Dædalus

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Dædalus was founded in 1955 and established as a quarterly in 1958. The journal's namesake was renowned in ancient Greece as an inventor, scientist, and unriddler of riddles. Its emblem, a maze seen from above, symbolizes the aspiration of its founders to "lift each of us above his cell in the labyrinth of learning in order that he may see the entire structure as if from above, where each separate part loses its comfortable separateness."

The American Academy of Arts & Sciences, like its journal, brings together distinguished individuals from every field of human endeavor. It was chartered in 1780 as a forum "to cultivate every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honour, dignity, and happiness of a free, independent, and virtuous people." Now in its third century, the Academy, with its more than four thousand elected members, continues to provide intellectual leadership to meet the critical challenges facing our world.

Foreword

Long committed to supporting intellectual life in the nation, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at the beginning of the new century decided to focus new effort on fostering the intellectual development of the next generation of scholars. Accordingly, in 2002 the Visiting Scholars Program began, resulting from the efforts of Chief Executive Officer Leslie Berlowitz. At the beginning, the chancellors or presidents of nine universities and colleges supported the enterprise; that number has now grown to fifty-two. Administrators of these institutions realize, as do concerned scholars at the Academy, the paucity of available resources to sustain the research of those holding new PhDs, who suffer either from academic unemployment or from demanding non-tenured assistant professorships. Several foundations have also provided generous assistance. The accomplishments of the first seven classes of Scholars since their fellowships suggest how valuable their year at the Academy was to them. They have published numerous books, and all of them have achieved appropriate academic or research appointments.

The present issue of *Dædalus* introduces the work of early-career scholars to a wider audience. Their essays suggest the broad range of interests among their generation. They write of the present and of the past, of problems in public health education and of Civil War atrocities. They take up theoretical issues (for example, "Anti-Intellectualism as Romantic Discourse") and practical

ones ("Rebalancing American Foreign Policy"); vast concerns ("What Does It Mean to Be an American?") and carefully limited ones ("The Rise and Fall of New Left Urbanism"). Their work derives from several academic disciplines, including anthropology, philosophy, political science, and various forms of history. Perhaps the most appealing aspect of their contributions is the consistently high level of engagement they demonstrate.

One index of the scholars' engagement is the ambition of their enterprises. Whether they deal with policy questions or with more purely academic concerns, they take a large view of their subjects, pondering the implications of what they're doing. They write responsibly, supporting their arguments with solid information. The essays remind us of what academic rigor can bring to matters of social policy; they illustrate the value of historical perspective on current issues; at their best, they suggest the sheer excitement of thought. They dramatize the promise of a new academic generation.

This issue of *Dædalus* also recognizes five emerging poets of exceptional promise and distinguished achievement. All are recipients of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences's Poetry Prize, established to honor the memory of longtime Academy Fellow May Sarton, a poet, novelist, and teacher who during her career encouraged the work of young poets. The prizewinners were selected by a group of prominent American poets, all Fellows of the Academy: Paul Muldoon, Carl Phillips, Charles Simic, C. D. Wright, and Adam Zagajewski.

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Torchlight parades for the television age : the presidential debates as political ritual

During the 2008 vice presidential debate, Alaska Governor Sarah Palin was pressed by her Democratic rival, Delaware Senator Joe Biden, and moderator Gwen Ifill to reply to a question she had previously ignored. The chipper Palin, who thrived on the perception of being persecuted, demurred. "I may not answer the questions that either the moderator or you want to hear," she parried, "but I'm going to talk straight to the American people."[1]

For this statement, Palin suffered not only rebuke, but ridicule. Flaunting her intent to duck a question amounted to a failure of manners. Part of the performance of a presidential (or vice presidential) debate, after all, consists of following certain conventions. One is that candidates are supposed to act as if they are there to report to the public their ticket's positions on prominent policy issues, thereby helping voters figure out which party better matches their own preferences. According to this logic, Palin's sin lay not in her evasion of the question – a common enough occurrence in the debates – but in her unabashed admission of the evasion. If a gaffe, in the journalist Michael Kinsley's formulation, is when a politician

tells the truth, Palin told the truth without even the customary inadvertence.[2]

Kinsley's axiom, quoted often during the gaffe-ridden 2008 campaign, remains in currency because it highlights the power of the unspoken and sometimes unrecognized assumptions that underpin our politics. These assumptions aren't always true or even justifiable. But the public, particularly those in the news media who shape our discourse, has a stake in maintaining them. They serve a useful purpose.

An underlying premise of the discourse about the presidential debates is that they exist to inform viewers, who watch them with open minds to learn about the candidates and decide how to vote. In other words, grandiose as it may sound, our culture assigns the debates a vital democratic role : democratic theory holds that effective self-government depends on an informed citizenry, and the debates, more than any other vehicle, are supposed to teach voters what they still need to know about the candidates in the fall of a presidential election season. Accordingly, we eagerly anticipate these contests as potential turning points for the campaigns, the only scheduled events that might by design win or lose votes for one candidate or the other overnight.

Journalists invariably speak of them as a rare chance for those all-important undecided voters to make up their endlessly wavering minds. In recent years networks have even convened focus groups of the vacillators on whose fleeting impressions the nation hinges, interviewing them on air after each clash to see if they were moved to reach any decisions that might collectively alter a campaign's outcome.

Of course, given the evasions, boilerplate, scripted jokes, and attention to stagecraft that routinely permeate the debates, it's hard to maintain that they fulfill this purpose of informing the independent-minded viewer. On the contrary, they seem to fail at this task often enough to earn them unremitting disparagement from the same pundits who hold them to such lofty standards. Ever since the first televised presidential contests, the 1960 "Great Debates" between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon, critics have complained that the spectacles are not debates at all, but well-choreographed joint press conferences – marred, as *The New York Times* editorialized in 1976, by "their show-business nature; their heavy reliance on rehearsal and grooming by professional image-makers; the concern for appearance over substance." The *Times* noted, "The 1976 presidential debates resemble the Lincoln-Douglas debates, to which they are inevitably compared, as much as a town meeting resembles – well, a television spectacular."[3]

Nothing encapsulates the view of the debates as superficial piffle better than the inevitable – and inevitably invidious – contrasts with those legendary Illinois Senate debates. Journalists have no corner on these glib comparisons. In *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, the late, unamused media critic Neil Postman railed against the Kennedy-Nixon contests as a pale imitation of Lincoln-Douglas. The Kennedy-Nixon debates, he said, marked a passage from "the Age of Exposition" to "the Age of Show Business." The hours-long, touring contests between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas in the fall of 1858 exhibited "a kind of oratory that may be described as literary," with "a semantic, paraphrasable, propositional content," Postman continued, while the four Nixon-Kennedy clashes were empty charades made for television, which "speaks in only one persistent voice – the voice of entertainment."[4]

Please, Mr. Postman. Scholars should know better than to traffic in such nostalgia. The Lincoln-Douglas contests provided plenty of entertainment, too, along with double-talk, cheap shots, pandering, and no small concern with appearances. "There is much to learn from the Lincoln-Douglas debates about the politics of the 1850s," Michael Schudson has written, "but there are no lessons to 'apply' to our own time, certainly not in the form of a rebuke to a purportedly diminished political culture."[5] Differences between the two sets of debates are real, but to judge the change as only decline is to make a moral judgment, not a historical one.

In short, both the celebrations of the debates as a fount of insight into the candidates' fitness to govern and the denigrations of their lifelessness and theatricality miss the point. Both rest on flawed assumptions about what the debates are there to do. Yet if we try instead to conceive of the debates' role and purpose differently, we may perhaps appreciate the democratic function that they *do* perform: not the provision of vital data to blank-slate voters seeking to form a considered judgment about the candidates, but rather the stimulation and engagement of broader public

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interest in politics. This contribution, while more modest than the grand claims frequently made on the debates' behalf, nonetheless goes some way toward renewing voters' political commitments and enriching democracy.

The discourse about the democratic promise of the debates dates back to the Kennedy-Nixon contests. Since 1948, when Tom Dewey of New York and Harold Stassen of Minnesota squared off for an hour in pursuit of the Republican nomination, presidential primary contenders had occasionally taken to jousting over the radio. But for both political and legal reasons – mainly the fear that federal equal-time regulations would require the inclusion of all manner of fringe candidates in a prime-time free-for-all – televised general-election debates remained a dream. Only after the quiz show scandals of the late 1950s did the calculus change. With the networks' reputations suffering, a dose of high-minded public interest programming suddenly seemed like the perfect tonic. Congress suspended the nettlesome equal-time clause of the 1934 Communications Act, and the networks set about conceiving television programs much like the very quiz shows that they sought to displace. Like the Lincoln-Douglas contests, their entertainment value was part of the draw from the first.

Not wishing to be seen as reducing public affairs to the level of Milton Berle, network spokesmen took pains to portray the debates as something more than a commercial enterprise : as a civic boon, a cure for an ailing democracy. Coming at a time when Americans were grappling with a perceived sense of inauthenticity in politics, these arguments were not insincere. For much of the twentieth century, the public had grown anxious that modernity was weakening democracy. A series of changes, including the astounding growth of the federal government, America's rise to global leadership, the decline of parties, and the Progressive Era's efforts to clean up politics, combined to make government a more important force in people's lives, but at the same time a more distant one as well. As Jürgen Habermas put it in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, citizens' "contact with the state [now came to] occur…in the rooms and anterooms of the bureaucracy," decidedly impersonal venues. Meanwhile, new media of mass communication – film, radio, later television – gave audiences an illusion of familiarity with national political figures that print could not, even as they encouraged the feeling that politics was playing out in a theatrical display on a faraway stage, remote from their own lives and concerns. The emerging political culture seemed to downgrade Habermas's celebrated "rational-critical discourse" that he posited was central to the Enlightenment conception of democracy.[6]

The rhetoric surrounding the televised debates – echoing the rhetoric surrounding television's coverage of the national party conventions and several other aspects of presidential politics – suggested that the new medium could restore a form of town-hall democracy in an impersonal age of mass media. Televised debates would bring an intimacy back to politics. The candidates would be in everyone's living rooms for sixty minutes, on four separate occasions, talking plainly and directly to the citizenry. Voters could use their autonomous intelligence in evaluating the two aspirants for the leadership of the free world.

And yet if a restoration was promised, television – that symbol of modern times – was not to be effaced. It was cast as the

hero, not the villain, of the civic revival story. CBS President Frank Stanton argued that the televised debates were tailor-made for the mass-media age. In the nineteenth century, he noted, large throngs turned out at campaign events such as torchlight parades and mass rallies; amid alcohol, music, and colorful costumes, they would feed off one another's partisan passions. Writing in 1960, just after the Kennedy-Nixon debates, Stanton dismissed those old-style gatherings as anachronistic, as calculated, in his words, "not to inform, or to create an atmosphere conducive to the appraisal of information, but to whip up attitudes capable of overcoming any temptation to judiciousness." By his own day, he said, America could no longer "afford the blind, uncritical automatic support of one man against another, whatever his insight, his judgment, or his qualities of leadership." The televised debates – an updated, twentieth-century substitute for the nineteenth-century outdoor spectacles – would treat voters as independent of mind, enlightening them about the candidates' stands and enabling them to weigh the issues with the care they deserved. Modern democracy demanded no less.[7]

Briefs like Stanton's set the standards by which the debates would be judged. More often than not, alas, they were judged as falling short. Rather than educating voters about the key differences between the candidates, went the critique, the TV extravaganzas stressed shallow qualities such as looks and speaking style, while allowing the presidential aspirants to avoid precisely the kind of substantive back-and-forth that the event was meant to foster. This critique of the debates as plotted and scripted, as valuing image over sub-

stance, implied that they weren't meeting their foremost obligation. Voters were instead being treated to a pageant of skilled performances, clever sound bites, prefabricated statements from stump speeches, and deft equivocations that aimed not to help voters assess the candidates' relative positions on the issues, but simply to win them over by strength of charm, wit, polish, misinformation, and spin. Even the jokes that occasionally brought down the house were known to have been devised in advance by a sharp wordsmith, with the candidate charged merely with finding the opportune moments to deploy them. This criticism of the debates was the flip side of the hope that they would restore a rational-critical discourse. It was the fear that they reinforced an irrational, uncritical discourse.

Exhibit A in the case for the debates' alleged substancelessness was the plain fact of Kennedy's victory. That mythology is so well-known that it scarcely bears repeating. With TV sets now in nine of ten American homes, an estimated seventy million people watched Kennedy and Nixon square off on September 26. Viewers saw a sharp contrast: Kennedy, standing calmly in a dark suit, projected unflappability. Handsome, relaxed, he answered questions crisply, snuffing out any doubts that he might be too callow for the job. Nixon, recovering from a knee infection and a cold, looked terrible. Sweat streaked the pancake makeup he had applied to his five-o'clock shadow, and his gray suit blended in with the walls. Afterward, the press, as if by unanimous consent, blamed Nixon's appearance for his loss. "Fire the make-up man," Nixon's aide Herb Klein was told. "Everybody in this part of the country thinks Nixon is sick. Three doctors agreed he looked as if he had just suffered a coronary."[8]

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There is no doubt that Kennedy looked better. There is also little doubt that debates helped him. Kennedy's pollster Lou Harris wrote a memo after the debate noting that the senator had opened up a 48 to 43 percent lead in his latest survey, "the first time that either candidate has been able to show the other open water. This is almost wholly the result of the Monday night debate," Harris asserted.[9] Other public polls showed a similar trend.

What *is* open to doubt is whether Kennedy's victory owed as much to a purely visual superiority to Nixon as is commonly thought. No empirical research directly supports the claim. The main piece of evidence supposedly buttressing it is the widespread notion that radio listeners believed Nixon had won. But that assertion is dubious. The historian-journalist Teddy White probably deserves the blame for etching it in the accounts of the debates. In his *Making of the President, 1960*, the urtext for chroniclers of the Great Debates, White wrote, "Those who heard the debates on radio, according to sample surveys" – surveys that White neither specified nor footnoted – "believed that the two candidates came off almost equal" (but not, it should be added, that Nixon won). "Yet every survey of those who watched the debates on television," White added – again, providing no details – suggested that Nixon had done poorly. "It was the picture image that had done it." Even more vaguely, the syndicated columnist Ralph McGill said that a sampling of "a number of people" he spoke to who listened on radio "unanimously thought Mr. Nixon had the better of it." Earl Mazo of the *New York Herald Tribune* recorded a similar anecdotal impression. But only one formal survey, by a Philadelphia market research firm, supports the claim of Nixon's radio superiority, and its methods have been called into question.[10]

Equally dubious is the idea that the debates gave short shrift to "substance," at least if measured by discussion of the venerated "issues." For all the accusations that the candidates postured excessively, or that TV focused too much on smiles and stubble, a countervailing line of critique held something like the opposite: not that the debates were utterly vapid, but that the rapid-fire, information-rich answers prevented viewers from taking some kind of broader measure of the men. "Not even a trained political observer," noted the journalist Douglass Cater, who moderated one debate, "could keep up with the cross fire of fact and counterfact, of the rapid references to Rockefeller Reports, Lehman amendments, prestige analyses, GNP and a potpourri of other so-called facts. Or was the knack of merely seeming well-informed what counted with the viewer?" Public opinion expert Samuel Lubell agreed, citing voters he interviewed who "tried to make sense of the arguments of the candidates 'but the more we listened, the more confused we got.'"[11]

What matters here isn't so much whether the debates really did exalt mere "image" as the more basic fact that such a belief took hold and endured. Perhaps the most lasting articulation of this belief came from the historian Daniel Boorstin in his now-classic 1961 work *The Image*. "[M]ore important than what we think of the presidential candidate," Boorstin argued, bemoaning the rise of television and media manipulation in politics, "is what we think of his 'public image.'" The Kennedy-Nixon debates, he said, offered "specious" drama that did nothing to convey "which participant was better qualified for the presidency."

They raised the peripheral matters of lighting, makeup, and Nixon's five-o'clock shadow to prominence while "reducing great national issues to trivial dimensions" and squandering "this greatest opportunity in American history to educate the voters."

Boorstin also elaborated what he saw as the dangers of the rise of this image culture: nothing less than the demise of representative government. Hearkening back to Lincoln, he said that the maxim "you can't fool all of the people all of the time" was "the foundation-belief of American democracy." It implied, first, that the citizenry can distinguish "between sham and reality," and, second, "that if offered a choice between a simple truth and a contrived image, they will prefer the truth." But in the face of pseudo-events like the Great Debates, Boorstin argued, this assertion no longer held. The cornerstone of the American temple was shaky.[12]

It took sixteen years for the stars to align to permit another round of general-election debates. In 1976, Jimmy Carter, a relatively unknown former governor, needed the debates even more badly than Kennedy had in 1960, to prove that he had presidential stature. And whereas previous incumbents, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, had concluded that going mano a mano could only elevate their rivals, Gerald Ford, having been elected to neither the presidency nor the vice presidency, concluded that he, too, needed to submit himself to a vetting of sorts by the public.

The 1976 debates are remembered far less well than the 1960 contests. Two episodes above all endure in popular memory. One is the audio failure that occurred near the end of the first match-up, on September 23, resulting in an awkward twenty-seven-minute silence in which the candidates stood still like mannequins. The other is Ford's statement in the second encounter that Eastern Europe was not under Soviet domination. Both moments exposed the fallacy of thinking about the debates as simply the candidates' unmediated statements and performances during the broadcasts proper. Rather, it came to be recognized, those performances belonged to a larger context that included how the candidates and the race were portrayed beforehand; how the participating journalists acted during the debate; and the whole post-debate battle for interpretation. "Starting with the Ford-Carter matches," Alan Schroeder, a scholar of presidential debates, has written, "a live debate has come to represent only the centerpiece of the larger media marathon that begins weeks before airtime and ends well after the program fades to black."[13]

In retrospect, the audio failure seems the more remarkable of the two incidents. At 10:51 p.m. Eastern time, as Carter was speaking, a technical failure crippled the sound system. In the interim, no one knew what to do. The moderator, Edwin Newman, suggested that the candidates sit down, but they didn't. Nor did they approach each other to chat informally. Instead they stood rigidly and silently at their respective podiums. This spontaneous mutual non-aggression pact became an emperor-has-no-clothes moment, underscoring the fear of spontaneity that had infused the debates. As much as anything, it revived the thread of criticism that had greeted the Kennedy-Nixon contests: that they were not real debates, requiring quick-wittedness and an active intelligence, but joint press conferences, packaged and rehearsed, short on the substance they were supposed to deliver. The si-

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lence, wrote the editors of *The New Republic*, "was *prima facie* evidence, if any were needed, that the debates are not a news event merely available for coverage by the networks; rather they are productions staged for their benefit and even, despite their loud grumbling, to their specifications." As a result, the magazine complained, no real give-and-take occurred; no "inspiring visions" were articulated, only talking points. "From Mr. Ford's first response . . . to Carter's last, the candidates delivered what they were programmed to deliver."[14]

   Comments like these about the debates, and those from *The New York Times* cited earlier, were widespread, and they recurred like clockwork in the following years. The laments about image superseding substance were fueled, moreover, by a new attention to the debates' backstage maneuverings. Candidates began to hold practice debates, with aides and other supporters playing the roles of the opposing candidates, and the press started reporting on these preparations with clear delight. Journalists got excited, too, when in 1983 Laurence Barrett, a *Time* magazine reporter, disclosed in a book that Ronald Reagan's campaign had gotten hold of Jimmy Carter's briefing book before one of their 1980 debates.[15] Though scandalous as a clear-cut violation of the norms of fair play, the subterfuge also caused discomfort for another reason: like the proliferating reports about debate preparation, "debate-gate" underscored the practiced nature of the performances and further dispelled any illusion of spontaneity surrounding them.

As viewers figured out that the debates didn't really begin when the program itself came on TV, they also came to realize that the debates didn't end with the candidates' closing statements either.

The fallout from Ford's remarks about Eastern Europe showed, more than anything else, the importance of the post-debate instant analysis and spin. As a substantive matter, the president's comments hadn't been terribly confusing or controversial. In context, his intent was clear enough – a desire not to write off Eastern Europeans' aspirations for freedom from Soviet influence – and, according to polling, most viewers didn't deem them an error. Some surveys taken that night even showed a plurality of respondents believing that Ford had outperformed Carter. The incident mattered, however, as an illustration of how the debates burst the time limits of the actual broadcast. Despite the public's indifference to Ford's comments, television and newspaper pundits seized on them as if he had made a horrendous blunder. At his press conference the next day, the first eleven questions dealt with the purported gaffe. Carter harped on it in his own appearances. Soon polls showed that the public had adopted the journalists' view. "I thought that Ford had won. But the papers say it was Carter. So it must be Carter," one voter was quoted as saying – ironically, maybe, but not without reinforcing the point about the importance of post-debate commentary.[16]

   Post-debate spin was mostly new in 1976. In 1960, neither party had tried to shape anyone's verdicts about the debates. Both camps simply said their men had done well, but their tone was restrained and not opportunistic. "Some Kennedy aides, asking not to be quoted, said they felt their candidate had scored more points and over-all had made the best impression," *The New York Times* noted.[17] Kennedy did use unflattering clips of Nixon sweating and scowling in a television advertisement, but that move was aimed at taking advantage

of an already-clear public verdict, not at influencing the verdict.

By 1976, the candidates' handlers had gotten cannier. After the first vice presidential debate that year, between Bob Dole and Walter Mondale, the Republican ticket conscripted three Dole supporters – his wife Elizabeth, Texas Governor John Connally, and Vice President Nelson Rockefeller – to praise Dole's performance; each appeared on each of the three TV networks. The practice grew apace. By 1988, journalists were referring to "Spin Alley," a corridor of the debate site where staffers argued shamelessly why their man had prevailed, whether they believed it or not.[18] The candid acknowledgment of "Spin Alley" dispensed with the pretense that the debate analysts were offering objective or even sincere analysis. Reporters knew they were getting a deliberately partisan take, yet they quoted their sources anyway and happily passed it all on to their audiences with the stark disclaimer that it was all "spin" for the home viewer to sort out. Not only the journalists and the spinners, but the audiences, too, were presumed to agree that what mattered as much as the debate performances was the subsequent effort to shape perceptions of the outcome and of the candidates.

