Several of Dulles’ chiefs of divisions in the CIA were not on call for the making of the Bay of Pigs plan, making it an operation "staffed largely by the agency’s losers”; Ibid., 397-398.

[65] Ibid., 400.


[68] Ibid., 206; Don Gregg, quoted in Weiner, Legacy of Ashes, 64.


[70] Carl Bernstein, “The CIA and the Media.”

[71] “A Look Back... Allen Dulles Becomes DCI.”


[73] Tim Weiner, “Seminar Twelve,” (Lecture, The CIA in Fact and Fiction, Princeton University, December 17, 2015); Plato’s concept of a lie told by an elite in order to preserve the status of society; Tonnvane Wiswell, The Republic by Plato (New Jersey: Research and Education Association, 1999).
A historiographical analysis of thematic mapping in turn-of-the-century Chicago reveals the role of cartography as a highly politicized method for sorting and labeling urban populations. Progressive Era reformers and sociologists created maps that fixed transient and shifting populations of various ethnic and socioeconomic groups deemed undesirable. Such urban mapping projects demonstrate the application of cartography’s ostensible objectivity to justify moral and political judgments about urban populations.

By Rachel Schastok ’15
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Between 1894 and 1923, three distinct publications used thematic cartography to map problem areas in Chicago. In 1894, English journalist William T. Stead published *If Christ Came to Chicago!: A Plea for the Union of All Who Love in the Service of All Who Suffer*, an exposé of the city’s sin and corruption that opened with a map of the Custom House Place vice district. In 1895, the residents of Hull House published their *Maps and Papers: A Presentation of Nationalities and Wages in a Congested District of Chicago, Together with Comments and Essays on Problems Growing Out of the Social Conditions*, a landmark collection that documented the plight of poor urban immigrants both narratively and graphically. In 1923, Nels Anderson published *The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man*, in which fellow member of the Chicago School of Sociology Robert E. Park claimed that the urban environment, though initially established by human will, comes to have a controlling effect on its inhabitants. Anderson includes a map of the West Madison Street transient district in this text.

Together, the projects of William T. Stead, Hull House, and the Chicago School of Sociology constituted a genealogy of early thematic mapping in Chicago. Such maps had their roots in an immense cartographic shift that occurred in the nineteenth-century United States, as American thinkers pushed cartography past the mere description of a landscape and toward the revelation of patterns in spatial relationships. In response to rapid urbanization, the Sanborn Map Company began in 1866 to produce new insurance maps that cataloged cities in great detail. This development, as well as the genre of urban disease maps, as established by projects such as John Snow’s 1854 map of the London cholera outbreak and Charles Booth’s 1885-1903 maps of poverty in London, were the precursors of the cartographically informed urban reform projects that appeared in turn-of-the-century Chicago.

Each set of reformers differed in its ideology and its impetus to map. However, the premises of all three rested on the notion of the industrializing city as an intrinsically disordered space. Drawing from the premises of earlier insurance and disease maps, these programs all employed cartographic methods in order to analyze the origin of a problem by its distribution over the urban landscape, while also guiding policymakers and the public towards a particular understanding of the spaces they mapped.

Working under Progressive-era enthusiasm for the application of science to social problems, these programs employed cartography as an ostensibly objective method of representing the ethnic, socioeconomic, or institutional contours of disadvantaged or vice-ridden areas of Chicago. Examination of these maps reveals their biases as instruments of social reform. Although the mapmakers made assumptions about their objectivity, the very act of mapping suggests a permanence of demography that was not realistic given the transience the underworld populations represented. Further, the selective mapping of buildings constituted a tool for declaring areas blighted. Considered together, the mapping programs of Stead, Hull House, and the Chicago School illustrate the way thematic mapping functioned in the context of Progressive-era social reform. By making neighborhoods legible in this way, Progressive-era mapmakers exercised the power to mark areas as intrinsically problematic and to justify a program of intervention in accordance with the goals of their reform efforts.