Given this incessant attention to the staging and spinning of the debates, complaints about their hyperscripted character multiplied. In 1988, for example, *New York Times* columnist A. M. Rosenthal raged about the vapidity of the vice presidential match between Democrat Lloyd Bentsen and Republican Dan Quayle. "It was not a debate," Rosenthal insisted. "It was not even a good news conference. It was a staged, manipulated, choreographed performance, stilted and artificial. At the end the most important question remained unanswered." Like so many others, Rosenthal (who, it should be said, has been described as writing like Peter Finch's anchorman in *Network*, "as if he were shouting from the fire escape") saw the debate as emblematic of politics in the age of TV and mass media. The entire campaign, Rosenthal said, took place not "between two sets of candidates but opposing teams of political packagers, script writers, handlers, spinners, and sound-bite artists." Two years later, no less a personage than Walter Cronkite, in delivering (fittingly) the first annual Theodore White lecture at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, made a similar pronouncement. "The debates are part of the unconscionable fraud that our political campaigns have become," he said. "Substance is to be avoided if possible. Image is to be maximized."[19]

Even as it became a cliché to decry the debates' failure to carry out their appointed democratic function, however, there remained a concurrent strain of commentary that regarded the debates as a useful exercise in public education. Though not dominant, this strain of commentary wasn't hard to find either.

In *The Making of the President, 1960*, White had spoken of television as having the properties of an X-ray, magically revealing a politician's inner self.[20] Though ridiculous as a scientific proposition, this was a felicitous metaphor, and one convenient for those who wished not to take too dim a view of the modern political TV dramas like the debates. Much like photographs are often assumed (wrongly) to capture "reality" as words cannot, the X-ray view of TV imagined the tube as a transparent medium: a medium that doesn't mediate. Implicit, too, in this notion was a trust in the judgment of ordinary citizens, a reluctance to part

with the Enlightenment faith in human reason. At the end of the day, went this argument, people could put aside the spin and stagecraft and arrive at sound judgments.

Remarkably, this determination to vindicate the TV debates often coexisted snugly alongside the sharp criticisms. In the same 1976 editorial in which it spent six paragraphs ruing the Ford-Carter debates as a poor progeny of Lincoln-Douglas, *The New York Times* concluded, without a shred of evidence, "Character, integrity, compassion, intelligence – or lack of them – do have a way of showing through." In the same vein, Joe Duffey, an adviser that year to Jimmy Carter, told the *Times* in a separate news article : "Character is what I think is finally displayed. It's either there or it isn't, and television is a great revealer."[21]

In 1980, Daniel Henninger, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, deepened the argument on behalf of the debates' intrinsic value. He praised the opportunity to see Carter and Reagan relatively unfiltered, speaking live and without a script (or at least not a literal script). "Television, in formats like Tuesday's debate, is nicely suited to passing democratic judgment in this country," Henninger noted. "It provides unimpeded and thorough access to the ideas and opinions of men and women in public life." Compared to the evening news, in which "images rush by [and] the on-camera reporter intrudes, pressing his opinion, flattening mine," the debates did indeed provide a rare opportunity to take the measure of two men ; one could ignore the pre- and post-debate hullaballoo and fall back on one's own impressions of the candidates going head to head.

From a slightly different angle, the political analyst Jeff Greenfield also sang the praises of debates when he wrote of the 1988 match-ups between George

Bush and Michael Dukakis. Greenfield also praised the contests as revealing, though he departed from Henninger in that he saluted the role of the questioning journalists as a beneficial ingredient in the mix. "The much-maligned format produced the most significant glimpses we have had into the thinking and character of the candidates since the general-election campaign began on Labor Day," he wrote. Suggesting that the journalist-interrogators made the format more illuminating than a true Lincoln-Douglas encounter would have been, Greenfield said that the candidates' responses to questions about criminal penalties for abortionists and Dukakis's bloodless demeanor gave viewers useful data for forming judgments. In contrast, letting the candidates say whatever they pleased would have given us "programmatic formulations of speechwriters such as Peggy Noonan and Robert Shrum."[22]

The pro-debate argument – that the contests elicit some important qualities in the candidates – is not wholly wishful. Some viewers certainly glean from them some information that they find useful. But they do so mainly because most of these viewers don't follow political affairs as intensively as journalists or news buffs, and as a result they learn elementary information about a candidate – that he supports universal health care or a balanced budget, for example – for the first time. These viewers don't mind that the candidates are regurgitating phrases they've used umpteen times before ; the phrases are new to them. It shouldn't be surprising that voters claim to find the debates helpful in deciding how to vote.

But that doesn't vindicate the debates. That debates may serve as a convenient source of easily discoverable news hardly justifies their existence. Newspaper and magazine articles, TV news seg-

ments, and countless other journalistic outlets provide the same information, and much more; it's just that many debate viewers don't pay much heed to those sources. In 2008, after the second encounter between Barack Obama and John McCain, reporters for National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* interviewed undecided voters. "After watching these debates, I've become more undecided," said a woman named Martinique Chavez. "I think that I need to wait till another debate and see and learn more of the facts." But of course Ms. Chavez did not have to wait for anything to learn more facts. She could have easily turned to a huge trove of newspaper and magazine articles, or the candidates' comprehensive websites, for far more detail than she could ever get in ninety minutes of TV.[23]

Nor does the fact that the debates sometimes sway dithering voters justify the conclusion that these voters are acting as democratic theory prescribes. On the contrary, if they're ignorant about the candidates going in, they're more likely to be seduced by clever or disingenuous statements in the debates – or by a winning smile, poised delivery, or snappy one-liners hatched weeks earlier. Anyone who paid attention to the focus groups convened by the networks to watch the 2000 debates between George W. Bush and Al Gore had to come away at least a bit uneasy about the public's capacity for critical thinking. On CBS, one Sandra Harsh said she was influenced by what she saw. "I was very impressed with Bush's specifics, his points of – of his program, what he planned to do," she said. "I like – I liked the line about trusting people, not the federal government. I liked his format for national health care. I – I think he showed himself as the superior candidate."[24] Not to be too harsh

on Sandra, but if viewers who turned on the debate that night had never before heard Bush recite his mantra about trusting the people, not the government, or came away thinking that he would implement a national health-care plan, it should give us pause about the debates' value in helping undecideds decide.

It's comforting to think that the debates disclose telling qualities about a candidate, whether it be Dukakis's sangfroid in 1988, Bush's indifference to people's struggles when the camera caught him looking at his watch in 1992, or Gore's superciliousness when he was roasted for high-decibel sighing in 2000. And surely it's proper for voters to consider the candidates' personal qualities, even superficial ones, alongside their records and their stands. All viewers have subjective criteria of what kind of politicians they like and dislike, and watching the candidates in a debate can help us gauge our own comfort level with them as television presences. But whether the specific personal traits on view in the debates should matter to the same degree that they're exhibited in a single performance or commented upon by the talking heads is totally speculative and highly dubious. Ultimately, the idea that debates give people the information they need to make a sound choice – whether about issues or about personal qualities – has to be seen largely as the expression of a wish. It may be true sometimes, but we don't have positive grounds for believing it to be true, and we have reason to doubt it as well.

Still, if the debates can't be said to serve the autonomous modern citizen, coolly assessing the candidates on the issues, they shouldn't be disdained entirely either. For while the debates have obvious flaws and could certainly be improved, the ultimate problem isn't the

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debates themselves; it's the assumptions we take to them – specifically the idea that their value resides in the information they supply.

The late communications scholar James Carey once proposed a distinction between what he called a transmission view of communication and what he called a ritual view. The transmission view is the one with which most of us usually operate. It holds that the purpose of communication – of which presidential debates are of course one form – is to impart information. It hardly needs more elaboration than that. The ritual view, in contrast, is, according to Carey, "a minor thread in our national thought." On this view, he wrote, communication is "directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs."[25]

It may make sense to conceive of the presidential debates as rituals rather than as transmitters of information. They are, after all, rites like holidays or parades, which gain meaning from the way they figure in our daily experiences. They may not educate, but they evoke feelings, bolster sentiments, and provoke action. Debates bring pleasure to following campaigns. They bind us together socially with our compatriots. They can even trigger political involvement. In this context, Frank Stanton – and indeed all of us – have had it backward: the debates matter not because they differ from the rallies and torchlight parades of bygone times, but because they *resemble* them.

Thinking of a debate as a ritual, more than as a source of information, also helps explain certain riddles. Why, for example, have presidential candidates since 1976 never declined to participate?

One possibility is the fear that the naysayer would be called a coward, and it is true that in fall 1992 the elder George Bush was drawn into televised arguments on the campaign trail with a man dressed as a large fowl who taunted "Chicken George" for shrinking from debates with Bill Clinton. But a candidate ahead in the polls could easily choose to weather such taunts if the advantages seemed great enough, or to demonstrate courage in another way. The harder obstacle to overcome seems to be that declining to spar would now be seen as neglecting a civic duty – like failing to put your hand on your heart at the playing of the national anthem or not showing up for the president's State of the Union address. Debates draw strength from their status as important rituals.

Or consider another riddle: if the debates exist to inform the undecided, why do so many viewers tune in who already have their minds made up? The transmission model makes these viewers superfluous. Yet for many such people, watching the debates is a beloved pastime. Admittedly, I'm something of a political junkie, but I often find myself over at a friend's apartment watching the encounters with a small group, all of us cheering on our candidate. The act of participating in such a shared experience renews our political commitment and excitement. And this is an old tradition. There were debate-watching parties in Democratic and Republican clubs back in September 1960; Jackie Kennedy hosted one in Hyannisport, where Archibald Cox, Arthur Schlesinger, and assorted politicians, family members, and journalists gathered over coffee and pastries to watch the tanned and polished JFK on a rented sixteen-inch portable TV set.

Even for those who are genuinely un-decided, the debates may perform this kind of ritual function, too. Starting in 1992, the National Communication Association and the Commission on Presidential Debates set up a project called Debate Watch to bring together citizens in local communities to watch and discuss the contests. Although the results are too inconclusive to allow for confident generalizations, they seem to suggest that joining in these colloquies spurred people to vote on Election Day. At the least, they appeared, as one scholar of the project noted, to "engage voters in the ideas, perspectives, and concerns of others in their communities." According to *The New York Times*, "participants lauded the sheer experience of post-debate discussion as much as the debates, bonding like jurors with other panel members and compounding their appetite for politics." Diana Carlin, a scholar involved with the effort, declared, "This is creating a sort of civic discourse that I don't think takes place in this country" – a claim that might be hyperbolic but nonetheless hints at some ground-level value derived from the contests.[26]

Evidence that the debates achieved this less lofty but more realistic goal dates back to 1960. "The TV medium in the past has been legitimately criticized for injecting too much show business into areas where it is not appropri-

ate," wrote *New York Times* television critic Jack Gould after the first Kennedy-Nixon debate. "But last night the networks demonstrated the civic usefulness of the broadcasting media." A few days later he built on his observation. "Overnight, as it were," he wrote, "there was born a new interest in the campaign that earlier had been productive only of coast-to-coast somnolence." Even Teddy White agreed that the debates managed to "generalize this tribal sense of participation … for the salient fact of the great TV debates is not what the two candidates said, nor how they behaved, but how many of the candidates' fellow Americans gave up their evening hours to ponder the choice between the two."[27]

The choreography and sound bites that constitute the presidential debates should be recognized as unreliable and inadequate methods for casual voters to get the facts about the nominees. But the experience of watching debates, perhaps in groups, or in discussing them "the next morning," as Gould wrote, "in kitchen, office, supermarket and commuter train" has value.[28] In an age of desiccated politics, when too many citizens feel adrift and overburdened in trying to judge complex policy issues for themselves, this experience serves, in some quiet way, to thicken our commitments to political life.

ENDNOTES

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Health media & global inequalities

Since its emergence in the nineteenth century, public health has primarily been the charge of nation-states acting to maintain the health of populations.[1] In addition to taking steps to prevent disease, governments deploy the rhetoric of health and "hygiene" to police the behavior and movements of immigrants and colonial subjects.[2] Yet the mobility of microbes that circulate "through air travel, commerce, and the circuits of capital"[3] has given rise to transnational institutions such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, which track disease vulnerability worldwide and pursue improvement in the health of world populations. How is the project of global health bound up with the uneven exchanges of globalization,[4] and how does it attempt to produce "healthy" subjectivities across lines of race, gender, class, language, and citizenship?

Public service campaigns deploy mass media to frame health as the responsibility of individuals and communities. From instructing parents to have their children vaccinated to warning against the risks of illegal drugs, media campaigns provide states and other agents with a means to shape citizens' health behaviors. This "hypodermic" model of education, as media studies scholars term it, presumes that information can be "injected" into passive audiences to produce desired changes in attitude or behavior.[5]

Not only the content, but also the narrative and aesthetic features of health communications mediate and impact their reception. These features, in fact, "create a range of publics"[6] and resist association with any idea of a universal "public" to be educated. Public health campaigns, therefore, demand interdisciplinary analysis that combines textual interpretation with research that addresses local and transnational forces that affect the health of populations. We know that discourses about health shape and direct people's experiences of embodiment and subjectivity, their perceptions of risk, and their health behaviors; so how do educational campaigns that intend to transmit health information across national boundaries affect these experiences? What kinds of subjectivity are called forth when health information travels?

While epidemiological data confirm the quantitative aspects of global disparities in health, mass-mediated health discourses allow us to study the cultural

and political dynamics of these disparities. Two such discourses – *Bodies … the Exhibition*, which displays anatomical specimens produced in China for consumption in wealthy first-world nations, and a comic book produced by international health and human rights agencies to raise HIV/AIDS awareness among young people in the developing world – illustrate the role of global inequality in shaping the production and consumption of health messages. Both are international public health communications complicated by the fact that their materials have originated in locations far removed from the sites of their consumption. *Bodies … the Exhibition* both leverages and conceals the economic inequalities and health disparities between its sites of production and consumption; the HIV/AIDS comic book campaign attempts to redress global health disparities, but ultimately avoids engaging questions of inequality. These representations of health, bodies, and human rights circulate between developed and underdeveloped nations, overemphasizing universal human qualities and neglecting the critical role of economic and social vulnerability in distributing health disparities unevenly around the globe.

*B*odies *… the Exhibition* profits from global inequalities, which are disguised through images of anatomical universalism.[7] A controversial and well-attended international exhibition of chemically preserved, "plastinated" corpses, *Bodies* has drawn criticism from human rights groups as well as experts on health education. Setting aside questions about the exhibit's self-designation as a resource for public education, *Bodies* nonetheless conveys a tremendous amount of information regarding cultural constructions of health, selfhood, and the body to an audience that numbers in the millions. *Bodies* has been on tour since 2005, and is currently on view in nine international cities, including New York, Madrid, Vienna, Budapest, Las Vegas, and Copenhagen. Addressed to middle- and upper-class visitors (the price of admission in New York, for example, is $27.50), the exhibition's didactic texts privilege voluntary health behaviors. A closer look at the exhibition's sourcing of its specimens, however, shows that this voluntaristic model – which encourages individuals to take responsibility for their own healthy "lifestyle" – at once requires and conceals global disparities in environmental toxicity, economic resources, and availability of health care.

Although exhibitions of preserved bodies have proven tremendously lucrative, their curators often appropriate the rhetoric of "public health" to legitimize the private, for-profit trafficking of corpses. *Bodies* couches its display of preserved corpses in a populist claim: that specimens should serve not only the medical establishment and its educational apparatus, but also the edification of the public at large. In the words of Gunther von Hagens, inventor of the "plastination" process, the public display of dissected cadavers attempts to "democratize anatomy."[8]

While the gallery displays of *Bodies* borrow from the cool, distancing representational techniques of science museums and anatomy textbooks, their rhetoric also relies on psychological processes of identification. "With educational relevance for all ages," *Bodies* advertises, "this exhibition of real human specimens immerses visitors in the complexities of the human body, telling us the amazing story of ourselves with reverence and understanding."[9] *Bodies* orchestrates the "story

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of ourselves" through visual and textual strategies of "immersion" that cue visitors to identify both with idealized bodies and with the social, economic, and technological forces that underwrite their display.

At the entrance to *Bodies* in New York, an inscription announces, "To see is to know." Yet many of the bodies on display seem posed for theatrical effect rather than anatomical instruction. While individual galleries include glass cases filled with body parts – a spinal column, a shoulder joint, a smoker's lung – most also include one or two elaborately posed bodies designed to exemplify the beauty and complexity of the human form while also illustrating the interdependence of corporeal systems. These idealized, partially dissected bodies are posed on pedestals as athletes handling footballs and basketballs to exhibit the movement of joints and the interdependence of skeletal muscles, or as a musical conductor wielding a baton to illustrate the workings of the nervous system.

Bodies actively encourages viewers to recognize themselves in the plastinated corpses on display, which are rendered superficially universal by the removal of their skin and the insertion of artificial blue eyeballs. The placards that accompany individual bodies ask viewers to try moving their own body parts to feel the muscles, joints, and cartilage they are looking at: "Bend an ear toward your face and notice how it instantly regains its shape." Thus *Bodies* is not only an anatomy lesson, it is also a lesson in self-recognition in which viewers learn to grasp, manipulate, and manage their own bodies. As John Zeller, the exhibition's co-curator, puts it when describing the bodies' "approachable" appearance, "You're seeing this mirror image of yourself."[10]

Compared with the carefully labeled body fragments displayed under glass, the freestanding bodies that comprise the main attraction convey only a modicum of anatomical knowledge, and an excess of theatrical display. Poised to pitch a baseball or conduct a symphony, they are exemplary specimens of athleticism and self-care. Through them, the exhibition instills a desire to live what Michel Foucault calls a "medically informed life," by endorsing normative health behaviors.[11] For example, a Plexiglas box located near displays featuring diseased tissues is accompanied by a placard suggesting that the viewer "Leave your cigarettes here and stop smoking now!" Elsewhere, visitors observing a body posed as a basketball player are advised to "do your sit-ups." More broadly, the exhibition aims to shape visitors' routine conduct: "Muscular weakness is easily reversed by normal everyday activity. It is never too late to start that workout." These rehearsals of apparently common-sense advice on physical habits recall Foucault's comments on the "generalized medical consciousness" that accompanied the emergence of clinical medicine, wherein "the consciousness of each individual must be alerted; every citizen must be informed of what medical knowledge is necessary and possible."[12]

In addition to asking viewers to identify physically with the plastinated specimens on display, *Bodies* also moves viewers to affirm a health care system based on notions of "freedom" and formal equality in which the individual, not the state, is charged with the responsibility of maintaining life and health. This model of health care, which assumes the individual exercise of voluntary activities and rational decision-making, has been tied to a clinical per-

spective that tends to "blame the victim" while disregarding structural contributors to health. As anthropologists Paul Farmer and Arthur Kleinman put it:

> The concept of autonomous individuals who are solely responsible for their fate, including their illnesses, is a powerful cultural premise in North American society.…Individual effects of powerful social forces beyond personal control are discounted.[13]

This premise of individual responsibility masks numerous inequalities that render *Bodies*' specimens available in the first place. While *Bodies* claims to uphold a commitment to public health, the exhibit carefully obscures connections between subject and society. The dissections in *Bodies* maximize exposure of physiological content, label constituent parts selectively, and are stripped of demographic and individual identifiers. Exhibit spokespeople claim that the full-body specimens originate as "unclaimed" cadavers that have become the property of the Chinese state. Citing legal protections of confidentiality, the organizers of *Bodies* have refused to release information pertaining to individual specimens, and the exhibition's didactic materials indicate the circumstances of death only "where appropriate."[14] Though a concern for the "dignity" of the bodies is cited as justification for these measures, the removal of physical and legal identifiers symbolizes – and facilitates – the removal of citizenship from the cadavers: their eviction not only from particular demographic groups, but also from the category of persons with enforceable rights.

The designations "body," "specimen," and "exhibit" prioritize the status of the cadavers as bearers of biological content, eliding the social and cultural contexts from which these individuals have been abstracted. If these subjects are "human," however, the exhibitors of *Bodies* must demonstrate that they consented to this posthumous use of their bodies. Paradoxically, by refusing to disclose the names and life circumstances of these subjects, and by ensuring that they cannot be physically identified, the exhibitors of *Bodies* assert that their probable violations of the subjects' rights to informed consent cannot be ascertained without violating those subjects' rights to privacy. Stripping away both the skin and the personal histories of its specimens, *Bodies* produces a category of anonymous beings who are bearers and exemplars of humanistic qualities and values, but disarticulated from history and agency and rendered beyond the reach of "human rights." Here it is worth recalling Hannah Arendt's contention that the "universal" condition of humanity, recognized as sufficient for the protection of "human dignity" or "human rights" by liberal humanist political discourse, proves insufficient to establish the physical and political security of stateless subjects. In the case of *Bodies*, legal guarantees of (certain) individual rights actually enable abuses by denying access to documentation.[15]

The most significant factor contributing to both a flexible labor reserve and a continuous supply of anonymous bodies in China is a massive population of dislocated "floating people" who have moved to urban centers in search of employment. "[Since] the state sanctioned the entry of peasants into the newly marketizing cities after 1983," political scientist Dorothy Solinger writes, a floating population numbering between forty and one hundred million has resided and worked in China's cities.[16] The difficulty of identifying and counting these people attests to their vulnerable status as itinerants who "reside in a

realm of uncertain legality."[17] Now comprising up to a third of China's urban population, floating people, according to political scientist Michael Dutton, are:

> [T]he Chinese subaltern. They are the floating outcasts of a society that is organized to ensure that everyone has a place.…Economic reform has left … internal migrants, the poor, the destitute, the criminal, and the undesirable – more vulnerable than at any time since the 1949 revolution.[18]

Dutton contends that floating people represent a form of marginalization and vulnerability that has been overlooked by Western discourses of human rights, which tend to focus on overtly political dissidents. Similarly, much of the outcry against *Bodies* has been generated by allegations of the use of executed prisoners in such exhibitions and the lack of government oversight in Chinese "body factories."[19] Focusing on the floating population, by contrast, draws attention to larger demographic issues that predispose some subjects to early and anonymous death.

   Studies of the health of Chinese urban migrants show that the floating population is at disproportionately high risk for infectious disease, employment-related injury and illness, and premature death. Predominantly male, young to middle-aged, and often far removed from their families, floating people may constitute a major source of unclaimed urban corpses. These factors are compounded by poor housing and sanitation, social stigmatization,[20] and the relative inaccessibility of health care for floating people. Most importantly, as anthropologist Judith Farquhar and professor of Chinese medicine Quichang Zhang have shown, the desocialization of China's health care system initiated in the 1980s has introduced a rapid shift toward a

"fee-for-services" model that leaves many citizens unable to afford medical care.[21] The dead may be "unclaimed" due to lack of nearby relatives or the difficulty of identifying rural kin, but other factors, such as the rising costs of burial and cremation, probably play a role as well. The predicament of the floating population shows how inequalities – between capitalist and post-communist countries, country and city, resident and migrant, permanent worker and undocumented laborer – contribute to the availability of unburied dead in Chinese cities.

   While *Bodies*' privatized displays make spurious claims to public health education, our next example is a formal global health campaign intended to redress the effects of health vulnerability and human rights abuses in underdeveloped nations. Unlike *Bodies*, it does address directly the relation between health and human rights; however, like *Bodies*, it remains constrained by ideals of universalism and individual responsibility that implicitly gloss over political and economic inequalities, specifically in terms of the global epidemiology of HIV.

Whereas the pedagogical efficacy of body exhibits has been questioned, informal illustrated texts often convey information more readily than doctors, medical journals, or public health agencies themselves. Although the entertainment industry has generally shied away from depictions of AIDS and has avoided including HIV-positive characters in storylines,[22] AIDS awareness campaigns have often appropriated the comic book format to disseminate their message. Building on a long-established genre of cartoons designed to spread health information,[23] the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations recently launched a series of comic

books including *The Right to Health* (2002), *HIV/AIDS: Stand Up For Human Rights* (2003), and *HIV and AIDS: Human Rights for Everyone* (2006). Translated into several languages and distributed among "poor, vulnerable and marginalized population groups" in the global south, these materials aim to spread awareness of the universal right to health and dignity.[24] Yet they do so by calling on readers to "stand up" to their own communities and national governments and make claims for rights that may be supported neither by material circumstances nor positive legal entitlements. *HIV/AIDS: Stand Up For Human Rights* presents a particularly clear example of both the importance and the difficulty of developing a rights-based approach to global health.

In 2003, the WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) developed *HIV/AIDS* as a twenty-page comic book and launched a campaign to circulate it to a growing list of countries, including Botswana, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, and Zambia. With the support of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), whose head stated that the "universal nature of football" made it an ideal medium for messages about health and human rights, the comic book was distributed to youth via national football associations in some African countries.[25]

The comic's action takes place "one day at the football field," in a geographically unspecified location and among a multiracial group of youths who collectively stand in for the global village. The football game is postponed when a young black man named Freddy refuses to play because he has to stay home and help his sick mother. As the other football players discuss whether Freddy's mother "should be told to leave the village" because she is HIV positive, a young white man interrupts with a monologue about AIDS transmission, risks, and the duty to "protect ourselves and help our friends who have HIV instead of leaving them sad and lonely."[26] He then leads the group of friends to Freddy's home, where Freddy's mother informs them tearfully that the doctor at the village health center refused to help her. Fortunately, one of the other football players, a South Asian woman named Alisha, is the daughter of the supervisor at the health center. She speaks with her father that evening, and the next day he orders the doctor to "treat a person with HIV/AIDS with respect and dignity like everybody else."[27] Freddy's mother is admitted to the hospital, and the group of friends discusses other ways to defend human rights by fighting discrimination based on gender, class, and race. As the youths and their neighbors assemble to make posters about the universality of human rights, the white man who first stood up for Freddy's mother explains why he knows so much about HIV: "because actually I am HIV positive as well."[28] The final pages of the comic are left blank so that readers can design their own posters and write down ideas for combating discrimination.

By populating its global village with subjects whose differences are racial, ethnic, and cultural, but not economic, political, or behavioral, *HIV/AIDS* enables almost any reader to identify with a character who looks "familiar."[29] Whereas *Bodies* produces a negative version of universalism by encouraging its predominantly white, privileged viewers to identify with a stripped-down and apparently raceless body, *HIV/AIDS* encourages readers in the global south to identify with one of the diverse char-

acters who physically resembles them. This enables the comic to be exported without rescripting to address factors that shape the local epidemiology of AIDS: the distribution of wealth and poverty; constructions of gender and sexuality; access to HIV prevention and treatment programs. *HIV/AIDS* has been translated into French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Thai, but its illustrations and storyline have undergone no revisions for distribution to individual nations, and no data have been collected regarding the comic's impact on its readers.[30]

While at the level of language the text connotes universal ideals of multiculturalism and equality, its illustrations and characterizations reinforce particularity and social stratification, recruiting racial and gender stereotypes to drive the plot and command the identification of readers. Readers are allowed to identify with the person who physically resembles them, yet simultaneously they are encouraged to identify with the person who speaks for them: the white male character, who dominates the cartoon's dialogue. The young, well-informed white man intervenes at a key moment to instruct his friends in both scientific and humanitarian aspects of the HIV epidemic, convincing them not only to tolerate Freddy but to visit his mother's home and think of ways to help. Although he turns out to be HIV positive himself, this character is positioned as an "outside expert" who does not share in the material hardships that render Freddy and his mother vulnerable to a range of health risks. The comic represents the white character as an exemplar of the universal: unlike Alisha or Freddy, he has no name, and is never shown with his family or with markers of obvious ethnic or national belonging.

(His appearance and clothing, in fact, are reminiscent of the Belgian cartoon character Tintin, whose international adventures have been critiqued as a celebration of colonialism.) While his attentive friends sometimes appear baffled by his discourse, he speaks the language of human rights as if it were intuitive.

His rhetoric, however, reinscribes the very differences of race, class, gender, and geographical location that the comic's setting suspends. His warnings against needle sharing and unsafe sex are accompanied by panels depicting stigmatized scenarios of deviant, risky behavior (see inside back cover). Unsafe sex, for example, is illustrated by silhouetted figures performing a sex act in an orientalized setting, possibly a brothel. By contrast, an example of safer sex is provided by a white couple civilly negotiating condom use in a cozy bedroom.[31] While the comic's emphasis on "human rights" is grounded in the universalizing metaphor of a level playing field for the multicultural football players, these panels reinscribe the geographically and demographically uneven distribution of poverty, drug abuse, sex work, condom availability, and gender equality that underlie differential vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

The plot of *HIV/AIDS* deemphasizes these differences, modeling human rights interventions in terms of individual and interpersonal actions. Interpersonal sympathy crosses the boundaries of race and HIV status, undoing the social stigmatization of people living with HIV. First, the white football player intervenes by educating his playmates about HIV transmission and persuading them to sympathize with Freddy and his mother. Next, Alisha's sympathy moves her to speak with her father, who directs the hospital staff to provide Freddy's mother with care. Finally, in a scene

that resembles a political demonstration, the football players gather near the hospital and make signs with slogans like "Stand up for human rights" and "Do not discriminate." In all of these instances, sympathy for people living with HIV stands in for concrete political and material changes. It is thus not surprising that Freddy and his mother are absent from the demonstration, and instead are seen making their way back into the clinic, while one of Freddy's friends calls out "Well done Alisha for talking to your father!" By contrast with the HIV-positive white protagonist, the black woman's case for human rights does not appear self-evident, nor does the comic depict her as capable of standing up for herself. *HIV/AIDS* marshals a politics of sympathy, not a politics of self-advocacy or an ethic of self-care. The interventions it depicts are voluntary, exceptional acts that normalize the absence or selective removal of material entitlements. Freddy's mother ultimately receives care not on account of her independence or her claims upon the health care system, but owing to the sympathy of others.

These individual interventions in the name of human rights stand in for political action and substantive changes that might secure material entitlements to health care. The protagonists ultimately translate their concern for Freddy and his mother into a public demonstration of concern, but their appearance in the street with handmade signs is not a tool of political pressure. Instead, they work to transmit a human rights message to fellow citizens, some of whom join them and contribute statements about the rights of women and the poor. While *HIV/AIDS* presents the process of learning about human rights as contemporaneous with simulated social justice activities, the right that is enacted most ro-

bustly is the community's right to frame concerns in terms of human rights language, not its right to the economic or material inputs to health. Thus, one desired outcome of the comic, as evidenced by the pages left blank for readers to "Draw your own poster for a campaign on HIV/AIDS discrimination," is to self-replicate by generating more media about the universality of human rights.[32]

The interpretation of human rights as comprising political entitlements rather than economic and material needs has, as Farmer argues, traditionally informed the mandate of agencies working to relieve poverty and social affliction.[33] Drawing on his experience as a health worker in Haiti and other resource-poor, justice-starved countries, Farmer notes the frequent mismatch between the priorities of aid agencies and their client populations:

> Although those we served ardently desired civil and political rights, they spoke more often of what are termed "social and economic rights." These rights include the right not to starve to death or die in childbirth; the right to treatment, even for … difficult-to-treat afflictions such as AIDS; the right to primary schooling and the right to clean water.[34]

In *HIV/AIDS*, we are not shown whether Freddy's mother is in need of food, employment, health insurance, or a clinic equipped with sufficient medication, electricity, and latex gloves: the discussion of her "rights" does not bring these questions into focus. Instead, the comic implicitly depicts the hospital as fully equipped, but staffed with prejudiced doctors.

In an essay on the discrepant priorities of human rights organizations and African citizens, the human rights lawyer

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Chidi Anselm Odinkalu notes the need for a movement that "evoke[s] responses from the political process."[35] Since the traditional mandate of first-world relief agencies has eschewed political and economic solutions in preference to narrowly conceived legal agendas, he argues, "real-life struggles for social justice are waged despite human rights groups…by people who feel that their realities and aspirations are not adequately captured by human rights organizations and their language."[36] By framing human rights primarily in terms of individual altruistic actions and calls for state governments to respect human rights, *HIV/AIDS* deemphasizes transnational factors, such as the legacy of racialized colonialism, the impact of structural adjustment programs, and legal protections for pharmaceuticals as "intellectual property,"[37] which have contributed profoundly to the globally uneven distribution of disease and premature death.

In a press release announcing the launch of *HIV/AIDS*, Dr. Jim Kim, former director of the WHO's HIV/AIDS department, stressed the importance of a rights-based approach to public health:

> [N]ot only ensuring access to treatment as part of the realization of the right to health, but equally addressing HIV-related stigma and discrimination, paying particular attention to vulnerable population groups, incorporating a gender perspective, and making sure that other related human rights aspects, such as the right to information and the right to participation, are integral components in our response to the epidemic.

Although *HIV/AIDS* directly addresses the issues of stigma and discrimination, it does so by naturalizing two social groups: one of informed, empowered activists like Alisha and the white pro-tagonist; and one of "vulnerable," minimally characterized victims. Characters like Freddy and his mother receive access to treatment and the right to participate only by proxy, through the exceptional individual interventions of more socially and economically privileged subjects. The comic's shortcomings illustrate the difficulties of representing and realizing the substantive entitlements that Kim endorses.

With its cosmopolitan first-world audience, its commercial motivations, and its connection to human rights abuses among vulnerable populations, *Bodies* puts forward a deeply problematic health message. By encouraging audiences to identify with its anonymized, "universal" human specimens, the exhibit conceals and compounds the social stratification that contributes to ill health worldwide. Where *Bodies* turns global political and economic disparities to its advantage, *HIV/AIDS* represents an attempt to articulate the connections between human rights and health. Intended as a readily translated document accessible to diverse audiences, the text presents official, authoritative knowledge on HIV, human rights, and risk behaviors. However, the comic's universalist commitments neglect the material needs and social stigmas tied to local contexts. More critically, *HIV/AIDS* fails to provide insight into the large-scale factors that contribute to ill health, and inadvertently reinscribes racial hierarchies by scripting an omniscient white male character who takes charge of a naive, tractable "global village." As both examples illustrate, public health representations that fail to contextualize their interventions within inequities of power and access to resources fail to address the roots of long-standing global health disparities.

[1] Priscilla Wald, *Contagious : Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative* (Durham, N.C. : Duke University Press, 2008), 51.

[2] Alan Kraut, *Silent Travelers : Germs, Genes, and the "Immigrant Menace"* (New York : Basic Books, 1994) ; Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides : Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 2001) ; Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies : American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, N.C. : Duke University Press, 2006).

[3] Wald, *Contagious*, 25.

[4] David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism : A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (London : Verso, 2006).

[5] Everett Rogers and F. Floyd Shoemaker, *Communication of Innovations : A Cross-Cultural Approach* (New York : New York Free Press, 1971).

[6] Charles Briggs, "Why Nation-States and Journalists Can't Teach People to Be Healthy," *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (3) (2003). Briggs argues, at 311, that health messages reinforce preexisting social hierarchies by "differentially interpellat[ing] people on the basis of their perceived relationship to hygiene, medical knowledge, and ways of preventing and treating diseases. Public health has thus involved, since its modern inception, ways of addressing 'the public' that create a range of publics. Health discourse has thus played a crucial role in defining and naturalizing social inequality."

[7] This section draws on a longer discussion of the Exhibition, published as Hsuan L. Hsu and Martha Lincoln, "Biopower, *Bodies . . . the Exhibition*, and the Spectacle of Public Health," *Discourse* 29 (1) (Winter 2007) : 15 – 34.

[8] Quoted in Mary Orr, "Anatomy as Art, Unsettling But Drawing Crowds," *The New York Times*, July 9, 2002.

[9] Available at http ://www.bodiestheexhibition.com/ (accessed November 19, 2007).

[10] Quoted in Bruce J. Navarro, "Exhibition Gives a Look Inside the Human Body : Skinless Cadavers, Variety of Organs on Display in New York Show," *MSNBC Health News*, December 1, 2005 ; available at http ://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10137337/ (accessed August 12, 2007).

[11] Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self : The History of Sexuality*, vol. 3, trans. Robert Hurley (New York : Vintage, 1986), 100.

[12] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic : An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York : Pantheon, 1973), 31.

[13] Quoted in Paul Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation : Haiti and the Geography of Blame* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1992), 247 – 248.

[14] "Frequently Asked Questions," *Bodies . . . the Exhibition* Press Materials (2007), 2.

[15] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York : Harcourt Brace, 1979).

[16] Dorothy Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China : Peasants, Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 2003), 17 – 23.

[17] Ibid., 17.

[18] Michael Dutton, "Street Scenes of Subalternity : China, Globalization, and Rights," *Social Text* 60 (17) (1999) : 63 – 86.

[19] David Barboza, "China Turns Out Mummified Bodies for Displays," *The New York Times*, August 8, 2006.

[20] See Li Zhang, *Strangers in the City : Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks* (Stanford, Calif. : Stanford University Press, 2001).

[21] Judith Farquhar and Quichang Zhang, "Biopolitical Beijing : Pleasure, Sovereignty, and Self-Cultivation in China's Capital," *Cultural Anthropology* 20 (3) (2005): 320.

[22] Matthew McAllister, "AIDS and Comic Books," *Journal of Popular Culture* 26 (2) (1992): 1–24.

[23] For a brief survey of cartoons and other images in public health campaigns since the 1800s, see Allison Grady, "Use of Images in Public Health Campaigns," *Virtual Mentor : American Medical Association Journal of Ethics* 9 (8) (2007): 583–590.

[24] "New Cartoon Hopes to Catalyze Activism on the Right to Health," WHO Press Release, December 6, 2002 ; available at http://www.who.int/hhr/activities/cartoon_press/en /index.html (accessed November 16, 2008).

[25] http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2004/pr90/en/ ; http://www.fifa .com/aboutfifa/worldwideprograms/news/newsid=95638.html.

[26] *HIV/AIDS : Stand Up for Human Rights* (Geneva, Switzerland : World Health Organization, 2003), 3, 5.

[27] Ibid., 10.

[28] Ibid., 14.

[29] The characters include a South Asian woman (Alisha), several dark-skinned characters (including Freddy, his mother, and the doctor who refuses to treat her), a white man (the human rights educator), an East Asian woman, a woman who may be Mayan, an indigenous Latin American man, and several characters of indeterminate ethnicity.

[30] Authors' personal communication with Helena Nygen-Krug, November 25, 2008.

[31] Unlike other comics treating HIV, safer sex, and safer needle drug use, which have included explicit depictions of stigmatized behaviors to promote "harm reduction" (for example, the 1980s-era "Safer Sex Comix" and the 1990s-era Canadian "Tête à Queue"), these images in *HIV/AIDS* seem to give weight to the notoriously misleading notion that only "risk groups" are threatened by HIV.

[32] *HIV/AIDS*, 17.

[33] Paul Farmer, "Challenging Orthodoxies : The Road Ahead for Health and Human Rights," *Health and Human Rights* 10 (1) (2008): 5–19.

[34] Ibid., 5.

[35] Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, "Why More Africans Don't Use Human Rights Language," *Human Rights Dialogue* 2 (1) (1999) ; available at http://www.cceia.org/resources /publications/dialogue/2_01/articles/602.html (accessed November 23, 2008).

[36] Ibid.

[37] Melinda Cooper, *Life as Surplus : Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era* (Seattle : Washington University Press, 2008).

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What does it mean to be an American?

It is often said that being an American means sharing a commitment to a set of values and ideals.[1] Writing about the relationship of ethnicity and American identity, the historian Philip Gleason put it this way:

> To be or to become an American, a person did not have to be any particular national, linguistic, religious, or ethnic background. All he had to do was to commit himself to the political ideology centered on the abstract ideals of liberty, equality, and republicanism. Thus the universalist ideological character of American nationality meant that it was open to anyone who willed to become an American.[2]

To take the motto of the Great Seal of the United States, *E pluribus unum* – "From many, one" – in this context suggests not that manyness should be melted down into one, as in Israel Zangwill's image of the melting pot, but that, as the Great Seal's sheaf of arrows suggests, there should be a coexistence of many-in-one under a unified citizenship based on shared ideals.

Of course, the story is not so simple, as Gleason himself went on to note. America's history of racial and ethnic exclu-

sions has undercut the universalist stance; for being an American has also meant sharing a national culture, one largely defined in racial, ethnic, and religious terms. And while solidarity can be understood as "an experience of willed affiliation," some forms of American solidarity have been less inclusive than others, demanding much more than simply the desire to affiliate.[3] In this essay, I explore different ideals of civic solidarity with an eye toward what they imply for newcomers who wish to become American citizens.

Why does civic solidarity matter? First, it is integral to the pursuit of distributive justice. The institutions of the welfare state serve as redistributive mechanisms that can offset the inequalities of life chances that a capitalist economy creates, and they raise the position of the worst-off members of society to a level where they are able to participate as equal citizens. While self-interest alone may motivate people to support social insurance schemes that protect them against unpredictable circumstances, solidarity is understood to be required to support redistribution from the rich to aid the poor, including housing subsidies, income supplements, and long-term unemployment benefits.[4] The underlying idea is that people are

more likely to support redistributive schemes when they trust one another, and they are more likely to trust one another when they regard others as like themselves in some meaningful sense.

Second, genuine democracy demands solidarity. If democratic activity involves not just voting, but also deliberation, then people must make an effort to listen to and understand one another. Moreover, they must be willing to moderate their claims in the hope of finding common ground on which to base political decisions. Such democratic activity cannot be realized by individuals pursuing their own interests; it requires some concern for the common good. A sense of solidarity can help foster mutual sympathy and respect, which in turn support citizens' orientation toward the common good.

Third, civic solidarity offers more inclusive alternatives to chauvinist models that often prevail in political life around the world. For example, the alternative to the Nehru-Gandhi secular definition of Indian national identity is the Hindu chauvinism of the Bharatiya Janata Party, not a cosmopolitan model of belonging. "And what in the end can defeat this chauvinism," asks Charles Taylor, "but some reinvention of India as a secular republic with which people can identify?"[5] It is not enough to articulate accounts of solidarity and belonging only at the subnational or transnational levels while ignoring senses of belonging to the political community. One might believe that people have a deep need for belonging in communities, perhaps grounded in even deeper human needs for recognition and freedom, but even those skeptical of such claims might recognize the importance of articulating more inclusive models of political community as an alternative to the racial, ethnic, or religious narratives that have permeated

political life.[6] The challenge, then, is to develop a model of civic solidarity that is "thick" enough to motivate support for justice and democracy while also "thin" enough to accommodate racial, ethnic, and religious diversity.

We might look first to Habermas's idea of constitutional patriotism (*Verfassungspatriotismus*). The idea emerged from a particular national history, to denote attachment to the liberal democratic institutions of the postwar Federal Republic of Germany, but Habermas and others have taken it to be a generalizable vision for liberal democratic societies, as well as for supranational communities such as the European Union. On this view, what binds citizens together is their common allegiance to the ideals embodied in a shared political culture. The only "common denominator for a *constitutional* patriotism" is that "every citizen be socialized into a common political culture."[7]

Habermas points to the United States as a leading example of a multicultural society where constitutional principles have taken root in a political culture without depending on "all citizens' sharing the same language or the same ethnic and cultural origins."[8] The basis of American solidarity is not any particular racial or ethnic identity or religious beliefs, but universal moral ideals embodied in American political culture and set forth in such seminal texts as the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Based on a minimal commonality of shared ideals, constitutional patriotism is attractive for the agnosticism toward particular moral and religious outlooks and ethnocultural identities to which it aspires.