William T. Stead opened *If Christ Came to Chicago!* with a map, “Nineteenth Precinct, First Ward, Chicago,” which showed the notorious Custom House Place vice district, located between Harrison and Polk Streets in the city’s most infamous ward. The district first came to Stead’s attention during his 1893 visit to Chicago, when the district was at its height during the World’s Columbian Exposition. Stead arrived in Chicago in October 1893 eager to experience the celebration of progress and civilization of the World’s Fair.
However, he quickly became aware of the strong network of vice and corruption that underlaid the White City. As Carl Smith argues about this period, a pervasive tension between increasing order and destructive disorder shaped Chicago at the turn of the century to the extent that “disorder itself appeared to be one of the defining qualities of urban culture.” In this era:

Americans increasingly agreed that the modern American city, and Chicago in particular, was the disorderly embodiment of instability, growth, and change. They also agreed that it was the center of political, economic, and social power in America, and, as such, was contested ground.³

Considered in this light, Stead’s damning exposé of Chicago’s vice areas emerges as one attempt to gain ground in the fight to steer the development of the city’s character.

Necessary for the analysis of each of the three mapping projects is a consideration of the mapmakers’ choices in terms of spatial and temporal representation. In accordance with the mapmakers’ intentions to provoke a response in favor of reform, the spaces mapped in each project were presented to suggest that their conditions would persist over time. Interestingly, Stead acknowledged that any attempt to study a significant portion of Chicago would fall short, as it would inevitably be out of date by the time the scientist published the results. He nevertheless used his map to suggest permanence by treating time and space as reciprocal elements; he believed that by limiting his scope to a single precinct, his study would illustrate truth and yield useful results. Specifically, Stead believed that he had selected a particularly useful representative area:

For the purpose of this survey I have selected the nineteenth precinct of the First Ward, not because it is an average precinct, but because it presents in an aggravated form most of the evils which are palpably not in accord with the mind of Christ. If Christ came to Chicago, it is one of the last precincts into which we should care to take him.⁴

While the map constituted a relatively small portion of Stead’s text, it provides a useful opportunity for analysis of Stead’s reform project as a whole. Its position within the book is important; it appeared on the very first page of the book, before the title page, and was therefore intended to be the reader’s
Thematic Cartography For Social Reform In Chicago

In 1885, the residents of Hull House published the *Maps and Papers*, the results of a study of the area between Halsted and State Streets, and Polk and Twelfth Streets. Florence Kelley, a highly active social reformer and an associate of Friedrich Engels, worked as the census director for Hull House, and it was the data amassed under her direction that was used to color the maps of the district. Hull House's decision to base its mapping project on statistics is not surprising given the secular, objective current then taking hold in social reform. By the end of the nineteenth century, the parameters and methodologies of the discipline of sociology had begun to form, as evidenced by the founding of the first academic department of sociology at the University of Chicago in 1892. The notion of public health had come to be defined largely in terms of norms and deviation, as made possible by a new analytical tool: statistics. The Hull House, as a liberal institution with an interest in reform, was determined to assist disadvantaged populations by means of “well-modulated interventions.” The desire to improve conditions by intervention drove reformers to “think in terms of a total and unified entity that connected population with its territory,” a framework for studying human populations that led Hull House thinkers to seek out relationships between urban residents and the physical environment they inhabited.

In this sense, the Hull House maps inherited the cartographic and analytical traditions established by three earlier types of thematic cartography: the Sanborn insurance map, the disease map, and earlier maps of socioeconomic conditions. Susan Schulten has pointed out the connection between Sanborn maps and maps of urban problem areas. Responding to the rapid pace of urbanization as well as the all-too-frequent occurrence of urban fires, the Sanborn Map Company began to produce series of immensely detailed maps. Because they were insurance maps, they showed the physical and institutional composition of cities at the level of individual buildings. Similarly, maps of epidemic disease and poverty, such as John Snow’s 1854 map of a London cholera outbreak and Charles Booth’s color-coded map of relative socioeconomic class in London, employ a high level of detail for an analytical purpose: by mapping individual cases or households over urban space, they could determine how each unit contributed to an existing condition. This was the same analytical purpose that motivated the Hull House maps.

It is clear from the accompanying text that Booth’s map had an especially significant influence on Hull House’s mapping program. In the preface, it was noted that “the colors in Charles Booth’s wage maps of London have been retained,” suggesting both approval of Booth’s research methods and some overlap between the audiences of the two maps. The Hull House mapmakers considered their own work an improvement on his, however. Like Stead, the Hull House researchers thought it advantageous that the area surveyed and analyzed was relatively compact, and in comparison to Booth’s map, “the greater minuteness of this survey will en-

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Chicago’s South Side by Samuel Sewell Greeley (1895)

*Source: Mapping the Nation*

first introduction to the problem of vice in Chicago. As such, it is important to examine what rhetorical work the map did to shape the reader’s impression.

A reader who opened Stead’s book and unfolded the map was likely to respond to its coloring before all else. Stead indicated pawnbrokers, saloons, and lodging houses by black monochromatic shading, while brothels appear as solid, vivid red. Stead relies on the power of rich color to draw attention, and likely also on the association of the colors red and black with evil and danger. As a result of this targeted use of color, establishments such as restaurants and stores, presumably deemed “morally neutral,” were de-emphasized. “Nineteenth Precinct, First Ward, Chicago” simultaneously alarmed and soothed; the map alerted the reader to a critical moral epidemic occurring over real and identifiable space within the city, while also assuring her of its ability to be contained once visualized. And yet, text is scarce within the map and institutions were not individuated beyond broad categories. This created the sense of a problem that had been identified yet not entirely known, leaving the reader eager to read on. Even before the beginning of the text proper, then, Stead drove the reader to read the moral problem from his map, and to absorb his moral judgement about the Custom House Place vice district, the topic with which the remainder of the book is concerned.

In contrast to the Christian moral outrage that motivated Stead, the agenda of Chicago’s Hull House was informed by a secular interest in social reform. Consonant with the settlement house movement, which had been gaining ground in the United States since 1889, founder Jane Addams and the other participants in Hull House’s work saw active participation in the community life of the blighted immigrant district on the city’s Near West Side as the most effective path to reform.
The stated goals of the program were explicitly reformist: The possibility of helping toward an improvement in the sanitation of the neighborhood, and toward an introduction of some degree of comfort, has given purpose and confidence to this undertaking…. Hull-House offers these facts… with the hope of stimulating inquiry and action.10

Knowing that Hull House intentionally mapped a small area in order to encourage reform, it is useful to examine the rhetorical interactions between maps and text. In contrast with Stead’s book, the wages and ethnicities maps appear several pages into the text proper, and therefore the reader’s introduction to the conditions of Near West Side residents was intended to be verbal. Interestingly, the opening of the text is perhaps best described as a verbal map. Its tone recalls Jacob Riis’s 1890 How the Other Half Lives or other works of muckraking journalism that would have remained in recent memory at the time of the publication of the Maps and Papers. After stating the borders of the area under examination, Agnes Sinclair Holbrook’s narration omnisciently guided the reader through the district, gradually revealing the hardships of its residents and laborers. This descriptive mode also established the authority of Hull House. Holbrook included descriptions of factory life only visible from the back door, suggesting a unique level of knowledge the area and its squalid conditions that introduced the maps as the products of long-established experts.

Just as maps of epidemic disease aimed to identify each part of a larger phenomenon, the Hull House researchers parsed the residential buildings of the Near West Side to include each constituent nationality. Holbrook noted that in the nationalities map the individual was treated as the unit, such that the residence of even a single person in a building, which occurred frequently with the prevalence of boarding, warranted his or her nationality’s inclusion on the map. In many cases, this convention led to the inclusion of as many as six types of shading in a single building. Thus, by excluding population density from the map, the map-makers guided the viewer to a perception of overcrowding more likely to generate sympathy and moral outrage. And, although Holbrook acknowledged that the population was frequently transient, institutions still treated the map as documentation of a condition that would persist in spite of the movements of individuals.11

Similarly, Nels Anderson’s The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man opened with a preface by editor and fellow member of the University of Chicago Sociology Department Robert E. Park. In the preface, Park states the imperative for Anderson’s study of the area known as Hobohemia: “A changing population of from 30,000 to 75,000 homeless men in Chicago, living together within the area of thirty or forty city blocks, has created a milieu in which new and unusual personal types flourish and new and unsuspected problems have arisen.”12 This analysis thus established the ‘hobo problem’ as a uniquely contemporary phenomenon brought about by the unprecedented growth of cities. The issue of greatest concern to the researchers was the possibility within a large urban center for antisocial figures to be outcasts from the larger community, living without its regulating or moral influences, while simultaneously forming their own self-sustaining communities on different terms.13

Elaborating further, the Committee’s Preface states, “the object of this inquiry… was to secure those facts which would enable social agencies to deal intelligently with the problems created by the continuous ebb and flow, out of and into Chicago, of tens of thousands of foot-loose and homeless men.”14 The Committee’s Preface corroborated Park in locating the problem and their cause for concern in the deviant lifestyle and pattern of movement of Chicago’s hobo population. The preface also identified the ultimate aim of the program. Much like Stead’s and Hull House’s, Anderson’s study was intended to inform reform agencies of the contours and gravity of the problem and the corresponding need to intervene. Through a combination of text and mapping, Anderson advanced those aims by presenting the hobo as a social type with certain negative qualities and tendencies that were inherently problematic for himself and for society.