What does constitutional patriotism suggest for the sort of reception immigrants should receive? There has been a general shift in Western Europe and North America in the standards governing access to citizenship from cultural markers to values, and this is a development that constitutional patriots would applaud. In the United States those seeking to become citizens must demonstrate basic knowledge of U.S. government and history. A newly revised U.S. citizenship test was instituted in October 2008 with the hope that it will serve, in the words of the chief of the Office of Citizenship, Alfonso Aguilar, as "an instrument to promote civic learning and patriotism."[9] The revised test attempts to move away from civics trivia to emphasize political ideas and concepts. (There is still a fair amount of trivia: "How many amendments does the Constitution have?" "What is the capital of your state?") The new test asks more open-ended questions about government powers and political concepts: "What does the judicial branch do?" "What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?" "What is freedom of religion?" "What is the 'rule of law'?"[10]

Constitutional patriots would endorse this focus on values and principles. In Habermas's view, legal principles are anchored in the "political culture," which he suggests is separable from "ethical-cultural" forms of life. Acknowledging that in many countries the "ethical-cultural" form of life of the majority is "fused" with the "political culture," he argues that the "level of the shared political culture must be uncoupled from the level of subcultures and their prepolitical identities."[11] All that should be expected of immigrants is that they embrace the constitutional principles as interpreted by the political culture,

not that they necessarily embrace the majority's ethical-cultural forms.

Yet language is a key aspect of "ethical-cultural" forms of life, shaping people's worldviews and experiences. It is through language that individuals become who they are. Since a political community must conduct its affairs in at least one language, the ethical-cultural and political cannot be completely "uncoupled." As theorists of multiculturalism have stressed, complete separation of state and particularistic identities is impossible; government decisions about the language of public institutions, public holidays, and state symbols unavoidably involve recognizing and supporting particular ethnic and religious groups over others.[12] In the United States, English language ability has been a statutory qualification for naturalization since 1906, originally as a requirement of oral ability and later as a requirement of English literacy. Indeed, support for the principles of the Constitution has been interpreted as requiring English literacy.[13] The language requirement might be justified as a practical matter (we need some language to be the common language of schools, government, and the workplace, so why not the language of the majority?), but for a great many citizens, the language requirement is also viewed as a key marker of national identity. The continuing centrality of language in naturalization policy prevents us from saying that what it means to be an American is purely a matter of shared values.

Another misconception about constitutional patriotism is that it is necessarily more inclusive of newcomers than cultural nationalist models of solidarity. Its inclusiveness depends on which principles are held up as the polity's shared principles, and its normative substance depends on and must be eval-

uated in light of a background theory of justice, freedom, or democracy; it does not by itself provide such a theory. Consider ideological requirements for naturalization in U.S. history. The first naturalization law of 1790 required nothing more than an oath to support the U.S. Constitution. The second naturalization act added two ideological elements: the renunciation of titles or orders of nobility and the requirement that one be found to have "behaved as a man … attached to the principles of the constitution of the United States."[14] This attachment requirement was revised in 1940 from a behavioral qualification to a personal attribute, but this did not help clarify what attachment to constitutional principles requires.[15] Not surprisingly, the "attachment to constitutional principles" requirement has been interpreted as requiring a belief in representative government, federalism, separation of powers, and constitutionally guaranteed individual rights. It has also been interpreted as disqualifying anarchists, polygamists, and conscientious objectors for citizenship. In 1950, support for communism was added to the list of grounds for disqualification from naturalization – as well as grounds for exclusion and deportation.[16] The 1990 Immigration Act retained the McCarthy-era ideological qualifications for naturalization; current law disqualifies those who advocate or affiliate with an organization that advocates communism or opposition to all organized government.[17] Patriotism, like nationalism, is capable of excess and pathology, as evidenced by loyalty oaths and campaigns against "un-American" activities.

In contrast to constitutional patriots, liberal nationalists acknowledge that states cannot be culturally neutral even if they tried. States cannot avoid coerc-ing citizens into preserving a national culture of some kind because state institutions and laws define a political culture, which in turn shapes the range of customs and practices of daily life that constitute a national culture. David Miller, a leading theorist of liberal nationalism, defines national identity according to the following elements: a shared belief among a group of individuals that they belong together, historical continuity stretching across generations, connection to a particular territory, and a shared set of characteristics constituting a national culture.[18] It is not enough to share a common identity rooted in a shared history or a shared territory; a shared national *culture* is a necessary feature of national identity. I share a national culture with someone, even if we never meet, if each of us has been initiated into the traditions and customs of a national culture.

What sort of content makes up a national culture? Miller says more about what a national culture does not entail. It need not be based on biological descent. Even if nationalist doctrines have historically been based on notions of biological descent and race, Miller emphasizes that sharing a national culture is, in principle, compatible with people belonging to a diversity of racial and ethnic groups. In addition, every member need not have been born in the homeland. Thus, "immigration need not pose problems, provided only that the immigrants come to share a common national identity, to which they may contribute their own distinctive ingredients."[19]

Liberal nationalists focus on the idea of culture, as opposed to ethnicity or descent, in order to reconcile nationalism with liberalism. Thicker than constitutional patriotism, liberal nationalism, Miller maintains, is thinner than ethnic models of belonging. Both nationality

and ethnicity have cultural components, but what is said to distinguish "civic" nations from "ethnic" nations is that the latter are exclusionary and closed on grounds of biological descent; the former are, in principle, open to anyone willing to adopt the national culture.[20]

Yet the civic-ethnic distinction is not so clear-cut in practice. Every nation has an "ethnic core." As Anthony Smith observes:

> [M]odern "civic" nations have not in practice really transcended ethnicity or ethnic sentiments. This is a Western mirage, reality-as-wish; closer examination always reveals the ethnic core of civic nations, in practice, even in immigrant societies with their early pioneering and dominant (English and Spanish) culture in America, Australia, or Argentina, a culture that provided the myths and language of the would-be nation.[21]

This blurring of the civic-ethnic distinction is reflected throughout U.S. history with the national culture often defined in ethnic, racial, and religious terms.[22]

Why, then, if all national cultures have ethnic cores, should those outside this core embrace the national culture? Miller acknowledges that national cultures have typically been formed around the ethnic group that is dominant in a particular territory and therefore bear "the hallmarks of that group: language, religion, cultural identity." Muslim identity in contemporary Britain becomes politicized when British national identity is conceived as containing "an Anglo-Saxon bias which discriminates against Muslims (and other ethnic minorities)." But he maintains that his idea of nationality can be made "democratic in so far as it insists that everyone should take part in this debate [about what constitutes the national identity] on an equal footing, and sees the formal arenas of

politics as the main (though not the only) place where the debate occurs."[23]

The major difficulty here is that national cultures are not typically the product of collective deliberation in which all have the opportunity to participate. The challenge is to ensure that historically marginalized groups, as well as new groups of immigrants, have genuine opportunities to contribute "on an equal footing" to shaping the national culture. Without such opportunities, liberal nationalism collapses into conservative nationalism of the kind defended by Samuel Huntington. He calls for immigrants to assimilate into America's "Anglo-Protestant culture." Like Miller, Huntington views ideology as "a weak glue to hold together people otherwise lacking in racial, ethnic, or cultural sources of community," and he rejects race and ethnicity as constituent elements of national identity.[24] Instead, he calls on Americans of all races and ethnicities to "reinvigorate their core culture." Yet his "cultural" vision of America is pervaded by ethnic and religious elements: it is not only of a country "committed to the principles of the Creed," but also of "a deeply religious and primarily Christian country, encompassing several religious minorities, adhering to Anglo-Protestant values, speaking English, maintaining its European cultural heritage."[25] That the cultural core of the United States is the culture of its historically dominant groups is a point that Huntington unabashedly accepts.

Cultural nationalist visions of solidarity would lend support to immigration and immigrant policies that give weight to linguistic and ethnic preferences and impose special requirements on individuals from groups deemed to be outside the nation's "core culture." One example is the practice in postwar Germany of giving priority in immigration and

naturalization policy to ethnic Germans; they were the only foreign nationals who were accepted as permanent residents set on the path toward citizenship. They were treated not as immigrants but "resettlers" (*Aussiedler*) who acted on their constitutional right to return to their country of origin. In contrast, non-ethnically German guestworkers (*Gastarbeiter*) were designated as "aliens" (*Auslander*) under the 1965 German Alien Law and excluded from German citizenship.[26] Another example is the Japanese naturalization policy that, until the late 1980s, required naturalized citizens to adopt a Japanese family name. The language requirement in contemporary naturalization policies in the West is the leading remaining example of a cultural nationalist integration policy; it reflects not only a concern with the economic and political integration of immigrants but also a nationalist concern with preserving a distinctive national culture.

Constitutional patriotism and liberal nationalism are accounts of civic solidarity that deal with what one might call first-level diversity. Individuals have different group identities and hold divergent moral and religious outlooks, yet they are expected to share the same idea of what it means to be American: either patriots committed to the same set of ideals or co-nationals sharing the relevant cultural attributes. Charles Taylor suggests an alternative approach, the idea of "deep diversity." Rather than trying to fix some minimal content as the basis of solidarity, Taylor acknowledges not only the fact of a diversity of group identities and outlooks (first-level diversity), but also the fact of a diversity of ways of belonging to the political community (second-level or deep diversity).

Taylor introduces the idea of deep diversity in the context of discussing what it means to be Canadian:

> Someone of, say, Italian extraction in Toronto or Ukrainian extraction in Edmonton might indeed feel Canadian as a bearer of individual rights in a multicultural mosaic.…But this person might nevertheless accept that a Québécois or a Cree or a Déné might belong in a very different way, that these persons were Canadian through being members of their national communities. Reciprocally, the Québécois, Cree, or Déné would accept the perfect legitimacy of the "mosaic" identity.

Civic solidarity or political identity is not "defined according to a concrete content," but, rather, "by the fact that everybody is attached to that identity in his or her own fashion, that everybody wants to continue that history and proposes to make that community progress."[27] What leads people to support second-level diversity is both the desire to be a member of the political community and the recognition of disagreement about what it means to be a member. In our world, membership in a political community provides goods we cannot do without; this, above all, may be the source of our desire for political community.

Even though Taylor contrasts Canada with the United States, accepting the myth of America as a nation of immigrants, the United States also has a need for acknowledgment of diverse modes of belonging based on the distinctive histories of different groups. Native Americans, African Americans, Irish Americans, Vietnamese Americans, and Mexican Americans: across these communities of people, we can find not only distinctive group identities, but also distinctive ways of belonging to the political community.

Deep diversity is not a recapitulation of the idea of cultural pluralism first developed in the United States by Horace Kallen, who argued for assimilation "in matters economic and political" and preservation of differences "in cultural consciousness."[28] In Kallen's view, hyphenated Americans lived their spiritual lives in private, on the left side of the hyphen, while being culturally anonymous on the right side of the hyphen. The ethnic-political distinction maps onto a private-public dichotomy; the two spheres are to be kept separate, such that Irish Americans, for example, are culturally Irish and politically American. In contrast, the idea of deep diversity recognizes that Irish Americans are culturally Irish American and politically Irish American. As Michael Walzer put it in his discussion of American identity almost twenty years ago, the culture of hyphenated Americans has been shaped by American culture, and their politics is significantly ethnic in style and substance.[29] The idea of deep or second-level diversity is not just about immigrant ethnics, which is the focus of both Kallen's and Walzer's analyses, but also racial minorities, who, based on their distinctive experiences of exclusion and struggles toward inclusion, have distinctive ways of belonging to America.

While attractive for its inclusiveness, the deep diversity model may be too thin a basis for civic solidarity in a democratic society. Can there be civic solidarity without citizens already sharing a set of values or a culture in the first place? In writing elsewhere about how different groups within democracy might "share identity space," Taylor himself suggests that the "basic principles of republican constitutions – democracy itself and human rights, among them" constitute a "non-negotiable" minimum. Yet, what distinguishes Taylor's deep diversity

model of solidarity from Habermas's constitutional patriotism is the recognition that "historic identities cannot be just abstracted from." The minimal commonality of shared principles is "accompanied by a recognition that these principles can be realized in a number of different ways, and can never be applied neutrally without some confronting of the substantive religious ethnic-cultural differences in societies."[30] And in contrast to liberal nationalism, deep diversity does not aim at specifying a common national culture that must be shared by all. What matters is not so much the content of solidarity, but the ethos generated by making the effort at mutual understanding and respect.

Canada's approach to the integration of immigrants may be the closest thing there is to "deep diversity." Canadian naturalization policy is not so different from that of the United States: a short required residency period, relatively low application fees, a test of history and civics knowledge, and a language exam.[31] Where the United States and Canada diverge is in their public commitment to diversity. Through its official multiculturalism policies, Canada expresses a commitment to the value of diversity among immigrant communities through funding for ethnic associations and supporting heritage language schools.[32] Constitutional patriots and liberal nationalists say that immigrant integration should be a two-way process, that immigrants should shape the host society's dominant culture just as they are shaped by it. Multicultural accommodations actually provide the conditions under which immigrant integration might genuinely become a two-way process. Such policies send a strong message that immigrants are a welcome part of the political community and should

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play an active role in shaping its future evolution.

The question of solidarity may not be the most urgent task Americans face today; war and economic crisis loom larger. But the question of solidarity remains important in the face of ongoing large-scale immigration and its effects on intergroup relations, which in turn affect our ability to deal with issues of economic inequality and democracy. I hope to have shown that patriotism is not easily separated from nationalism, that nationalism needs to be evaluated in light of shared principles, and that respect for deep diversity presupposes a commitment to some shared values, including perhaps diversity itself. Rather than viewing the three models of civic solidarity I have discussed as mutually exclusive – as the proponents of each sometimes seem to suggest – we should think about how they might be made to work together with each model tempering the excesses of the others.

What is now formally required of immigrants seeking to become American citizens most clearly reflects the first two models of solidarity: professed allegiance to the principles of the Constitution (constitutional patriotism) and adoption of a shared culture by demonstrating the ability to read, write, and speak English (liberal nationalism). The revised citizenship test makes gestures toward respect for first-level diversity and inclusion of historically marginalized groups with questions such as, "Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?" "What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?" "What did Susan B. Anthony do?" "What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?" The election of the first African American president of the United States is a significant step forward. A more inclusive American solidarity requires the recognition not only of the fact that Americans are a diverse people, but also that they have distinctive ways of belonging to America.

ENDNOTES

[1] For comments on earlier versions of this essay, I am grateful to participants in the Kadish Center Workshop on Law, Philosophy, and Political Theory at Berkeley Law School; the Penn Program on Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism; and the UCLA Legal Theory Workshop. I am especially grateful to Christopher Kutz, Sarah Paoletti, Eric Rakowski, Samuel Scheffler, Seana Shiffrin, and Rogers Smith.

[2] Philip Gleason, "American Identity and Americanization," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1980), 31–32, 56–57.

[3] David Hollinger, "From Identity to Solidarity," *Dædalus* 135 (4) (Fall 2006): 24.

[4] David Miller, "Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Theoretical Reflections," in *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies*, ed. Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 328, 334.

[5] Charles Taylor, "Why Democracy Needs Patriotism," in *For Love of Country?* ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 121.

[6] On the purpose and varieties of narratives of collective identity and membership that have been and should be articulated not only for subnational and transnational, but also

for national communities, see Rogers M. Smith, *Stories of Peoplehood : The Politics and Morals of Political Membership* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2003).

7 Jürgen Habermas, "Citizenship and National Identity," in *Between Facts and Norms : Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg (Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 1996), 500.

8 Ibid.

9 Edward Rothstein, "Connections : Refining the Tests That Confer Citizenship," *The New York Times*, January 23, 2006.

10 See http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/100q.pdf (accessed November 28, 2008).

11 Habermas, "The European Nation-State," in *Between Facts and Norms*, trans. Rehg, 118.

12 Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism : Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1994) ; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship : A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1995).

13 8 U.S.C., section 1423 (1988) ; *In re Katz*, 21 F.2d 867 (E.D. Mich. 1927) (attachment to principles of Constitution implies English literacy requirement).

14 Act of Mar. 26, 1790, ch. 3, 1 Stat., 103 and Act of Jan. 29, 1795, ch. 20, section 1, 1 Stat., 414. See James H. Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608 – 1870* (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 239 – 243. James Madison opposed the second requirement : "It was hard to make a man swear that he preferred the Constitution of the United States, or to give any general opinion, because he may, in his own private judgment, think Monarchy or Aristocracy better, and yet be honestly determined to support his Government as he finds it" ; Annals of Cong. 1, 1022 – 1023.

15 8 U.S.C., section 1427(a)(3). See also *Schneiderman v. United States*, 320 U.S. 118, 133 n.12 (1943), which notes the change from *behaving* as a person attached to constitutional principles to *being* a person attached to constitutional principles.

16 Internal Security Act of 1950, ch. 1024, sections 22, 25, 64 Stat. 987, 1006 – 1010, 1013 – 1015. The Internal Security Act provisions were included in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, ch. 477, sections 212(a)(28), 241(a)(6), 313, 66 Stat. 163, 184 – 186, 205 – 206, 240 – 241.

17 Gerald L. Neuman, "Justifying U.S. Naturalization Policies," *Virginia Journal of International Law* 35 (1994) : 255.

18 David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1995), 25.

19 Ibid., 25 – 26.

20 On the civic-ethnic distinction, see W. Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1992) ; David Hollinger, *Post-Ethnic America : Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York : Basic Books, 1995) ; Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging : Journeys into the New Nationalism* (New York : Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1995) ; Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1993).

21 Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford : Blackwell, 1986), 216.

22 See Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals : Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1997).

23 Miller, *On Nationality*, 122 – 123, 153 – 154.

24 Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We ? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York : Simon & Schuster, 2004), 12. In his earlier book, *American Politics : The Promise of*

Disharmony (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1981), Huntington defended a "civic" view of American identity based on the "political ideas of the American creed," which include liberty, equality, democracy, individualism, and private property (46). His change in view seems to have been motivated in part by his belief that principles and ideology are too weak to unite a political community, and also by his fears about immigrants maintaining transnational identities and loyalties – in particular, Mexican immigrants whom he sees as creating bilingual, bicultural, and potentially separatist regions; *Who Are We?* 205.

25 Huntington, *Who Are We?* 31, 20.

26 Christian Joppke, "The Evolution of Alien Rights in the United States, Germany, and the European Union," *Citizenship Today: Global Perspectives and Practices*, ed. T. Alexander Aleinikoff and Douglas Klusmeyer (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2001), 44. In 2000, the German government moved from a strictly *jus sanguinis* rule toward one that combines *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*, which opens up access to citizenship to non-ethnically German migrants, including Turkish migrant workers and their descendants. A minimum length of residency of eight (down from ten) years is also required, and dual citizenship is not formally recognized. While more inclusive than before, German citizenship laws remain the least inclusive among Western European and North American countries, with inclusiveness measured by the following criteria: whether citizenship is granted by *jus soli* (whether children of non-citizens who are born in a country's territory can acquire citizenship), the length of residency required for naturalization, and whether naturalized immigrants are permitted to hold dual citizenship. See Marc Morjé Howard, "Comparative Citizenship: An Agenda for Cross-National Research," *Perspectives on Politics* 4 (2006): 443 – 455.

27 Charles Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," in *Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism*, ed. Guy Laforest (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 183, 130.

28 Horace M. Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1924), 114 – 115.

29 Michael Walzer, "What Does It Mean to Be an 'American'?" (1974); reprinted in *What It Means to Be an American: Essays on the American Experience* (New York: Marsilio, 1990), 46.

30 Charles Taylor, "Democratic Exclusion (and Its Remedies?)," in *Multiculturalism, Liberalism, and Democracy*, ed. Rajeev Bhargava et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 163.

31 The differences in naturalization policy are a slightly longer residency requirement in the United States (five years in contrast to Canada's three) and Canada's official acceptance of dual citizenship.

32 See Irene Bloemraad, *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

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Anti-intellectualism as romantic discourse

When I told friends that I was heading off to a doctoral program in U.S. intellectual history, they either seemed mystified – "Do we *have* an intellectual history?" – or found the entire proposition somewhat funny: "*American* intellectual history!? Isn't that an oxymoron!?" More skepticism awaited as I began my studies. Classmates repeatedly subjected me to playful, if remorseless, interrogations about the wherefores and whithers of this so-called history of the American mind. I had to wonder what I was doing studying a subject that people think does not exist.

I might have dismissed this doubting American intellectual life as a curious national pastime until I experienced firsthand its transatlantic dimensions. While teaching an undergraduate course on "U.S. Intellectual History" as I was writing my doctoral thesis in Germany, I asked my students what drew them to a course on American thought. They confessed without a whiff of irony and no intended disrespect: they simply wanted to be in on the joke.

A curious thing happened as I got to know my students and they got to know American thinkers like Margaret Fuller, Herbert Croly, and Cornel West. I came to realize that my friends, classmates, and students hadn't said anything about American culture that these very thinkers hadn't said themselves. Just as West had lamented the "good American fashion" of fostering a "truncated perception of intellectual activity," and Croly had likened the "American intellectual habit" to that of "domestic animals," Fuller had warned about an America devoid of "intellectual dignity," capable of only cultural "abortions," "things with forms …but soulless, and therefore revolting."[1] Indeed our very own thinkers have argued for a specifically American version of the betrayal of the intellectuals: it is the *intellectuals* who have been betrayed by a culture hostile or indifferent to their ideas.