Before elaborating further on the characteristics of Anderson’s map, it is important to understand the methodological precursors of the Chicago School of Sociology. In 1921,
Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, two prominent members of the Chicago School, published the *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*. The student edition of this volume opened with a reference to Auguste Comte, a French philosopher who was among the first to elaborate the terms of the discipline in the 1830s, six decades before its initiation into American academia in 1892. Comte stated of sociology, "its practical aim was to establish government on the secure foundation of an exact science." Evaluating this claim in the 1920s, Park and Burgess wrote that the discipline had indeed followed this trajectory to a significant extent. However, beginning in that decade, the Chicago School's work began to shift away from Comte's notion of "scientifc prevision" and toward "a view of human communities and social relations as built 'on top of' ecological landscapes and thus not subject to the same inexorable laws as plant and animal ecological systems."16

Significant yet under-acknowledged contributors to the development of the Chicago School of Sociology were Jane Addams and, as a result, Hull House. While the University of Chicago began as an academically nontraditional institution, a subsequent conservative turn soon left the sociology profession strictly gender-separated. While male faculty received the title of sociologist and contributed to the academic studies that constituted the early professionalization of the discipline, women were denied access and relegated to social work, considered the non-academic and less critical branch of the field, essentially an outgrowth of the traditional women's sphere. Gender segregation in sociology continued into the interwar period, when Anderson published *The Hobo*.

At that time, Progressivism, which had spurred the settlement house movement, fell out of favor due to its association with various radicalisms. For that reason, although Burgess claimed that *Hull-House Maps and Papers* marked the foundation of urban studies in Chicago, much of Addams's influence on sociology was filtered through the work of her male colleagues and went largely unacknowledged. Nevertheless, in revisionist accounts of the development of sociology, the cartographic methodology of Hull House's Near West Side mapping program is recognized as a vital contribution to the work of the Chicago School in the 1920s and '30s.

An examination of the cartographic and verbal portions of Anderson's study reveals similar rhetorical strategies. Both components of the text delineate a geographical area, the Main Stem on Chicago's West Madison Street, after imbuing it with a set of problematic characteristics. The Progressive reform goals of the study are presented to neatly correspond to these problems. In the text directly before the map in the 1961 edition of *The Hobo*, Anderson claims that the segregation of the transient community into the small area of Hobohemia is precisely the cause of its problems:

The segregation of tens of thousands of footloose, homeless, and not to say hopeless men is the fact fundamental to an understanding of the problem... This massing of detached and migratory men upon a small area has created an environment in which gamblers, dope venders, bootleggers, and pickpockets can live and thrive.18

Immediately following this statement is the map. Just as the text condemns the Main Stem by naming several character types universally understood to be immoral or dangerous, the eleven categories of establishments—including cheap hotels, gambling, and saloons—act as signifiers of seediness and moral transgression.

Unlike the maps in both Stead's and Hull House's mapping programs, "Hobo Institutions On One Street Along 'Main Stem" does not label building addresses or include the make-up of the entire city blocks; rather, it is focused exclusively on the buildings that face West Madison Street. Despite its presence in a sociological study, these elements demonstrate that the map was intended less to provide the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the constituent parts of the main stem neighborhood than it was intended to collapse its complexity and portray a single dimension of the district—namely, the predominance of institutions that support the problematic transient population. Thus, by limiting the cartographic portion of his study to a single, reductionist view of Hobohemia, Anderson aimed to generate concern and make social reformers see intervention as the best response.

Each of these three maps is perhaps best understood as an effort to represent for an outside audience the conditions of the American city at the turn of the century, an era that brought new possibilities for living in the city, but also a time when urban development in laboring-class areas tended to outpace...
planning for the welfare of its residents. Under these conditions, the projects of mapmakers shaped the representations of the areas of Chicago they studied in order to impress upon the reader the need for reform. Carl Smith's assertion about the rhetorical power of urban catastrophes in the late nineteenth century applies nicely to these efforts to map urban conditions. He argues:

Defining whether and in what way this or that event was disorderly, disastrous, and potentially catastrophic was an act of power in a struggle in which different people tried to enforce their often disputed vision of urban order as the one that was most normal, proper, desirable, progressive, and correct. The struggle was over the future of America, with which the rise of the city was so closely linked.19

The role of cartography in this struggle to encourage reform projects is also historically specific. The act of mapping was then most often understood as a neat and objective means of reflecting real spaces and conditions. By treating maps as representations outside the bounds of subjectivity therefore capable of faithfully reflecting the world, these mapmakers were able to employ visual texts in novel ways.
Thematic Cartography For Social Reform In Chicago

Endnotes

[9] Ibid., 57.
[10] Ibid., 58.
[14] Ibid., ix.
This paper uses the works of John Osborne, Azouz Begag, and Peter Maass to deconstruct the generalization that Europeans “developed within the shadow of the past.” The British dramatist, French-Algerian autobiographer, and the American reporter of the Bosnian Genocide, respectively, depict tensions between those who shunned history in order to develop in pace within the postwar global order and those who closed their eyes to the present in a desperate attempt to hold onto the past. This dichotomy helps to explain contemporary sources of conflict in Europe and warrants this foray into post-45 history and literature.

Recalling Richard von Weizsäcker’s 8 May 1985 declaration that “anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection,” one might conclude that (post)modern Europe developed outside the shadow of the past. Although von Weizsäcker, the sixth President of the Federal Republic of Germany, recognized Germany’s role in the atrocities of the Second World War, he suggested that West Germans proceed by “[using] the memory of [their] own history as a guideline for [their] future behavior.” Von Weizsäcker envisioned a Germany—and, more generally, a Europe—that could recover from its crimes and immoral acts, that could skirt around the “shadow of the past.” Unfortunately, many post-45 nations fell short of von Weizsäcker’s aspirations. John Osborne in Look Back in Anger, Azouz Begag in Shantytown Kid, and Peter Maass in Love Thy Neighbor portray the relationships between key characters and the past as influencing their politics, weighing upon their consciences, and determining their dreams for the future; in each case, however, a tension between “the shadow of the past” and “development” arises. The arguments and attitudes voiced by characters in Look Back, Shantytown Kid, and Love Thy Neighbor are representative of post-war British, French, and Yugoslav citizens, respectively, and discussing this dissonance between “looking back” and “moving forward” greatly implicates post-45 Europeans’ national attitudes.

In Look Back in Anger, John Osborne characterizes two societal trends of post-war England by glimpsing into the home-life of Jimmy Porter, the anti-hero who was “born out of his time.” First, Osborne increasingly criticizes a nation whose majority was attempting to socially, morally, materially, and politically “develop” by jettisoning British traditions and values, such as colonialism, nobility, and conservatism. In the exposition, Jimmy drawls, “It’s pretty dreary living in the
American Age—unless you’re an American of course,” subtly
indicting the British who were futilely attempting to regain
empire by emulating the progressive methods of America.4
More explicitly, Jimmy later exclaims, “Reason and Prog-
ress, the old firm, is selling out!” foreseeing a “Big Crash” in
those “forgotten shares… in the old traditions, the old be-
liefs.5 Britain, with its conservative roots, had been usurped
in the global order by the United States, and the nation was
striving to “develop” in line with the American posture in-
stead of with respect to past British actions. Osborne per-
haps best personifies Britain’s abandonment of its history
and traditions through Jimmy’s friend, Hugh. Hugh is one of
these post-45 lemmings who felt “England was finished for
us, anyway” and that the “only real hope was to get out, and
try somewhere else.” Jimmy considered this “giving up” as
detestable because Hugh was leaving “his mother all on her
own,” where Hugh’s mother symbolizes the old English or-
der.6 Through Jimmy and Hugh, Osborne thus contemplates
the degree of cowardice associated with throwing past ac-
tions, traditions, and predispositions overboard in hopes of
making room for the British on the ship of American pros-
perity.