The vision of American history as one long *durée* of resistance to intellectual pursuits received its classic formulation in Richard Hofstadter's 1963 study, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. The suffocating political culture of the 1950s following Adlai Stevenson's defeats confirmed Hofstadter's view that "resentment and suspicion of the life of the mind and of those who are considered to represent it" had been a defining feature of American life. In Hofstadter's text, "anti-intellectualism" takes on

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many guises: the disavowal of rationality and learning in early American Protestantism; impatience with abstract thought and preference for practical knowledge on the frontier, in business, and in progressive education; populist hostility to the elitism of genteel reformers, monastic academics, and policy experts. According to Hofstadter, though diverse, these sentiments in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American religious, political, and economic life shared a general disregard for intellect, making "anti-intellectualism" an axiomatic expression of the American experience.[2]

Anti-Intellectualism is a systematic analysis of a cultural malady, but it is also a history of a grievance; therefore, even at its most restrained, it is a deeply personal document. Hofstadter's unusually qualified and tentative conclusions signal what his scholarly critics regarded as the book's shortcomings in conception and tone. Many took issue with the elusiveness of Hofstadter's conceptualization of "anti-intellectualism," unsatisfied with his apologia that it "does not yield very readily to definition."[3] Rush Welter argued that anti-intellectualism was at best "a protean concept," and used to articulate nothing like a "national commitment so much as a cluster of expressions and activities that may or may not have held the same meaning for all." Cushing Strout complained that the book documents "[f]eelings" which are "diverse, ambivalent, and no index to social isolation." While documenting these feelings, Hofstadter exposed his own, producing a confessional history of a confession that "skates…on what he knows to be thin ice."[4]

If analytically imprecise "anti-intellectualism" was also deeply felt, but Hofstadter did not manufacture this

cultural attitude nor was he the first to identify it. Indeed his accomplishment was the way in which he rehearsed a complaint that, by 1963, had become commonplace. Though the term "anti-intellectualism" came into vogue in the 1950s, the image of American culture as uniquely hostile to critical intellect enjoyed a long and dynamic history in American thought. It moved all along the political and cultural grid, as partisans from the left and right, and commentators liberal and conservative, pressed it into service. We come closest to understanding Hofstadter's argument if we see its roots in a romantic critique of American culture. His critique, like many before him, is a romantic longing for an America not yet achieved. By examining the romantic origins and prehistory of the trope of American anti-intellectualism, we can understand how a culture purportedly hostile to ideas cultivated a rather unappealing one with enduring appeal.

Though the notion of America either as Edenic paradise or savage wilderness has long animated European thinking about America, the notion that it was therefore either unburdened by or ill-suited for intellectual rigor took on particular form in the romantic imagination. As James Ceaser has argued, the romantics looked to the American democratic experiment as a symbol of modernity and freighted it with their own fantasies and fears about the "destiny of the modern world."[5] Whereas eighteenth-century European discourse about America focused primarily on the conditions of the natural environment, in the early nineteenth century attention shifted to its forms of human culture. Of special interest to German romantics in particular was the notion of the organic ties between a people,

their relationship to the homeland, and their styles of expression. Because Americans were not a *Volk*, but a mix of "races," transplanted to rather than historically rooted in the North American continent, German romantics wondered about the sources of aesthetic inspiration and the qualities of the intellect of people who were not *a people*, a nation of affiliation but not of belonging, an adopted homeland, but not an inherited *Fatherland*. Fascinated with the intellectual characteristics of what Nietzsche would later refer to as the "new human flora and fauna"[6] taking shape in the new world, they described these new cultural types in oracular terms: were they heralds of intellect at its dawn or twilight? Models of mind unburdened by hollow pieties, or aimless imaginations without sail or ballast? For the romantics, American culture and the human qualities it produced served as a powerful symbolic field on which to test their ideas about the organic relationship between the individual imagination and the soul of a people, a culture, and its environment, and the prospect of a people politically liberated yet socially and psychically unified.

The redemptive promise of American culture can be seen most vividly in Goethe's enthusiasm for the youthful intellect of a people free from the entombing memories of history. Goethe, himself the living monument of European *Kultur*, long fancied that he would steal away to America, experimenting with his own ideas about emigrating in *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796) and again in *The Travelings of Wilhelm Meister* (1821). Though he never traveled to America in body, he journeyed there in mind, devouring studies of its ethnology, geology, politics, and economy, and speculating about how the happy circumstance of its location – both geo-graphical and in the course of human history – might help cultivate the liberated spirit of its inhabitants. In 1819, he envied "Northamericans" who can be "happy" to have "[n]o ancestors and no classical soil" and who were liberated from the psychic weight of a now parched and impotent feudal and classical past. In an 1827 poetic love letter "[t]o the United States," Goethe effused:

> America, yours is the better lot
> Than is our continent's, the old.
> You have no ruined castles' rot
> Nor marbles cold.
>
> Nor is your inner peace affected
> In your present active life
> By useless thought which recollected
> Lead to useless strife.[7]

From across the Atlantic, Goethe imagined a world that promised not the absence of intellect, but rather an "inner" life returned to its right state: innocent, sloughed free of encrusted traditions, and liberated to know itself and the universe in terms of its own making.

Countering Goethe's vision of American imaginative freedom and innocence was the stronger romantic current that viewed American intellectual and cultural life as torpid, formless, and crude. Some of the most potent denunciations of American cultural apostasy came from the Austrian romantic poet, Nikolaus Lenau. Unlike most romantics, who formed their strong views of American intellect having never stepped foot on the continent, Lenau made the transatlantic voyage for a six-month stay in northwestern Pennsylvania from 1832 – 1833. He came steeped in the romantic longing for America shared by many German-speaking liberals of his generation, who envisioned it as paradise of

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untamed nature and untrammeled liberties – the poet's natural environment.

Almost immediately upon arrival, however, Lenau's exalted image of America began to collapse. Expecting a sublime landscape, he discovered a dreary, monotonous, and cold country gripped by winter. After just eight days in America, Lenau concluded that such an uninspiring environment could not create a nation of poets, only a people who lacked an eye for beauty and ear for song:

> The American has no wine, no nightingale.…[T]hese Americans are incredibly loathsome, small merchant souls. Dead, stone-dead to the life of the mind are they.…I think it seriously and extremely significant that America has no nightingale. It seems to me like a poetic curse. A Niagara voice is necessary to teach these scoundrels that there are higher gods than those that are struck off the mint.

His firsthand accounts, excessively stylized and hastily spun as they may be, present America as intellectually desolate and culturally grotesque, a study in debased imagination and stunted intellect "in all [its] frightful banality."[8]

Lenau's frightful Americans had no nightingales flying above, but, making matters worse, they had no firm ground below. Using metaphors from nature – "roots," "soil," and "earth" – Lenau employed a romantic vocabulary to question the very grounds, or foundations, of American cultural and intellectual life. His objections were quite literal: American soil failed to nourish a vibrant cultural ecosystem at its roots. Whatever traces of culture existed "have in no sense come up organically from within," he wrote. American culture was "groundless" [*bodenlos*], for its people lacked the shared historical, moral, and spiritual foundations vital

for collective imagination. Without roots in collective memory and tribal affections knitting the people to each other and to a homeland, he insisted that America was not a nation so much as a contractual arrangement: "That which we call fatherland is in America nothing more than security for one's assets. The American knows nothing, seeks nothing but money, he has no ideas consequently the state is not a moral and intellectual…Fatherland, but merely a material convention." Americans' single-minded pursuit of the here and now made Lenau thankful for the "Atlantic ocean" for providing an "isolating belt" protecting "the spirit and all higher life" back home from the deadening anti-intellectualism of America, "the true sunset land" – or, "mankind's far west."[9]

Critiques such as Lenau's smart even more when they come from our very own Ralph Waldo Emerson. Though celebrated for giving form to a distinctly American intellectual tradition, Emerson also spent his career drawing attention to its shortcomings. He insisted that the life of the mind was a life well-lived and essential to a vibrant democracy, but he worried that forces in American life worked against that vital intellectual wealth. Drawing freely from romantic thought as he articulated his own concerns about American intellectual life, Emerson sought to make sense of the conditions which had yet prevented, though one day might foster, the native, democratic genius.

"American Scholar" (1837), Emerson's most concise meditation on the American mind, is often exalted as our intellectual declaration of independence, despite the fact that it contains some of his strongest terms for describing American anti-intellectualism. Emerson expressed

concern about a "people too busy [for] letters"; a society that thinks of human life in averages and aggregates, as if men were "bugs," "spawn," and "'the herd,'"; the "sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude," which showed regard only for "exertions of mechanical skill" but no esteem for the reason and revelation wrought by philosophical inquiry and speculation. He describes the American as caught up in the immediacy of making a living, while forgetting what makes life worth living, settling for a life as *Man Doing* rather than striving to be *Man Thinking*. Even the scholar fails to marry the *vita contemplativa* with the *vita activa*. Indeed, Emerson's most pointed criticisms are not of the man in the mass, but of the specialized intellect; even our thinkers can't get thinking right. According to Emerson, the "delegated intellect" was an enemy of intellect, a man in his "degenerate state," loving answers, not questions. Emerson warned: "See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself."[10]

Emerson believed that the democratic mind could aim higher only by cultivating a new style of thinking organic to American experience. This required that it free itself from the bullying thoughts of foreign traditions. Emerson surveyed the American intellectual landscape and was chagrined to observe that the American Revolution had brought a political break with England, but not a cultural one with Europe. This, he argued, was possible only once American intellect ended its "long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands" and stopped feeding on the "remains of foreign harvests."[11] For Emerson, all truths are achieved, not inherited – prospective, never retrospective. According to Emerson, it is only the "plain old Adam, the simple genuine self" with no history at his back, who enjoys an original relationship with the universe.[12]

This is the Adamic Emerson – both herald and exemplar – of the new *Man Thinking*. And yet it's hard not to hear his lyrical celebration of the impious mind as him shouting down his inheritance. Though Emerson spent his life hoping to capture the intellectual promises of American independence, he recognized the centrality of European influences on American culture. He himself drew inspiration from Goethe specifically in his quest for the self-begotten intellect, and from the European romantics generally in his aspiration for organic thought. His writings are saturated in ambivalence about America's intellectual and cultural stature compared to Europe's. Indeed all of his examples of genius in "The American Scholar" are European, and even after thirteen years of a continual quest for American intellectual distinction, he seems to have come up empty-handed, for none of the great men he classified in his *Representative Men* (1850) was American.

This was Emerson's dilemma: American thinking was only *American* thinking in its Adamic form; and yet by his own example, his longing for newness was intimately bound up in what Harold Bloom has identified as the romantics' anxiety of belatedness. "The romance-of-trespass, of violating a sacred or daemonic ground," Bloom writes, is caught in a dilemma of its own design, for "meaning…cleaves more closely to origins the more intensely it strives to distance itself from origins."[13] In his quest for literary and philosophical originality, and his zeal to break the vessels of European intellectual authority, Emerson continually reestablished Europe as the outsized measure of undersized American intellectual life by per-

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sistently insisting that it is not. Emerson's dialectic between America as focus of a re-centered cultural map and America as "mankind's far west" and between the American thinker as the first man of a new intellectual history and a derivative mind in its "sunset," became the interpretive field upon which subsequent discourse about American anti-intellectualism would take place.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the specter of America as native grounds for anti-intellectualism continued to haunt Americans' thinking about homegrown intellect. Gilded Age liberal critics, editors, and educators – the New England born-and-bred reformers whom Hofstadter identified as the purveyors of "mugwump culture" – argued that while Americans had poured their energies into conquering a continent, they drained vital resources away from conquering the higher regions of the mind. The mugwumps viewed their role as custodians of culture, which, properly conceived and realized, was a corrective to, rather than coextensive with, economic and social life. They dedicated themselves to establishing intellectual institutions and journals of opinion, thus fostering an expansive literary public sphere to elevate the postbellum mind. Yet their writings testify to their persistent doubts that an Enlightenment republic of letters could ever compete with the growing American marketplace of goods.

In his 1874 critique of American "Chromo-Civilization," *Nation* editor E. L. Godkin offered what would become the classic formulation of the mugwumps' diagnosis of American anti-intellectualism: the smug, pecuniary "pseudo-culture" of the American bourgeoisie, which mistook the trappings of wealth for the accom-

plishments of culture. He argued that industrial democracy led to the mindless commercialization of American intellectual life. Though salutary in principle, the rise of small colleges and the common schools, the proliferation of popular educational institutions, and the expansion of print culture for middle-class audiences had vulgarized ideas and debased the process of their acquisition. This yielded a "smattering of all sorts of knowledge" that neither informed nor enlightened, but simply flattered "a large body of slenderly equipped persons" with the conceit of culture. According to Godkin, American chromo-civilization created a "society of ignoramuses" who substituted the accumulation of facts for the assimilation of real knowledge, and the consumption of goods for the cultivation of character. A perfect distillation of the capitalist environment from which it came, pseudo-culture viewed knowledge as commodity and understood material and moral progress as coextensive.[14]

Like Emerson, the mugwump critics were literary cosmopolitans with national aspirations, and yet for them the problem with American intellect was that it was all-too-native to the culture. They argued that the material conditions of the country shaped the character and quality of the American mind in an inverse relation: the history of abundance of material resources had depleted the American intellect. In his 1888 survey of "The Intellectual Life of America," Charles Eliot Norton offered a gloomy diagnosis of the growing disparity between the country's material wealth and its capacity for independent thought. As Norton saw it, while civilization is a necessary precondition for an elevated intellectual life, overcivilization is its death knell. In its short history, Norton argued, America had acquired with rela-

tive ease the material comforts and prosperity that other civilizations strove for centuries to achieve, and this "unburdened existence" had created an easygoing people, pleasant but too facile to create or even appreciate the higher arts.[15] Political liberty and material plenty had produced little depth of spirit or subtlety of mind.

Drawing on romantic ideals of culture as human cultivation, and republican notions of thrift and restraint, mugwump critics stressed that true knowledge could only be fostered from within, not acquired from without. However, if their theology preached that the kingdom of culture is within you, their liturgy suggested that it, in fact, came from Europe. Their cosmopolitan familiarity with and delight in the artistic and literary accomplishments of Europe both inspired and frustrated them. They viewed their role as critics to be cultivators of a still-fledgling American mind, to bring it out of the nursery and into the wider world. By now, the persistent characterization of American intellectual life as forever "young" was no Goethean celebration of intellectual curiosity and novelty, but an embarrassed assessment of an adolescent people unwilling to grow up. The mugwumps shared Emerson's longing for a distinctly American culture – as well as his doubts that America would ever be able to pull it off. Unlike Emerson, though, they felt they had no option but to hold European arts and letters as the measure for America's. If modernity propelled America toward a "chromo-civilization," the mugwumps felt no anxiety – indeed they welcomed – cleaving to European origins and taking refuge in belatedness.

At the turn of the last century, American intellectual life had plenty of critics, but not all agreed that the culture of cap-

italism was the source of American's intellectual transgressions. Harvard philosopher George Santayana knew American intellectual life had its problems, but none so damaging as the very solutions proposed by the mugwump critics themselves. He argued that the notion that culture affords a mental altitude from which to critique shallow commercialism was an evasive and regressive response to the intellectual challenges of modernization. If there was a problem with American thought, it was the problem of *not* viewing culture as a condition of daily life, and only as a corrective to it.

In his 1911 essay, "The Genteel Tradition,"[16] Santayana argued that Americans did have an intellectual tradition, albeit a "genteel" one, and therefore one ill-befitting its way of life and its people. It drew in part from a native source: a despiritualized Calvinism that bequeathed a lust for order and stringent moralizing, but no longer the "agonized conscience" and "sense of sin" that gave primitive Protestantism its form. The second and more dominant source, however, was the early-nineteenth-century European import, transcendentalism, which endorsed a subjective view of knowledge and an aggrandized conception of self. In Santayana's genealogy, these two intellectual legacies crossed paths in the nineteenth century and consolidated their capital in the form of the genteel tradition: a moralistic and evasive intellectual temperament, suffused with light but no shadows, an unthreatened and unthreatening view of the universe and man's place within it.

Santayana's complaint with the genteel tradition was not only that it made an easy peace with the universe, but also that it took the universe on terms foreign to the American experience. The problem wasn't that Americans had too

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little regard for intellect and ideas, but rather *too much*. Americans loved their ideas, so long as they weren't *their* ideas, but inherited ones, preferably from Europe and preferably with no life left in them. He characterized American intellect as "old wine in new bottles," and "a young country with an old mentality," arguing that America never had to wait to create its own intellectual institutions and culture of arts and letters: it simply brought them over from Europe. He viewed Americans as intellectual latecomers with minds "belated, inapplicable." However, unlike Emerson who suffered its bad conscience, Santayana's latecomers welcomed intellectual belatedness as a mark of their arrival, taking pride in the fact that they refused to "let the past bury its dead."[17] Esteem for traditions remote from experience, though, signaled no genuine feeling for ideas; custodianship, he argued, resists the *life* of the mind.

For Santayana, America economically and technologically lunged toward the future, while intellectually it looked timidly to the past. He insisted that, until it made a home *of* modern America, intellect would never find a home *in* modern America. Despite his persistent criticism of the romantic imagination, Santayana drew heavily from romantic discourse to make his point. His writings are awash in organic metaphors of "soil" and "roots," and he consistently argued that a vital culture must grow in its "native" environment and cultivate forms expressive of its own "thundering, pushing life." The American imagination needed to make peace with its skyscrapers and corporations and make friends with their raw, energetic condensation in human form: the modern American. But even Santayana expressed doubts about how arable the soil of modernity might be:

[I]t is not easy for native [intellects] to spring up, the moral soil is too thin and shifting, like sand in an hourglass, always on the move; whatever traditions there are, practical men and reformers insist on abandoning;…nothing can take root; nothing can be assumed as a common affection, a common pleasure; no refinement of sense, no pause, no passion, no candour, no enchantment.

Dynamism has its own perils, and in a culture of business vitalism, all "theoretical passions" are either "sporadic" and fizzle out, or are indifferent from overstimulation.[18] A hectic, *bodenlos* culture creates an intellect after its own form, either too fitful or too blasé to sustain itself.

Santayana's strongest verdict against American intellectual life came in actions, not words, when he gave up his tenured professorship at Harvard in 1912 and left America for Europe for good. Before he left, though, his views of American anti-intellectualism made strong impressions on many talented Harvard students and their cohort – including Walter Lippmann, T. S. Eliot, and John Reed – themselves aspiring writers and thinkers who shared his chastened view of early-twentieth-century American culture. Their grievance started out personal: they wanted to make a living from the life of the mind, and felt the normal pangs of doubt and frustration as they saw few appealing career options. They surveyed American intellectual life and perceived forces hostile to the critical intellect not only in the worlds of business and commerce, but also within the university. Indeed their harshest criticisms were directed at the academy, which they viewed as too implicated in a business culture; the imperative for specialization and profit

had strangled the life out of learning. They saw themselves as "intellectuals," which at the turn of the last century entered American English political and cultural discourse, quickly becoming a crucial term of self-definition among the young writers and thinkers eager to make sense of their roles in modern society. Instrumental to this new self-concept was the image of what modern thinkers were up against: a broader culture unwilling or unable to appreciate their service. They were sufferers, "bear[ing] the brunt of our America" and the "mass of dolts," as Ezra Pound put it.[19]

If the intellectual as social type was new, the notion that she had to suffer fools was not. In their assessments of American culture, the young critics merely provided new terms for an old way of thinking. While H. L. Mencken introduced the convention-hugging, fear-mongering "booboisie," and Sinclair Lewis the American "Babbitt," for whom the plump, smooth, mass culture of mediocrity was his native habitat, Emma Goldman was one of many radical thinkers who rediscovered the wrathful "Puritan," who policed free thought and hounded liberated spirits. Few critics, however, generated as many terminologies for and genealogies of American anti-intellectualism as Van Wyck Brooks, whose most influential work was his 1915 analysis of the inner civil war between the "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow" in American thought. He characterized "Highbrow" as an isolated, abstract, otherworldly, and effete style of thought and relationship to ideas. It viewed culture as something disciplinary and decorative, and therefore, remote from the messy problems of daily life. The "Lowbrow," by contrast, represented a style of thought that was very much of this

world: starkly practical, materialistic, uninspired by and incapable of speculative thought. Though the two tendencies rarely overlapped, they did meet in the form of a joint-stock conspiracy against the critical, engaged intellect. For Brooks, the spectacle of these dual tendencies revealed a history of the American mind rendered "stagnant from disuse," unable to contemplate "the mature potentialities and justifications of human nature." Brooks bemoaned, "[W]e have no Goethe in America and…we have no reason to suppose we are going to get one."[20]

Like others before them, the young intellectuals turned to Europe in their quest for a distinct American culture. Spurred by a thirteen-month postgraduate tour in Europe, Brooks's fellow critic, Randolph Bourne, argued that the American mind couldn't be cultivated until it reappraised its relationship with European cultures. Echoing Emerson, Bourne worried that the American mind was "parasitical" and "lazy"; it reinforces its own "cultural humility" by slavishly appropriating "alien intellect," he wrote. And yet the cultures of Europe should continue to serve American intellectual life, he maintained, but not as a giant museum or poaching ground, but, rather, as an example of living cultures that dialectically take the shape and give form to their particular experiences and environment. According to Bourne, European cultures viewed the life of the mind as a way of life; they valued experience, not the fruits of experience. Bourne admitted that abroad he enjoyed "the feeling of at-homeness which makes intelligible the world"[21] as yet impossible at home.

In trying to devise a new approach to American intellectual life and their role in it, the young intellectuals repeated the

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standard references, the same romantic discourse of "barren soil" unable to "fertilize" "native" intellect at its "roots." They also revived the Lenauian images of a *bodenlos* imagination and the wayward intellect's yearning for home. This longing for intellectual grounds continued to animate their imaginations after the war, and many joined the postwar exodus to Europe, enabling them to experiment with the intellectual life they thought still impossible in America. They formed the "lost generation," as Gertrude Stein called them, the prodigals and pilgrims who thought it better to be lost among the ruins of Europe than at home in an American wasteland.

The dramatic political realignments of the postwar era emboldened American intellectuals to rethink their narrative. America's victory, and its newfound political, economic, and military hegemony, suggested that the old mental map, with Europe at the center and America at the periphery, needed to be redrawn. America's new superpower status stimulated the development of its intellectual and cultural infrastructure at a pace and on a scale unprecedented. With the massive postwar expansion of higher education, the proliferation of think tanks and artistic foundations, and the continued growth of federal agencies in need of policy experts and political analysts, intellectuals had opportunities for institutional affiliation as never before. American intellectual life became a growth industry, and so, too, intellectuals' interest in assessing the promises of these new alignments.