Opposite of the individuals who shunned British history in
the name of “development” were those who were wistfully
looking back to days of England’s imperial glory instead of
confronting the “developing” world around them. Thus, Os-
borne’s second critique is one of those individuals who ef-
fectively lived in the shadow of the past, “casting well-fed
glances back to the Edwardian twilight from [the] comfort-
able, disenfranchised wilderness” that was the new order
of American political, economic, and cultural hegemony.7 If
Hugh embodies the British who had forsaken the past with
hopes of succeeding in the new order, then Jimmy’s father-
in-law, Colonel Redfern, represents those who “spend their
time mostly looking forward to the past.”8 The England that
the Colonel “remembered was the one that [he] left in 1914,
and [he] was happy to go on remembering it that way.” The
Colonel mourns for the lost dream of imperial glory, lament-
ing, “If only it could have gone on forever…I think the last
day the sun shone was when that dirty little train steamed
out of that crowded, suffocating Indian station… I knew in
my heart it was all over then. Everything.”9 Faced with the
uncertainty of living in an era dominated—materially, po-
litically, and socially—by another nation and absent of “any
good, brave causes” for which one would die, many chose to
freeze time, mentally occupying the age of British opulence
and power instead of confronting the reality of the post-45
global dynamic.10 Thus, Osborne displays an England torn
between those “hurt because everything is changed” and
those “hurt because everything is the same.”11 Some are liv-
ing in the “shadow of the past” while feeling victimized by
the “developments” of the present, and others are consciously
avoiding the “shadow of the past” in a ruthless attempt for
“development.” Classifying post-45 Britain as “developing in
the shadow of the past,” therefore, glosses over the intricacies
that made British society as tense as it was in the 1950s.

Azouz Begag, in his memoir Shantytown Kid, depicts a sim-
ilar strain in a France that had reverted from allowing the
“free circulation” of Algerians and French to a state of blatant
discrimination resulting in Algerian shame of identity, where
the condition of “free circulation” is like the past, and the
state of discrimination occurs in the present.12 Here, Algeri-
ans are distancing themselves from their heritage with hopes
of growing alongside the French. One observes the institu-
tionalized pressure to assimilate through Begag’s experience
in the French school system. Begag “wanted to be among the
top of the class alongside the French children,” a surprising
goal, considering that Begag’s fellow Arab schoolchildren
consistently occupied the bottom ranks of classroom per-
formance and that he was often forced to decide between
succeeding in class and maintaining friendships with his
shantytown peers.13 On a larger scale, the pattern of fl eeing
from one’s Algerian heritage in order to better assimilate into
national French culture is visible in the gradual emigration
of inhabitants of Le Chaâba, the shantytown, to apartments
in French cities, specifically Lyon. Describing the Algerians’
wishes to sever ties with the shantytown and with their past
in order to “develop” on French terms, Begag writes, “A lot of
people started thinking about leaving. Where to? Anywhere,”
and the trend continued until it felt as though “Le Chaâba’s
soul was slipping away through the cracks in the planks.”14
Yet, as Algerians attempted to find their place in French society, the French began to relapse into racial discrimination, forgoing the possibility for social “development” in order to rest within the comfortable confines of the antiquated social order that they had once dominated. When Begag and his friends, upon the request of the piously Arabic Old Ma Louise, began pelting a prostitute and her client who had parked on the outskirts of Le Chaâba, the Frenchman yelled, “You bunch of dune coons! Do you think I’m going to let you Arabs start laying down the law in our own country?” before running away. The expression “our own country” summarizes the newly heightened national French perception of French-Algerian relations: although the French had agreed to the “free circulation” of Algerians in the Evian Accords, Algerians were increasingly regarded as unwelcome guests in French territory. Adding to evidence of this perception, Begag concludes the memoir of his childhood by recalling the question of his family’s French landlord: “So when are you going back to your country?” Begag characterizes French nationals as reverting to the “shadow of [their] past” and ignoring previous developments toward social equality, while he shows how Algerians progressively shied away from their traditions, heritage, and history in hopes of “developing” alongside the native French. Just as in Look Back in Anger, Shantytown Kid demonstrates the historical complexities that are ignored by simply agreeing that all post-45 European nations, here France and its old colony Algeria, developed in the shadow of the past. Meanwhile, the United States and the powers of Western Europe attempted to evade the mistakes of the past by avoiding the lessons of history entirely. Maass lists “ethnic rivalry,” “tribal warfare,” and the characterization of Slavs as “uncivilized” as the dominant European justifications for why the Balkans were hastily unraveling; these rationalizations were crucial because they “defined the violence as an antimodern and anti-Western phenomenon—an exception.” However, these excuses also prevented Europeans from using their experiences with genocide and fractious European relations to intervene: instead of “guns or ammunition,” America and Western Europe airdropped “feta cheese and pasta.” These actions were met with some criticism. For example, Margaret Thatcher, who left office just before the Balkans erupted, felt that “Feeding or evacuating the victims rather than helping them resist aggression makes us accomplices.” She expressed shame in “the European Community, for this is happening in the heart of Europe. It is within Europe’s sphere of influence.