In the 1952 symposium devoted to the intellectual "reaffirmation and rediscovery of America," the editors of *Partisan Review* asked prominent American intellectuals to consider the source of and inspiration for intellectual life "now that

they can no longer depend fully on Europe as a cultural example and a source of vitality." With guarded optimism, respondents including Margaret Mead, C. Wright Mills, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. considered the conditions under which intellectuals might at long last break bread with American culture. Surveying recent history, Lionel Trilling noted, with some astonishment, that "[f]or the first time in the history of the modern American intellectual, America is not to be conceived of as *a priori* the vulgarest and stupidest nation of the world." Sidney Hook argued that it was time to give up on the lament of "anti-intellectualism," "the most popular conception of the alienated artist in America and the shallowest."[22] *Time* magazine captured the widespread feelings that a truce was in order on its June 11, 1956, cover: "America and the Intellectual: The Reconciliation," with a portrait of Jacques Barzun and the lamp of learning burning bright; inside the issue one could read an affirmation of the newfound mutual affection between America and her native intellect.[23]

And yet a funny thing happened on the way to the altar. These postwar affirmations of American intellectual life appeared precisely at the moment when the sentiment of America as native ground hostile toward critical intellect enjoyed a renaissance, and when "anti-intellectualism" became the standard term for expressing these feelings. The 1950s vogue for the term was new, though the term itself and the image of America it represented were not. The old romantic conception of America, alternately exalted or debased by its conditions for the cultivation of native intellect, proved ineluctable. Reviving the notion of American anti-intellectualism as a salutary protest against all

limits and doctrine, Barzun argued that the American suspicion of theory helped shield it from totalitarian political doctrines: "'It is attention to practice and indifference to overarching beliefs that guarantee our innocence....We are innocent because we have been – we still are – too busy to brood.'"[24] Likewise many *Partisan Review* commentators argued that it was time now for America to get over her "adolescent embarrassment" of her intellectual stature, and to take on the role of "protector of Western civilization."[25]

Though the political map of the Western world had been redrawn, the old narratives about America's intellectual role were not. America was now a superpower, Western Europe its economic and political beneficiary, but, as Philip Rahv confessed, "It is hard to believe that western Europe has lost its cultural priority for good."[26] The prehistory makes clear that anxieties, like those espoused by Rahv, about American "anti-intellectualism" more properly belong to an idealized, romantic vision of America. Yet Rahv's estimation makes equally clear the enduring difficulty in shedding romance for reality in how we think about both the American intellect and the American intellectual.

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The intellectual foundations of the modern American fiscal state

At the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. system of public finance underwent a dramatic structural transformation. The late-nineteenth-century system of indirect national taxes – associated mainly with the highly partisan tariff and regressive excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco – was eclipsed in the early twentieth century by a professionally administered, graduated income tax that soon accounted for more than half of all federal tax revenue. This seismic shift toward direct and progressive taxation marked the emergence of a new fiscal polity, one guided not simply by the functional need for revenue, but by social concerns about justice, fairness, and the equitable distribution of fiscal obligations.

The intellectual debates and political struggles that took place a century ago inform our current discussions about "fundamental" tax reform. In recent years, American scholars, policy analysts, and lawmakers have decried the failings of the present U.S. tax system. At the same time, commentators have identified how the recent rise in inequality has signaled the arrival of a new Gilded Age in the United States. In an attempt to confront this increasing concentration of wealth and power, some present-day reformers have vowed to make profound changes to our existing progressive income and wealth-transfer taxes. A century ago, during a similar period of rising inequality, serious structural reform was not only envisioned but also achieved, and we would do well to recall the social and economic conditions, as well as the political will, that made that fundamental fiscal reform possible.

In the early twentieth century, the modern American fiscal state turned to direct and graduated taxes to reallocate the economic responsibilities of financing an emerging regulatory and administrative, social-welfare state. But the reformers who sought to usher in a new fiscal order intended to use tax laws and policies for much more: to redefine the meaning of modern citizenship; to facilitate a fundamental change in existing political arrangements; and, perhaps most important, to help underwrite the expansion of the American liberal state. To do all of this, tax activists understood that they needed to lay an intellectual foundation in support of direct and progressive taxation.

Among the critical reformers, a particular group of academic experts played a

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pivotal role in reconfiguring the meaning and implications of taxation. In a subtle, though significant, move, these economic and political theorists helped to supplant the prevailing "benefits theory" of taxation, and its attendant vision of the state as a passive protector of private property, with a more equitable principle of taxation based on one's "faculty" or "ability to pay," which demanded a more active role of the positive state. Led by the likes of Richard T. Ely, Henry Carter Adams, and Edwin R. A. Seligman, these German-trained, professional political economists helped dismantle the nineteenth-century orthodox theories of laissez-faire and promoted the adoption of new, more effective and egalitarian forms of taxation and state action.

The thinkers who led the movement for direct and graduated taxation emerged from similar backgrounds and experiences. Many were reared in the deeply religious environment of Northeastern evangelical Protestantism, and even those who distanced themselves from organized religion channeled their theological and ethical inclinations into their academic work and public advocacy.[1] German training and experience, moreover, bolstered their moral orientation. They, like many other aspiring American scholars, turned to German universities and mentors for their professional training in the social sciences, learning firsthand from some of the leading figures of the German historical school of economics about how historical and institutional development affected the so-called "natural" laws of political economy. And as part of their education outside the classroom, they learned about the promise and perils of the modern European social-welfare state.[2]

These scholars returned to the United States troubled by the excesses of late-nineteenth-century American industrial capitalism. The labor unrest and class conflict that resulted from the modern forces of mass migration, rapid industrialization, and uneven economic growth fortified the economists' reformist tendencies. Although they realized that they could not graft European social democracy onto American political culture, the progressive political economists sought to link the highbrow theories of the academy with the material world of the working masses.[3] They did this, in part, by challenging the prevailing system of political and economic thought and providing a new conceptual foundation for new forms of taxation. Eschewing timeless universalisms, these academic theorists believed that economic relations were embedded in a larger social and institutional matrix, one constituted mainly by law and legal processes. Thus many of the leading progressive political economists were eager to use law and legal institutions to exercise the "ethical agency" of state power. In this way, many of these thinkers were part of what legal historians have identified as the "First Great Law & Economics Movement."[4]

The intellectual movement for progressive taxation, guided by the new generation of professional economists, was part of a much larger transformation in American social thought at the turn of the century, often referred to as a "revolt against formalism." Shifting the justification for taxation from the benefits theory to the ability-to-pay principle delegitimized past standards of rigid economic thought and facilitated new ways of thinking about the social processes of modern life. This consequential transition profoundly affected the development of American liberalism, turning it away from its classical emphasis on negative individual liber-

ties and toward a new focus on collective, positive rights.[5]

For many of the progressive political economists, benefits theory and the ability-to-pay principle were contending doctrines with fundamentally different underlying social and political theories. The benefits doctrine stood for the outmoded proposition, in the progressives' view, that taxation was justified as a price paid for goods and services provided by government in exchange for tax payments. Under the benefits theory, individuals paid taxes to ensure that the neutral and limited state could provide citizens with physical and financial security, not only from each other, but from the public powers of the state. The Michigan jurist and treatise writer, Thomas M. Cooley, typified this line of thought. "The citizen and the property owner owes to the government the duty to pay taxes," Cooley proclaimed, so "that the government may be enabled to perform its functions, and he is supposed to receive his proper and full compensation in the protection which the government affords to his life, liberty and property, and in the increase to the value of his possessions by the use to which the money contributed is applied."[6] Citizens, in essence, traded tax payments solely for the benefits that they received from the state.

The benefits theory equated taxes with commercial transactions. Members of a polity had no social obligations or civic duties beyond the *quid pro quo* of paying taxes and receiving governmental protection. If taxation was one of the most commonly and consistently experienced relationships between Americans and their government, benefit theory appeared to limit that important relationship – and the civic identity that emerged from it –

to the cash nexus. Fiscal citizenship itself was reduced to a commodity.

In criticizing the benefits principle, the progressive political economists emphasized its anachronistic implications. Challenging Cooley directly, Richard Ely claimed that taxes could not be justified based on "the old fiction of reciprocity." Ely was careful in explaining that taxes were "not exchanges" or "payments" for public goods and services. "The sovereign power demands contributions from citizens regardless of the value of any services which it may perform for the citizen," wrote Ely in his 1888 tax treatise.[7]

As students of the German historical school of economics, progressive thinkers like Ely applied a thoroughgoing historicism to their analysis of contemporary American political economy and tax policy. Thus, Henry Carter Adams boldly derided classical benefits theory for ignoring how "the modern State … assumes duties far beyond the primitive functions of protection to life and property." Although such a "quid pro quo theory of taxation may have served fairly well under conceptions of governmental activity held in the early part of the century," Adams argued in 1898, "it must be regarded at present as somewhat antiquated."[8]

Edwin Seligman, the leading authority on progressive taxation, condemned the social theory underpinning the benefits principle in even starker terms. Like Ely and Adams, Seligman maintained that the benefits doctrine was based, at its core, on an obsolete conception of citizenship:

> It is now generally agreed that we pay taxes not because the state protects us, or because we get any benefits from the state, but simply because the state is a part of us.…In a civilized society the

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state is as necessary to the individual as the air he breathes; unless he reverts to stateless savagery and anarchy he cannot live beyond its confines.... To say that he supports the state only because it benefits him is a narrow and selfish doctrine. We pay taxes not because we get benefits from the state, but because it is as much our duty to support the state as to support ourselves or our family; because, in short, the state is an integral part of us.[9]

Simply put, the progressive economists used taxation as a means to renegotiate the social contract between citizens and their state. Instead of relying on abstract economic relations based on market transactions to justify taxation, they turned to social relations and the interdependent reality of modern social and political life to explain the need for direct and graduated taxes.

The progressive theorists' unified disdain for the benefits principle did not translate, however, into a single universal vision of the ability-to-pay doctrine. Adams, who believed in distinguishing between the theoretical justification for taxation and the "lawyer's point of view," relied on what he referred to as a "contributory theory of a tax." Progressive taxation was justified under such a theory because it embodied the ethical duty of social unity that citizens of a polity owed to each other and to the larger commonwealth. Unlike the prevailing "purchase theory" or benefit theory of tax, which emphasized a solitary, atomistic, and consumerist relationship between the citizen-taxpayer and the state, Adams argued that a contributory theory was based on "solidarity of social interest." For him, a "sense of organic unity and of interdependence, and consciousness of common rights

and common duties, go along with the idea of contribution."[10]

Ely pushed further in emphasizing the link between social solidarity and taxation. Quoting approvingly from a Massachusetts Tax Commission report, he wrote: "All the enjoyments which a man can receive from his property come from his connection with society. Cut off from all social relations a man's wealth would be useless to him. In fact, there could be no such thing as wealth without society."[11] Seligman took a slightly different approach. Although he agreed that the social interdependence occasioned by modern industrialism had displaced the logic of autonomous individualism, he maintained that the triumph of the ability-to-pay principle was the culmination of a long and gradual historical process driven mainly by class dynamics. "Amid the clashing of divergent interests and the endeavor of each social class to roll off the burden of taxation on some other class, we discern the slow and laborious growth of standards of justice in taxation, and the attempt on the part of the community as a whole to realize this justice," proclaimed Seligman. "The history of finance, in other words, shows the evolution of the principle of faculty or ability to pay – the principle that each individual should be held to help the state in proportion to his ability to help himself."[12]

To be sure, the practical application of the ability-to-pay principle had its limits. Accurately measuring a citizen's ability to pay taxes was a controversial issue that remained rather elusive – then and now.[13] But the progressive economists contended that their primary, pragmatic tax reform objective was not to recommend an unassailable fiscal system based on the principle of ability to pay. Rather, they aimed to demonstrate the theoretical limitations inherent in the benefits

principle. That is not to say that they thought the benefits principle had no place in tax-policy discussions; their goal instead was to make more explicit the political and social theory implicit in the dueling tax notions and, in the process, create support for a reform movement. In this sense, the political economists, like other progressive activists, used the language of ethical duties and the idiom of social solidarity "less to clarify a political philosophy than to build a political constituency."[14]

Creating a social and political movement for tax reform also meant reaching an audience beyond the academy. The progressive economists thus realized that the power of their ideas alone was often not enough to change the laws and institutions that undergirded the American fiscal system. They needed to take a more active role in the political and policy-making process by participating as consultants and part-time tax commissioners, and by capturing the attention of lawmakers.

Just as the economists and other social scientists were promoting their ideas, the American political system itself was undergoing a profound transformation. The nineteenth-century political structure of "courts and parties" was giving way to a more fractured and pluralistic system of American statecraft. The rise of a more competitive political process and greater reliance on expert administration challenged the traditional control of party politics and patronage.[15] By linking a graduated income tax to tariff reform, tax activists were able to help move fiscal policy away from party politics and toward administrative expertise. With this shift, reform-minded economic experts joined organizations

like the National Tax Association, the leading professional association of public finance experts, and other civic groups to provide an outlet for their ideas.

To make their ideas palatable for the public, the progressive economists needed to navigate between the two prevailing political positions on taxation. In leading the conceptual campaign for progressive tax reform, they needed to defend their ideas against economic and political conservatives who wanted to maintain the status quo, and against the seemingly radical populist calls for a more dramatically redistributive fiscal system.

Political conservatives, wedded to a classical, night-watchman view of the state, equated the move to graduated income and wealth-transfer taxes with creeping socialism. The conservative critic David A. Wells, for instance, contended that, except in the case of war financing, there was no place in a free republic for any form of graduated taxes based on the ability to pay. Although Wells, the former commissioner of Internal Revenue during the Civil War, was well aware of the importance of using taxes to fund an army and build a nation, he, like many old-guard commentators, opposed progressive taxation adamantly. "Any government, whatever name it may assume, is a despotism, and commits acts of flagrant spoliation," declared Wells, "if it grants exemptions or exacts a greater or lesser rate of tax from one man than from another." Arguing that graduated taxes of any sort were a form of emasculating charity, Wells concluded that "equality and manhood, therefore, demand and require uniformity of burden in whatever is the subject of taxation."[16] The progressive economists observed firsthand, often to their personal and professional

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detriment, the overwhelming power that critics like Wells held, particularly in delineating the bounds of academic freedom.

Conservative hostility to progressive tax reform, however, spread beyond social commentators and the academy and into legal institutions of power. The U.S. Supreme Court, in a rather surprising decision for contemporaries, struck down as unconstitutional the 1894 income tax, the first peace-time measure of its kind. In his concurring opinion, Justice Stephen J. Field illustrated the anxiety with which elites viewed the progressive tax movement. "The present assault on capital is but the beginning," wrote Field. "It will be but the stepping-stone to others, larger and more sweeping, till our political contests will become a war of the poor against the rich; a war constantly growing in intensity and bitterness."[17]

Addressing these conservative opponents, the progressive economists sought to demonstrate that support for graduated taxes could be compatible with traditional American notions of equality and fairness. This required first showing that critics had erroneously assumed that "progressive taxation necessarily implies socialism and confiscation." Citing David Wells's writings explicitly, Seligman claimed, "[I]t is quite possible to repudiate absolutely the socialistic theory of taxation and yet at the same time advocate progression."[18]

To do so, Seligman and his like-minded colleagues turned to marginal utility analysis, an increasingly popular economic concept in the European and American academy at the time. A variant of neoclassical economics, marginalism held that the value of a commodity was based upon the subjective worth, or utility, a consumer ascribed to it. This

value, in turn, depended upon how much of the commodity the consumer already had. Each additional, or marginal, unit of a commodity, including money, was believed to be of lesser value than the previous unit.[19] The progressive tax theorists used the notion of the diminishing marginal utility of money to contend that progressive taxation, in fact, entailed an equality of sacrifice among taxpayers. "Strict equality of sacrifice in the sense of relatively proportional diminution of burden," wrote Seligman, "thus involves progressive taxation."[20]

The use of marginalism to decouple graduated taxation from state socialism may have persuaded some critics. But the reform-minded economists faced a more amorphous, though equally formidable, kind of opposition from the political left, where the populist attraction to Henry George's single-tax theory distracted important constituencies away from the progressive tax reform movement. In defusing this opposition, the tax theorists attempted to debunk the amateur economic analysis conducted by George and his disciples and to unmask the "ultra conservative" social theory that underpinned George's call for a single-tax on land.

In his enormously popular 1879 book, *Progress and Poverty*, and in other writings, Henry George advocated for a levy only on increases in land value – a single-tax on what George referred to as the "unearned increment" of appreciated land. George's idea quickly captured the imagination of contemporary social movements. As early as 1885, Richard Ely observed that "tens of thousands of laborers have read *Progress and Poverty*, who have never before looked between the two covers of an economic book."[21]

Henry George and the single-tax appealed to a variety of grassroots, populist groups as an attack on land speculators and monopolists. Yet as the progressive economists noted, the single-tax in particular and George's political philosophy in general were premised on a conservative, if not reactionary, view of individualism. George argued that the fruits of individual labor belonged to the individual and the state had very little role to play in economic or social matters beyond levying a single-tax on land. At its core, George's single-tax appeared to be a narrow application of the benefits principle: landowners owed a duty to the state because it was the state that protected the private property rights of landowners.

The tax experts not only ridiculed George as an "unscientific" amateur, they also denounced the single-tax as an infeasible solution to the many ills of modern industrialism. At the 1890 American Social Science Association's conference dedicated to the single-tax, Seligman joined other professional political economists in berating George's "schemes" as "repugnant to our moral sense and repellant to our logic." Similarly, Ely depicted George as "an ultra conservative, for he does not believe in taxes at all, but holds them to be robbery.…The truth is, there is in modern society no such individual production as Mr. George assumes. What have I produced alone and unaided? Nothing."[22] In sum, nearly all professional tax experts loathed George's single-tax as a hopelessly reactionary panacea.

If the progressive economists did not take George's analysis of taxation seriously, they were compelled to contend with other forces on the political left advocating for a more radically redistributive fiscal system. American socialists, pointing to the experience of European nations, called for steeply graduated taxes on income and wealth as a means to confront the growing disparity of wealth and opportunity that accompanied industrial capitalism. The progressive tax reformers responded that American political culture posed serious institutional constraints on the adoption of European-style social democracy in the United States. Even Seligman, who discredited benefits theory because it elided the social connections between citizens and their state, recoiled at the implications of radically redistributive tax laws and policies:

> From the principle that the state may modify its strict fiscal policy by considerations of general utility, to the principle that it is the duty of the state to redress all inequalities of fortune among its private citizens, is a long and dangerous step. It would land us not only in socialism, but practically in communism.[23]

By operating between the two opposing political camps – between the conservative critics who equated graduated taxes with socialism and the populist reformers who advanced a seemingly more radical form of taxation – tax reformers sought to demonstrate that progressive taxation was, in fact, an assault on privilege and concentrations of wealth that did not amount to a move toward state socialism. This was no easy task. It required the progressive tax theorists to stake out a fragile intermediary position that subsequently afforded lawmakers and policy analysts an opportunity to make the existing system of public finance more transparent and fair, without threatening the fundamental prerogatives of American political culture.

The Supreme Court's decision striking down the 1894 tax law gave reformers an opportunity to forge their intermediary

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position. Although the decision was a formidable institutional obstacle, it did not mark the end of the progressive tax reform movement; instead, it galvanized tax activists to seek a constitutional amendment nullifying the Court's holding. Ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment was a long and arduous process, and the progressive economists played a key role in convincing state legislators of the amendment's popular appeal. In 1913, soon after the amendment's final ratification, the federal government adopted the country's first permanent progressive income tax. With relatively high exemption levels and moderately graduated rates, this tax law initially affected only a small fraction of the U.S. population and raised little revenue. But the law led the way in the rise of a new fiscal order.[24]

Ultimately, the moderate theoretical and political position taken by the progressive tax experts influenced lawmakers. As Congressman Cordell Hull (D-Tennessee), one of the chief architects of the 1913 law, explained: "I have no disposition to tax wealth unnecessarily or unjustly, but I do believe that the wealth of the country should bear its just share of the burden of taxation and that it should not be permitted to shirk that duty."[25] For reformers and lawmakers, then, progressive taxation implied that wealth in an industrial society was a social product, and that the distribution of social obligations ought to bear some resemblance to the distribution of social rewards.

Despite modest beginnings, the federal government soon vigorously employed its newfound fiscal powers. In response to World War I, the government established a series of revenue laws that dramatically expanded the scale and scope of the national tax system. The sheer demand for wartime revenue was certainly an important determinant of this fiscal revolution, but the progressive theorists' concerns about social justice and the distributional impact of American tax laws were equally significant. Building on the progressive economists' conceptual foundation, U.S. Treasury Department officials, many of whom were lawyers, sought to highlight the importance of fiscal citizenship to the financing of the war. These lawyers-turned-government administrators attempted to ensure that the physical sacrifices made by those who fought the war were matched by fiscal sacrifices from the affluent, who often benefited from the robust war economy. The astronomically high marginal and effective income tax rates, and the enactment of an inheritance tax and innovative levies on wartime business profits, illustrated that a new "soak-the-rich" form of taxation was taking shape. Indeed, by the end of the war levies on income and profits had come to dominate federal revenues.[26]

Although the World War I tax system was scaled back as part of the general retrenchment of the 1920s, the Progressive Era foundation of the graduated income tax remained remarkably resilient, and thus provided subsequent reformers with a conceptual base upon which to build. Another world war would trigger the second major transformation in twentieth-century American tax policy, replacing the existing "class tax" with a "mass tax" that reached a broad swath of middle-class wage earners.[27] But by the end of the 1920s, the intellectual, emotional, and cultural spade work had been accomplished; the foundations of a new fiscal polity were firmly established.

The new fiscal order that emerged at the turn of the century was by no means a radical system of wealth redistribution,

nor was it merely a conservative bulwark against more dramatic reform. Instead, the modern American fiscal state that emerged in the early twentieth century dramatically altered the distribution of fiscal burdens along the lines of both class and region. In the process, this new polity fundamentally reconstituted the meaning of modern citizenship, the existing regime of American statecraft, and the range of possibilities for robust government action. This transformation was, ultimately, a qualified success. Although it did not go as far as some social democratic reformers had envisioned, this new fiscal polity laid the foundation for and held the promise of a new, more progressive American state.

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[16] David A. Wells, "The Communism of a Discriminating Income Tax," *North American Review* 130 (1880): 328–329, 260. Ironically, while Wells was linking tax equality and uniformity with masculinity, early suffragettes were already using their status as taxpayers to fight for full citizenship. See Carolyn Jones, "Dollars and Selves: Women's Tax Criticism and Resistance in the 1870s," *University of Illinois Law Review*, 1994: 265–310; Linda Kerber, *No Constitutional Right To Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998).

[17] *Pollock v. Farmers' Loan & Trust Co.*, 157 U.S. 429, 607 (1895).

[18] Seligman, *Theory of Progressive Taxation*, 222.

[19] On the rise of marginalism, see "Symposium, Papers on the Marginal Revolution in Economics," *History of Political Economy* 4 (1972); Mark Blaug, *Economic Theory in Retrospect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[20] Seligman, *Theory of Progressive Taxation*, 239.

[21] Quoted in Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* (New York: International Publishers, 1947), 120.

[22] Edwin R. A. Seligman, "Single Tax Debate," *Journal of Social Science* 27 (1890): 4, 35, 44; Ely, *Taxation in American States and Cities*, 16–17.

[23] Seligman, *Theory of Progressive Taxation*, 222.

[24] W. Elliot Brownlee, *Federal Taxation in America: A Short History*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); John D. Buenker, *The Income Tax and the Progressive Era* (New York: Garland, 1985); Sidney Ratner, *Taxation and Democracy in America* (New York: Wiley, 1967).

[25] Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York: Macmillan, 1948); Harold B. Hinton, *Cordell Hull: A Biography* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1942), 151–152.

[26] David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[27] Brownlee, *Federal Taxation in America*, 96–97.

John Jacob Kaag

Pragmatism & the lessons of experience

Experience has lessons to impart. Its ability to teach, however, turns on our willingness to learn. Attending to the lessons of human experience brought American pragmatists of the nineteenth century to a new conception of philosophy, one that embraced the fallibilism that had long defined the natural sciences. It led them back to the abiding existential questions that underpinned the Wisdom Traditions of the past in order to explore the personal, social, and political trials of the present. These thinkers established a new intellectual tradition that allows us to "learn from experience."[1]

Classical pragmatism stood against the prevailing current of European philosophy, which continued to be motivated by Immanuel Kant's insistence that philosophy should be concerned with the limits and conditions of "pure reason," that is, reason devoid of empirical content. In contrast, American intellectuals such as Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, Jane Addams, Ella Lyman Cabot, and John Dewey held that philosophy should concern itself with the messiness of human meaning, which James acknowledged as "various, tan-

gled and painful." Philosophy ought to be understood, they thought, as the result of human beings thinking through the meaningful questions of living as embodied, thoughtful organisms. These questions can never be *purely* cerebral; they are laden with emotion, carefully negotiated in daily life, and pressed upon us in moments of personal and social crisis – always, therefore, empirically conditioned and experiential. Experience was to replace pure reason as American pragmatism's enduring lodestone.

Pragmatism took the reconstruction of experience as its principal task: the only way to respond effectively to the dilemma that philosophy faced in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1907, William James called it the "present dilemma," but it now is more accurate to call it a perennial one. It is the crisis that philosophy faces when it jeopardizes its own relevance. Academic philosophy has spent the better part of the past century earning a deservedly bad reputation. Since the time of Socrates and Aristophanes, philosophy has been accused of being only loosely tethered to the world of human affairs, and today the string appears to have been severed completely. As Dewey noted in 1917, the "recovery of philosophy" is only

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possible if philosophers are willing to take a stand with the sciences, and a variety of other academic disciplines, on the ground of human experience.

Experience: the term reverberates as a noun, a verb, and ultimately as a command. While Bertrand Russell, echoing the sentiment of traditional empiricism, reduced experience to a description of "sense-data," the classical pragmatists insisted that human experience is defined by a particular qualitative dimension; by its purpose, effect, and the living memory of past experiences. Experience is not merely something undergone, but also, and always, something actively done. Dewey's *Experience and Nature* (1925) suggests that a human being, like any other organism, continually transacts with its natural surroundings, and this observation serves as the starting point of pragmatic naturalism. For human beings, however, Dewey presents this natural transaction not as a mere fact of existence, but an ongoing question concerning the transaction's origin, history, process, and destination.

While pragmatism maintained a scientific bearing, it was quite careful not to succumb to scientism. Dewey, amenable to the studies of psychology, biology, and early cognitive neuroscience, nonetheless held that these disciplines did not give us *absolute* answers, only useful perspectives on the variety and novelty that define our transactions with the affairs of nature. James, the father of experimental psychology in America, conceded, "[E]xperience as we know, has ways of *boiling over* and making us correct our present formulas."[2] Following his father Benjamin Peirce, C. S. Peirce made a name in mathematics and physics before cultivating a reputation in philosophy. He studied under the foremost mathematicians and physicists of the nine-

teenth century, but the young Peirce still concluded, "[W]ithout beating longer round the bush … experience is our only teacher."[3] At times this teacher seems to know only one pedagogical method: the often painful process of trial and error.

Modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes, had been defined by the search for absolute and enduring principles that might serve as the foundation of human knowledge. In contrast, Peirce echoed Ralph Waldo Emerson by suggesting that experience happens as a "series of surprises" and continually – inevitably – defies the theories and principles that attempt to describe it.[4] Peirce's anti-foundationalism, however, did not signal the ultimate bankruptcy of the empirical and theoretical sciences. Unlike many relativists of the twentieth century, he did not regard uncertainty and fallibility as postulates that proved the futility of analytic disciplines; rather, insights achieved in the midst of inquiry kept these disciplines on the move. "The pragmatist knows," wrote Peirce, "that doubt is an art which has to be acquired through difficulty."[5] The belief that doubt is not something given, but something carefully acquired, distinguishes him from strains of contemporary relativism, as well as the unbridled skepticism that defined the Cartesian system. The Cambridge pragmatists dismissed the *radical* doubt of Descartes, insisting that meaningful skepticism could never be cultivated *ex situ*, beyond the constraints of a pressing and immediate situation.

Indeed the situation, indeterminate and confused, provides the occasion for genuine philosophic inquiry. Dewey explains, "[T]o set up a problem that does not grow out of an actual situation is to start on a course of dead work," and to arrive rather quickly at the dead end of "busy work." Dewey's observation

changed the ground rules for philosophy. No longer were thinkers meant to retreat to their salons and ivory towers in order to raise questions that would never be negotiated in the world of experience. Instead they were challenged to engage the world and set upon problems, in order to face questions that *ought* to be negotiated – no small challenge. This is never simply a matter of uncovering a question that lays in wait for us. According to Dewey, determining a "problematic situation" is an active process of creation and discovery. A problem arises in the midst of investigation and serves as the pivot between the indeterminacy of the present state and the determinacy that one seeks as the end of inquiry. Once a problem is identified, James suggests that we are able to "unstiffen all our theories, limber them up and set each one to work."[6]

Not surprisingly, the growing number of non-philosophers who claim the title of "pragmatist" often do so in light of comments such as James's, which indicate that theoretical progress ought to be measured in terms of it instrumental consequences. Pragmatism gets stuff done, and if one's thought effects *any type* of change in the "real world," then that thinker is a pragmatist – or so the story goes. However, this version of the story misconstrues the meaning of pragmatism and jeopardizes the future of the tradition in America. Dewey, James, and Peirce did not advocate unreflective instrumentalism. When James suggests that we set our theories to work, he does not suggest that we ram abstract explanations into the face of a relatively unaccommodating world. The world, not our theories, will inevitably win in this sort of confrontation. Instead, James understood abstract concepts as adaptive instruments that can, for the time being, help individuals and their communities

negotiate the twists and turns of experience. Pragmatism entails the cultivation of a sensitivity to our surroundings, both local and remote. James echoes Ralph Waldo Emerson's insistence that we attune ourselves to the "slightest sensorial nuance." In this respect, certainty and truth are not relative terms, but *provisional* guides that help us "feel out" the transient flow of experience and the possibility that it affords.

Human experience *is* transient; its lessons are fleeting. For all of its uncertainty, experience assures us of one thing: it will be over soon. This is the hardest teaching that experience has to offer, and it is the enduring one around which the history of Western philosophy has turned. American pragmatism could not make human experience central to its philosophy without attending to the torturous course of experience and its starkly abrupt end. James, along with his colleague Josiah Royce, sought to re-center philosophy around the hard fact of human finitude.

Early American thinkers, such as Roger Williams (1603 – 1683) and Jonathan Edwards (1703 – 1758), established human fragility and terminality as focal points of their respective philosophies. By the 1890s, as pragmatism began to hit its stride, life in New England had grown considerably easier, but human finitude remained fodder for American thinkers. Ella Lyman Cabot, a philosopher who worked closely with Royce and James at the turn of the century, put it thus: "What is our Life? A sleep and a forgetting, a happy rising and a painful setting."[7] Cabot knew that the experience of life is the all-too-hasty process of dying. And she understood, as Plato suggests in the *Phaedo*, that philosophy at its best is principally concerned with the process of dying well.

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What Cabot knew only in theory, Royce knew firsthand, having been raised in near-poverty in Grass Valley, California. He made it to Harvard, but remained at the margins of the intellectual clique there. He continues to remain at the margins of contemporary treatments of American pragmatism, too, in part because he responded to the problem of human finitude by developing "an absolute idealism," a synthesis of Christian theology and Hegelian system-building that ran counter to the methodological novelty of the pragmatic tradition. Whereas Royce maintained the necessity of an absolute God, the pragmatic method self-consciously eschewed such ideas. Royce did, though, influence pragmatism in general and James in particular in at least two respects.

First, Royce's existential insight regarding the human condition – his acknowledgment of the ephemeral and tragic character of human experience – helped temper the forward-looking optimism often associated with what would come to be known as Deweyian instrumentalism. Writing in 1894, Cabot reflected on the difference in temperament between Dewey and Royce:

> Dewey perhaps understates what Royce dwells on too much – the storm-stress aspects of life. Dewey's attitude is tremendously healthy … and he is not without feeling and appreciation as the half-unintentional touches in his books show. But could he possibly have such a wide sympathy as Royce with mystics and romanticists? Could he be as fair to them as Royce is? And if not is his position the best one! A healthy scorn for all things abstract and spiritual is a bracing tonic, but passion and pathos and the tragedy and mystery …must be met with understanding criticism not mere condemnation.[8]

Most pragmatists resisted the ingrained, often destructive symptoms of Christian ideology of nineteenth-century America, setting themselves against fanaticism of all forms and the stultifying effects that dogma had on individuals and their communities. Royce, aware of the pitfalls of institutionalized religion, recognized the valuable role that religion has, *for better and for worse*, played in the lives of individuals; this was Royce's second contribution to the pragmatic tradition. In his diary of 1873, several years prior to meeting Royce, James reflects on this value: "Religion in its most abstract expression may be defined as the affirmation that all is <u>not</u> vanity."[9] Vanity, the grim prospect that our limited efforts come to naught, defines large swathes of human experience. In spite of this fact, we doggedly, triumphantly, often irrationally marshal on. James was fascinated by this determination. His close interaction with Royce encouraged him to face the challenge of adjusting pragmatism to account for the full range and depth of human experience, an experience willfully embraced despite its inevitable limitations. According to James, pragmatism was to make philosophy more "tough-minded," more scientific, experiential and empirically grounded. Yet pragmatism was also to preserve the "tender-minded" temperament which was keenly attuned to the existential situation to which religion responds and the actionable belief that religion entails – namely that life is worth living.

But is it? In his 1895 article, "Is Life Worth Living?" James keeps the answer to that question intentionally vague: "Maybe." For the pragmatist, religious belief is an open question or possibility, not a promise. Maybe there is afterlife; maybe there is a transcendent spiritual

reality; maybe there is redemption to our suffering. James's audience was disappointed by his ambiguity, but he explained that scientific life has much to do with "maybes," and human life on the whole has everything to do with them. Scientific advancement, political revolution, social reform, evolutionary adaptation, psychological treatment: all turn upon a "maybe," a risky possibility that things may turn out otherwise. Why should we expect more certitude from religious beliefs?

Just as fallibilism does not have to threaten scientific inquiry, existential risk does not cut short life's broader projects in which human beings seek meaning. To the contrary, only by risking ourselves in an encounter with possibility do we broaden our projects and ourselves. Possibility exists at the border of selfhood, a permeable, indeterminate, precarious region that individuals explore at their own peril. The danger is real, but so, too, are the meaningful alternatives that can only be found in this experiential borderland. In "Circles," Emerson sets the groundwork for a pragmatic conception of selfhood: "There is no outside, no enclosing wall, no circumference to us."[10] This comment can cut in one of two directions, both of which provided fruitful avenues for thinkers such as James, Dewey, and Addams.

First, Emerson suggests that experience is essentially open-ended, a fact that corresponds to a metaphysical position that holds that the universe itself is not bounded by a set of determinable limits. Pragmatism maintains that there is neither a single god's-eye view to be sought nor a totalizing divine force to be worshiped. If anything is to be considered sacred, it is time itself, the medium through which individual humans work out the creative business of living. Sec-

ond, Emerson points to the fact of continuity; there are no walls that *inherently* cordon off the ground of experience. This openness is at once an invitation for communion and conversation.

The fact that modernity continues to be defined by disciplinary, interpersonal, and experiential divides has nothing to do with experience itself, but rather with the rigid conceptual schemes that individuals habitually employ, often to poor effect, in understanding their respective worlds. When an individual peers over these self-imposed walls, James believes that one catches sight of "a universe … that possesses in its own right a concatenated or continuous structure."[11] When this individual ventures beyond the narrow confines of self-definition, there is the chance to experience this relational world, with all of its subtle and novel connections, as one's own. Failing to venture, according to Emerson, constitutes "the only sin," for it forfeits the potentiality that quietly resides at the heart of being human. It is in this sense that "experience" is not only a description, but also an imperative.

If failing to recognize fertile possibilities in one's own life is a sin, it follows that individuals have a moral obligation to foster communities and societies that provide the vistas and pathways by which individuals can explore their own experiential frontiers. This is the conclusion that drove classical pragmatists into a variety of academic disciplines in order to develop living networks that embody this ideal. It led Peirce to a new vision of science as the cooperative processes of a certain type of community. In the 1890s, John Dewey extended Peirce's insight concerning group dynamics in order to place educational and democratic theory on a new footing. Jane Addams followed suit a decade later by employing it in es-

tablishing the early peace movement and cultivating social reform in Chicago. George Herbert Mead, Addams's colleague in the 1920s, adjusted this angle of vision in order to develop the basis for a significant branch of modern sociology.

At the core of the pragmatic understanding of community are three related tenets, all of which stem from experience: interpretation, pluralism, and loyalty. Experience does not come ready-made as discrete points of sense-data, but rather blooms with meaning as individuals tend it in the process of careful interpretation. According to Peirce, neither meaning nor truth are simply matters of objective fact, but rather matters of inter-subjective interpretation. It is in this sense that he states, "Nature is a book which science interprets."[12] This is not to say that the findings of science are the stuff of whim and fancy. Genuine interpretation always points to an object that is being interpreted. In the case of nature, the object of interpretation is never wholly stable, but this dynamic object can, and does, serve as the ground on which science makes its collective findings. According to Peirce, the "dynamical object" provides the limits, but also the enabling conditions, for scientific interpretation. The limits of interpretation are set by nature but also by the course of human history. Even the most novel interpretation depends on convention – the history of past interpretations – for its communicability. The pragmatists appropriated the long-held understanding of aesthetic taste as being conveyed in a common sense, and claimed that it might provide a systematic organization for the sciences.

Pragmatic common sense is a curiously flexible benchmark. It expands, contracts, and evolves under the pressure of current circumstance, in accord with the living struggles of the present. At every moment, its emergence, like the development of natural selection, depends on the precondition of variation. Without a variety of perspectives, the scientific community would be ill-equipped to deal with the indeterminacy of novel situations. The pragmatic concern for pluralism is not merely an issue of convenience or expediency, but one of experiential honesty. If we are honest with experience, we cannot neglect its variety of forms, each with its own qualitative dimension. It is impossible to anticipate which perspective will prove fortuitous in the course of human inquiry. "Fortuitous" variation is only identified in hindsight; in the midst of development there is only variation *tout court* and its continual engagement with experiential realities.

Interpretation and pluralism serve as the drivers of pragmatic inquiry, but thinkers such as Royce and James knew that these ideas lacked power without the energy of loyalty, or the will to believe. Pragmatism hoped to redeploy the notion of loyalty, often associated with the willingness to adopt the cause of a particular or exclusive group. In so doing, it maintained that the identification of individual interests with communal projects could, and should, be inclusive and seek the greatest degree of participation without compromising the personal stakes that underpin the lives of individuals.

In the 1930s, at a time when rigid ideological categories defined international and domestic affairs, John Dewey continued to express a loyalty to cultural and political pluralism. Pluralism, a vital lesson of experience, was not to remain hide-bound in lecture halls and libraries, but let loose and enacted in the public square. While Peirce and James

celebrated diversity primarily in theory, Dewey and Addams translated this celebration into projects of social activism. In so doing, they began to make pragmatism truly practical. As a founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Dewey maintained, "[A] progressive society counts individual variations as precious since it finds in them the means of its own growth."[13] He continually, if not unerringly, sought to honor, encounter, and foster diversity, taking the message of *Democracy and Education* to Japan and China in 1919; seeking education reform in Turkey in 1924 and in the Soviet Union in 1928; and chairing the Dewey Commission in 1936, which aimed to engage and critique the growth of authoritarianism in Communist Russia.

Dewey's intent as a public intellectual, however, was not to set "freedom on the march," but to explore carefully and humbly those political frontiers that remained uncharted. His initial endorsement of American interventionism in World War I quickly shifted in light of the experiential realities that emerged after the military confrontation. In a remark that remains disturbingly prescient, Dewey maintained that the war (and the subsequent peace) failed, to the extent that it prioritized abstract ideals over experiential evidence:

> [The United States] took into the war our sentiment, our attachment to moral sentiment…our pious optimism as to the inevitable victory of the "right," our childish belief that physical energy can do the work that only intelligence can do, our evangelical hypocrisy that morals and ideals have a self-propelling and self-executing capacity.[14]

The ideals of freedom and pluralism can neither march on their own nor be dictated to a foreign population. At best, they can be embodied in diplomatic missions that seek to expose alternatives and possibilities indigenous to experience and that might be cooperatively negotiated.

Advocating a genuinely pragmatic approach to foreign policy is difficult in a nation of ideals. It becomes nearly impossible when exceptionalism and nationalism are among these ideals. Jane Addams learned this lesson the hard way. Having been quicker than Dewey to denounce U.S. military involvement in the early years of the twentieth century, Addams was deemed "the most dangerous woman in America" by Theodore Roosevelt in 1917. In a time of war, cooperation was a subversive act. Her work with the Women's Peace Party stemmed directly from the social reform that Addams spearheaded at Hull House beginning in 1889. Addams suggested that instead of traveling abroad in order to experience genuine difference, one needed only open her eyes and step through any doorway in nineteenth-century Chicago, just beyond the stereotypes that bar the way of mutual understanding. The settlement house movement that Addams initiated was unique in its approach to cultural difference and took pragmatism not only as its intellectual touchstone, but as an enduring way of life.

Working among the immigrant poor of Chicago led Addams to recognize "lessons of experience" that could never be replicated in the elite academic centers of the Northeast. Residents of Hull House emphasized the value of local diversity, the unique relation that individuals living in close quarters had to language, ethnicity, gender, and class differ-

ences. Addams reinforced the pragmatic thesis that experience is never had at a distance, but only in the intimate familiarity of local and provincial circumstances. Today, provincialism has the connotations of restriction and narrow perspective. Addams, however, suggested that fostering democratic practices must begin at home, in the neighborhoods and locales where experiential knowledge takes place. She endorsed provincialism for countering the broad and damaging generalizations that accompany and exacerbate the tensions of class and race. Pragmatism was, after all, a middle-range theory that aimed to clip the wings of abstract concepts in order to ground philosophy in the particularities of everyday life. *Twenty Years at Hull House* roots Addams's pragmatic commitment in the ability and enthusiastic willingness to live amidst concrete issues of difference. Describing the residents of a settlement house, she writes, "They must be content to live quietly side by side with their neighbors, until they grow into a sense of relationship and mutual interests."[15]

Just as Emerson suggested that being quiet was necessary to attune oneself to the "slightest sensorial nuance," Addams held that a type of active receptivity was integral to identifying the subtle needs of a diverse community. The pragmatic desire to identify mutual interests stood against a bureaucratic imposition of projects and purposes on a given community. Handling social difference is never a matter of dictation and assimilation, but rather the careful process of integration in which ideals are recast in order to accommodate the widest range of living realities. This sort of accommodation and integration provided the basis for the social progressive movement on the whole, and more particularly, the pragmatic conception of meliorism.

This approach to thoughtful living and social reform seems so difficult, so ambiguous, so complicated. *So why bother?* This is perhaps the most difficult question that philosophy ever has to confront. Cabot repeatedly faced the challenges entailed in thinking, working, and living pragmatically. Being attentive to experience, and more specifically, being wide-eyed to the experience of others, caused Cabot to suffer from what she called a type of "moral sleeplessness." After a trip to Hull House in the early 1890s, Cabot began to formulate her reasons for bearing the sleeplessness that attends the social and political projects of pragmatism. She wrote, "[T]he art of living is becoming other people."[16] This pithy statement lends itself to two interpretative frames. First, individuals participate in the "art of living" to the extent that they continually and creatively expand their experiential horizons. In effect, each of us engages in a process of self-discovery, uncovering broader, deeper, and more intricate aspects of ourselves. Second, this process of self-discovery depends on an individual's ability to find oneself in a wider community of interpretation. The cultivation of selfhood is never an isolated affair, but an interpersonal project of integrating a variety of purposes and interests. Our empathetic and careful involvement with others always determines the extent to which we "become other people."