The implications of this pattern culminated in the Bosnian War, chronicled by Peter Maass in Love Thy Neighbor. In this iteration, it is the Serbs who march deep into the shadow of their past, resurrecting nationalist images of Prince Lazar and the Battle of Kosovo Polje and calling upon Serbs to avenge their ancestors who had been subjugated by Muslims and their parents who had been murdered by Croatians of the Ustashe, undoing Tito’s actions toward creating a unified Slavic people. Demonstrating the Serbian obsession with the past, Maass notes the “vulgar justice… that a man who was born in a concentration camp ended up ruling his own string of camps as an adult.” A Bosnian (ex-)veterinarian conveyed to Maass the confusion and, ultimately, horror resulting from the transformation of Serbian classmates, friends, and neighbors complacent in the development of Slavic unity under Tito into looters, rapists, and murderers: “We didn’t believe that this would happen. This is the twentieth century. We are in Europe. We have satellite television here. Even today, when there is electricity, we can watch CNN. We can watch reports of our own genocide!” Those who chose to mourn for imperial England instead of contribute to the presence of Britain inspired societal and generational divides, and the French who reneged on the offer of “free circulation” of Algerians fostered the growth of racial discrimination. The consequence of Serbs investing in nationalism and accepting Tito’s death as an opportunity to dominate the Balkans in the name of “revenge” was the largest instance of European genocide since the Holocaust.

Paradoxically, by tiptoeing around the siege of the city where Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, by chalking the conflict up to “ethnic rivalry” rather than exaggerated nationalism and absurd bids for Balkan power, by refusing to intervene for fear of proceeding down the same paths that led to the World Wars, by appeasing the Serbs and denying justice to the Bosnians, the powers of Western Europe allowed the past to repeat itself. In their attempts to “develop” a mature response to a European war, these powers ignored entirely...
the lessons of the past in a failure of historical consciousness. Thus, while the Serbs regressed into the depths of their past (c. 1389) and shunned the recent unifying developments that had been made in Yugoslavia, other post-45 European countries acted reciprocally by distancing themselves from the shadow of the past in hopes of “developing” a conflict-free solution to the decimation of a nation.

In 1985, Richard von Weizsäcker made the distinction that while “[T]he young people are not responsible for what happened over 40 years ago… they are responsible for the historical consequences.” Less than a decade later, those young people were operating concentration camps, comprising firing squads, gang-raping women and children, digging mass graves, and exacting a reign of terror in Bosnia. One might argue that the statement “Post-45 European countries developed in the shadow of the past” is sufficient to capture the essence of European actions after 1945. However, England, France, and Yugoslavia can be sorted into two contingencies—one of people avoiding the past in hopes of accelerating present development and the other of people embracing inertia and the shadow of their past, evading present developments. Exploring this dichotomy, rather than embracing the umbrella statement, allows for a greater understanding of the societal gaps that served as a place for conflict to fester and grow in postwar Europe.
Endnotes


[5] Ibid., 55-56

[6] Ibid., 46.


[8] Ibid., 56.

[9] Here, “glory” refers to the geopolitical and economic benefits that Britain gleaned from its colonies as well as the cultural and social comfort that British citizens derived from holding the dominant position in the imperial dynamic; Ibid., 68.

[10] Ibid., 84.


[14] Ibid., 117.

[15] Ibid., 41.

[16] Ibid., 198.


[18] Ibid., 76.

[19] Ibid., 14.

[20] Ibid., 28.

[21] Ibid., 269.

[22] Ibid., 252.