"What the true definition of Pragmatism may be, I find it very hard to say."[17] Peirce was correct when he penned these words in 1903, yet somehow it's become easier than ever to say, quite confidently, "I am a pragmatist." What exactly are we saying when we claim to be pragmatists? When William James addressed this question in his 1907 Lowell Lectures,

he concluded that this American intellectual tradition was "a *new* name for some old ways of thinking." Today it is no longer a new name. Indeed pragmatism seems rather worn down, a tool damaged by use and misuse. Like any instance of jargon, "pragmatism" risks becoming an old name with a forgotten history.

Genuinely reviving this American philosophical tradition depends on our ability to retrace and extend various ways of *thinking through experience*. Pragmatism is difficult to define because it is not one thing. It bespeaks ways, directions, and pathmarks that guide us in traversing the rough terrain of the experiential landscape. In its attempt to reclaim the original meaning of philosophia, a relatively small group of American thinkers began to do just that, giving voice to the enduring lessons that only experience has to offer.

ENDNOTES

[1] I would like to thank Dr. Robert Innis for his suggestions and encouragement in the drafting of this article.

[2] William James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," in *Pragmatism* (New York : Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), 222.

[3] Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol. 5, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1934), 37.

[4] Emerson writes, "Life is a series of surprises" ; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Circles," in *Emerson's Prose and Poetry*, ed. Joel Porte and Saundra Morris (New York : Norton Critical Edition, 2001), 181.

[5] Charles Sanders Peirce, *Writings of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol. 6, ed. Max Fisch (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1982), 498.

[6] James, "What Pragmatism Means," in *Pragmatism*, 58.

[7] Ella Lyman Cabot, "Philosophy and Nature," December 13, 1884, in Assorted Poetry, Ella Lyman Cabot Collection, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, (A-139) Folder 226.

[8] Ella Lyman Cabot, "Notebook 1892," in Philosophical Reflections, Ella Lyman Cabot Collection, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, (A-139) Folder 320.

[9] William James, "Notebook 1873," William James Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS AM 1092.9 (4500).

[10] Emerson, "Circles," in *Emerson's Prose and Poetry*, ed. Porte and Morris, 175.

[11] William James, *The Meaning of Truth* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1975), 7.

[12] Peirce, *Writings of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol. 1, ed. Fisch, 55.

[13] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York : Macmillan and Company, 1916), 357.

[14] John Dewey, "Force and Ideals," in *Characters and Events : Essays in Social and Political Philosophy by John Dewey*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph Ratner (New York : Henry Holt and Company, 1929), 631.

[15] Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York : Macmillan and Company, 1911), 126.

[16] Ella Lyman Cabot, "Notebook on Growth," in Philosophical Reflections, Ella Lyman Cabot Collection, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, (A-139)

Folder 324. See also John Kaag, "Women and Forgotten Movements in American Philosophy : The Work of Ella Lyman Cabot and Mary Parker Follett," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 44 (1) (Winter 2008) : 134 – 157.

17 Charles Sanders Peirce, *Pragmatism as Principle and Method of Right Thinking : The 1903 Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism*, ed. Patricia Turrisi (Albany : SUNY Press, 1997), 164.

Christopher Klemek

The rise & fall of New Left urbanism

The pillars of the "urban renewal order," shorthand for an interlocking set of social policies since the 1940s, were crumbling fast by the 1960s. Urban populations, especially in Western Europe, the United States, and Canada, suddenly no longer wanted the variety of once progressive-minded public programs it encompassed: highways through cities, demolitions aimed at clearing "blighted" or "gray" areas, redevelopment for public housing superblocks and other megaprojects. A slum in the eyes of a planner, it turned out, was often a resident's cherished homestead, and soon proponents of the City of Tomorrow ran up against increasing opposition. The fall of the urban renewal order was driven from below, to be sure; but the ideology of this grassroots uprising was not clearly drawn from the traditional left or right. Yet in its wake opened a fleeting conceptual space, where the fate of urban planning and policy – even urban life in general – could be debated and reconsidered, sometimes quite radically.

Striking experiments in citizen participation, or "advocacy planning," took root in Anglo-American urbanism in the 1960s and 1970s, often in the very neighborhoods that were threatened by "the federal bulldozer." In districts like London's Covent Garden, Toronto's St. Lawrence Neighborhood, and New York's West Village, citizens attempted to make city planning – and by extension urban life – more democratic and equitable, putting forward their own proposals to counter the sweeping urban renewal plans imposed by government or private developers. Each of the counterproposals, while not always successfully realized, experimented with alternative methods of meeting urban challenges – mobility, preservation, growth, affordability, and upgrading – and embodied the aspirations and ideals of residents who couldn't be easily ignored. Such residents rejected the authority of supposedly impartial experts and liberal policymakers, whose pursuit of modernization in the "public interest" seemed to come at the expense of urban neighborhoods.

Ad hoc grassroots organizing proved effective in stopping highway plans, "slum" clearance proposals, and redevelopment schemes. But such victories posed a follow-up question: must popular mobilization be only reactive? In other words, couldn't cities also be *planned* from the grassroots? At a time when the New Left was championing the idea that "the people with the prob-

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lems are the people with the solutions," an emergent "New Left urbanism" embodied hopes (in the end fleeting) for urban renewal with a humane face.

Efforts to stop the construction of highways through cities formed the first significant wave of challenges to the urban renewal order. The second half of the 1950s saw successful grassroots opposition to plans for a freeway in San Francisco along the Embarcadero waterfront and a plan for a sunken artery through Washington Square in Manhattan, and by the 1960s, this "freeway revolt" had spread to many American cities. Robert Moses had predicted, during the policy discussions that preceded the national highway program, that the portions of the network in dense urban areas would be the most likely to stir resistance. After all, unlike rural and suburban ones, these urban freeways came at the expense of large numbers of residences and businesses, negatively impacting those least likely to use the new roads and igniting a cultural clash over an urban versus a suburban vision of American life. It, too, was a clash between those who saw themselves as needless victims – a contingent sometimes dismissed as NIMBY ("Not In My Backyard") obstructionists – and those who saw some local sacrifices as necessary for infrastructure meant to serve the larger public good.[1]

These sacrifices, however, weren't equitably distributed, with poor and minority urban communities facing disproportionately higher numbers of demolitions. In fact, Moses and other advocates didn't shy away from linking urban highway construction to another agenda within the urban renewal order: the eradication of areas planners deemed obsolete or "blighted." Slum clearance proposals frequently also were based upon the undesirability of an existing neighborhood, which was condemned for its inherent characteristics, and not simply as a casualty of some larger public works project. It took longer for residents to develop the conceptual and tactical resources to challenge slum clearance schemes and defend neighborhoods on their own terms, to affirm their worthiness in the face of a rhetoric of blight. Yet this did happen, and by the early 1960s, pressure from residents in New York neighborhoods like Gramercy, Bellevue, and the West Village forced a shift in rhetoric from public officials, halted several specific slum clearance proposals, and facilitated the expansion of historic preservation statutes to protect entire neighborhoods. Unofficially, this heralded a larger cultural sea change in attitudes toward old neighborhoods, evident by the 1970s in phenomena like the revival of Brooklyn's "brownstone belt" and a growing enthusiasm for fixing up homes in Victorian districts more generally. (Incidentally, these trends were reflected, respectively, in two popular public television programs born during the period, *Sesame Street*, in 1969, and *This Old House*, in 1978.) Even the "ghetto" self-help philosophies promoted by some minority urban leaders at the time exhibited related themes of neighborhood defense and uplift.

Grassroots self-empowerment was complemented by federal legislative changes – Congressional amendments to housing legislation in 1959 and 1965, and to the highway acts in 1962 and 1968 – which revised the definitions of urban renewal to include more resident consultation and more physical rehabilitation. However, more assertive citizen participation in urban planning was not welcomed universally. As groups became more savvy and effective at obstructing

proposals, unwanted projects could be deliberately bogged down, eventually killed, through mandated hearings and court challenges – some resulting from the very legislative changes and program initiatives designed to encourage inclusion; measures intended to defuse and incorporate opposition often, inversely, fanned it. Still, U.S. urbanites increasingly believed that the sweeping powers granted to government agencies under the rubric of urban renewal had authorized a kind of undemocratic monster. Vigorous opposition, even gridlock, seemed warranted to check such tyrannical abuse of power.

While increasingly successful at opposing outside plans, citizen groups were perhaps less vocal for measures they supported, and practically none could point to any successful proposals of their own devising. Defensive battles often obscured the real point: that neighborhoods wanted to gain some control to pursue their own constructive programs. In the early 1960s, the New York traffic commissioner expressed a common criticism of the negative tactics deployed so effectively by a West Village neighborhood organization: "I have yet to hear of anything in New York that that group is for!" Indeed, the group in question, led by Jane Jacobs, deliberately chose to shelve its positive goals until after renewal plans were defeated, for fear they might be co-opted as tokens of community participation. Some groups, however, did not wait for the dust to settle before devising counterproposals; they used them as rallying points against official plans. And many others took up planning in the wake of victories.

Community groups didn't invent the notion of democratizing the urban planning process. By the late 1940s and 1950s,

figures such as Paul and Percival Goodman, Peter and Alison Smithson, and adherents of the British "townscape" movement advocated a certain populism in design. Social scientists including Herbert Gans, Marc Fried, Michael Young, and Peter Willmott raised questions about how well the public was served by urban renewal. And Jane Jacobs's 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, publicly challenged the expertise professed by credentialed urbanists; it granted a folk wisdom to the various preferences of average city dwellers, whose implicit ratification of what worked seemed at odds with fashionable planning prescriptions.[2]

The most relevant ideas, however, were those that emerged from the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Fine Arts. Urbanists who studied and taught there in the 1950s were riven by tensions between advocates of social scientific methodologies and those who were concerned primarily with urban design questions. Denise Scott Brown, a graduate student who emigrated from London to study at the school in 1958, characterized the divide as "analysts" versus "artists." Those debates were suddenly complicated, even radicalized, by a newly aroused political sensibility and the more activist posture that accompanied it. Scott Brown recalled witnessing at Penn what would later be dubbed the New Left:

> Here, long before it was visible in other places, was the elation that comes with the discovery and definition of a problem: poverty. The continued existence of poor people in America was a real discovery for students and faculty in the late 1950s. The social planning movement engulfed Penn's planning department.[3]

That "social planning movement" found its first systematic expression

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in Paul Davidoff, who came to Penn in 1956, initially as a planning student and then as an instructor. Combining training from Yale Law School with a passion for social justice, Davidoff saw urban planning as a power struggle, a scramble for scarce resources. In particular, he envisioned the planning process as something analogous to the adversarial system of jurisprudence. Planners, he felt, only deluded themselves by thinking anyone could objectively identify and pursue some sort of abstract public interest. Instead, Davidoff saw only contending forces – and often grossly unequal ones. The poor and otherwise disenfranchised groups lacked a strong advocate in planning deliberations, and to rectify this, Davidoff imagined an urbanist analogue to the public defender – "advocacy planners" – who would function more like community organizers, helping citizens of modest means to voice their concerns (usually their opposition) about proposals sponsored by politically or economically powerful constituencies. Davidoff consequently rejected fine arts training conventions, like the design studio, as overly concerned with aesthetics – as, in effect, too conservative or "imperial"; he preferred to sensitize planning students to sources of social conflict like police brutality. Together with his protégé, graduate student Thomas Reiner, he drafted a theoretical framework for a more politicized approach to planning, publishing a set of highly influential articles over the early 1960s in the professional journals read by urbanists.

As Davidoff was setting forth his radical theoretical analysis in Philadelphia, pragmatic citizen groups in New York City were finding their own routes to something remarkably similar. Jane Jacobs was a key figure in this respect, and by 1962 she had already made three distinct, significant interventions on the urban scene: releasing her controversial book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961; organizing her neighborhood in opposition to a slum clearance proposal for the West Village in 1961 – 1962; and leading, beginning in 1962, a citywide coalition to defeat the lower Manhattan expressway plan. These three dramatic strokes were each of lasting importance for New York City, and perhaps for urbanism generally. But all of them were *reactive*, defensive maneuvers against threats posed by unwelcome policies. In a letter congratulating Jacobs on her victories, Lewis Mumford warned her against "improvising the means of democratic expression each time, at a heavy cost," urging instead "a more permanent local organization" than such ad hoc opposition could supply. Other city residents also sought more durable protections, and they were increasingly willing to take proactive, preventative actions against perceived threats to neighborhood stability. The historic preservation statutes being enacted by the mid-1960s offered some protection, but it was relatively superficial – that is, exclusively architectural. The time had come to offer some concrete alternatives on the social, economic, and political fronts as well.

Jacobs and her like-minded neighbors formalized their ad hoc opposition (the Committee to Save the West Village) into a permanent neighborhood association, which allowed residents not only to set their own priorities, but also effectively advocate for them. Most of these goals proved relatively modest; among five subcommittees listed in a 1962 newsletter were garbage clean-up, tree planting, and property improvement. But tucked innocently within this list was a more ambitious aim: the creation

of a working group to look into the possibilities for low-cost "experimental housing." Including this project announced that the group intended to take neighborhood development into its own hands, challenging for dominance both private market forces, like real estate speculation, as well as those public agencies hitherto delegated the authority for making planning decisions. The committee also pointedly adopted a set of inviolable principles in an effort to pursue housing alternatives without engaging in the standard operating procedures of urban renewal: Title I "write-downs," eminent domain, condemnation, and relocation.

The West Village boasted residents with eclectic skills – from poets to longshoremen – and some of these proved relevant to such a project. Jacobs herself was certainly well-acquainted with the politics and considerations involved in planning, and her husband was a practicing architect. Nevertheless, the West Village Committee eventually turned to the architectural firm of Perkins & Will to give final form to the residents' ideas. Indeed, technical skills and professional expertise, not to mention other key resources like outside financing and official approval, were all necessary for the ultimate success of any community proposal. Yet the participatory process fundamental to the West Village Committee ensured that residents' goals and concerns were incorporated into the project from its inception. This was a direct challenge to the urban planning status quo.

After a year of preparatory work, the committee's proposal was unveiled on the front page of *The New York Times* in May 1963. The plan for "the West Village Houses" envisioned a series of buildings scattered along Washington Street sites, where stretches of the elevated freight

tracks (a.k.a. the "high line") of the New York Central Railway had been demolished. It proposed a handful of small, five-story walk-up apartment buildings, with orientation and scale meshed with existing buildings, and with mixed retail uses at street level.

There were similar stirrings among neighboring community groups on Manhattan's East Side. The Gramercy Neighbors successfully rebuffed a slum clearance proposal promoted by Robert Moses in 1956, by advocating for rehabilitation instead of demolition. After Moses shifted that scheme to a neighboring community, the Bellevue South Preservation Committee sought to replicate his defeat, and local architects, led by Mitchell Saradoff, drafted an elaborate counterproposal that emphasized infill construction with minimal clearance. (In spite of this, the city condemned the Bellevue neighborhood in 1964.) Residents affected by an East Village slum clearance proposal formed the Cooper Square Committee in 1959. Echoing the West Villagers' refusal to be displaced, the group developed an alternative plan over the 1960s, with consultation from MIT-trained planner Walter Thabit.

Urbanists in academic and professional planning circles rushed to get behind these grassroots developments, with Paul Davidoff's ideas providing the rationale. 1964 proved to be a critical year for this shift. Beginning that year, Thomas Reiner devoted some of his Penn classes to the plight of a Philadelphia neighborhood facing destruction by a crosstown expressway along South Street. (In 1968, that same community provided Denise Scott Brown's fledgling design firm with its first commission: the firm served, essentially, as the advocacy planners for the opposition groups.)

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Meanwhile, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, planning student Chester Hartman, sympathetic to Davidoff's critiques of the overly aesthetic focus of studio training, had left the Harvard Graduate School of Design to research a PhD on slum clearance in Boston's West End. In 1964 he became involved with several Boston-area community groups opposing the Inner Belt highway through Cambridge and urban renewal projects in Allston. He set up Urban Planning Aid, Inc., a pro bono advocacy planning practice with Lisa Peattie, Robert Goodman, and others. This "counter-planning force," in Hartman's words, assisted neighborhoods including Roxbury and the South End.[4]

Also in 1964, C. Richard Hatch organized the Architects Renewal Committee in Harlem (ARCH), a neighborhood-based advocacy planning firm led by young African American urbanists. Hatch was soon joined by J. Max Bond, a Harvard-trained architect with previous experience in France and Ghana, and eventually the staff grew to over a dozen. The group's initial projects included advising tenants on their rights and surveying the neighborhood's housing stock, promoting both rehabilitation and infill housing. Davidoff sat on the ARCH board, a connection which the organization's publications made explicit:

> We at ARCH believe strongly in the advocacy planning concept. We believe that neighborhood involvement coupled with technical sensitivity to community needs is essential to the planning process if it is to be at all relevant to Black and Spanish-speaking people.[5]

One of ARCH's leaders, Arthur Symes, put it this way: "Architecture and planning are just too important to be omitted from the lives of people who happen to be poor."

These assorted experiments in New Left urbanism flourished not only because of a shift in the *Zeitgeist*, but also because of the support of powerful patrons (at least for a time). Private philanthropies, particularly the Ford Foundation, provided early seed grants for ARCH and other urban neighborhood organizations. And from 1964 onward, under various Great Society initiatives to tackle poverty, civil rights, and urban problems, federal funds supported the activities of numerous community organizers via the Labor Department's Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) or the Model Cities program of the newly formed Department of Housing and Urban Development. When New York City elected the liberal Republican John Lindsay as a reform-oriented mayor in 1965, he championed measures to devolve power and accountability to "neighborhood city halls," and he lent his support to the West Village Houses in particular, helping the community group obtain permits from unsympathetic city officials.

Just as New Left urbanism gained powerful political patrons at the local and national levels, it also became ensconced in the major institutions of professional urbanists as well. In summer 1964, a group of activism-oriented urbanists founded Planners for Equal Opportunity (PEO). Charter members included Paul Davidoff, Herbert Gans, Chester Hartman, Marshall Kaplan, and Walter Thabit. PEO immediately began to agitate professional organizations, training programs, and planning practitioners for greater inclusiveness.[6]

In 1964, the planning program at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute gave community advocacy its first permanent institu-

tional role through a program, funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, to consult residents in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. By 1965, Penn had abolished the traditional studio method from its planning curriculum. In 1966, Harvard decided to incorporate advocacy planning into its curriculum, and the Graduate School of Design asked Chester Hartman to return as a faculty member and set up the Urban Field Service, a student version of his Urban Planning Aid practice.

Thus radical "anti-planning" advocacy, once avant-garde, came to be seen as mainstream, as traditional technocratic expertise in urban policy fell into disrepute. This paralleled, and even slightly anticipated, the eroding support for the foreign policy of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Washington's "best and brightest" – no surprise then that the student movement, so galvanized by antiwar sentiment, took up community planning as a complementary cause. As sit-ins on campuses nationwide expressed grievances related to Vietnam, curricula, and governance, they also frequently included the plight of poor and minority residents from their respective college towns. Advocacy planning, with its theoretical roots in graduate schools of fine arts, and its practical beginnings in disparaged neighborhoods, made its way into the moral consciousness of the collegiate middle class.

A high-water mark in popular support can also signal the start of a receding tide. Any full account of the major social movements of the 1960s – student, antiwar, women's rights, and civil rights – must incorporate the powerful backlash that their more radical wings provoked. Dramatic campus sit-ins, for example, hardened ideological lines and alienated many liberal faculty members from students, and many whites took violent urban riots as justification for abandoning any sympathy for the plight of poor blacks.

Advocacy planning was swept up in the same shifting tides. There were certainly lasting achievements, large and small: Mayor Lindsay endorsed Walter Thabit's Cooper Square alternative plan in 1968; it was officially adopted by the city in 1970. The Pratt Center's community work under Professor Ron Shiffman continued uninterrupted for decades. Other outcomes were more ambiguous: ARCH helped organize opposition to Columbia University's plans for redeveloping Morningside Park into a campus extension; the protests succeeded in stopping the project, though large-scale counterproposals that ARCH developed were never constructed. The West Village Houses finally broke ground in 1974, but official foot-dragging and rising construction costs had stripped the project down to bare bones. Bankrupt by the time the project was completed, the community organization lost control of the development it had planned as the city foreclosed and passed ownership to outside investors.

In Philadelphia, the South Street expressway proposal was eventually dropped. Denise Scott Brown's role as a consultant for the community's anti-crosstown fight had consisted primarily of promoting appreciation for that neighborhood's messy vitality; in public forums she prevailed on policy-makers to see the area as something to be preserved rather than eradicated. She did so by executing hardly any design and very little planning, despite her fine arts training. Of such advocacy planning she said, "Although it underrates both artistry and analysis, it is really the only moral method of planning

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and I have tried to follow it as a practitioner."7 However, almost no comparable opportunities surfaced subsequently, and her firm ultimately made its name through designs for high-profile private clients like Ivy League universities and major cultural institutions. Neighborhood groups, at least those in poor areas, simply did not command the resources to retain professional planners.

Just like public defenders, advocacy planners, as Davidoff envisioned them, would need to rely on the commitment of public funding to sustain their activities on any permanent basis. Initially, such funds were available as a result of various Great Society programs. But policy intellectuals like Daniel Patrick Moynihan soured on the ideal of "maximum feasible participation" that had animated the OEO's support for neighborhood initiatives. Sporadic riots, sustained rises in crime, and accompanying fears of social decay helped feed a sense of crisis and despair. Moynihan, along with other influential "neoconservative" social scientists, including Edward Banfield and Martin Anderson, suggested that issues surrounding racialized urban poverty might fare better under a policy of "benign neglect." President Nixon obliged, declaring, in 1973, a general moratorium on public housing outlays and related urban spending, and, by 1974, ending programs like Model Cities and the OEO. Some urban aid continued in the form of "block grants," but advocacy planning initiatives could no longer count on significant federal funds. Meanwhile, Mayor John Lindsay's proposals for empowering neighborhoods through "little city halls" were consistently frustrated by resistance from traditional partisan power centers in New York politics, and they did not survive after he left office in 1973.

This political sea change had analogues in the urbanist establishment. Paul Davidoff left Penn in 1965, teaching briefly at Hunter College before turning from 1969 onward to independent work on racial integration in suburbia. Chester Hartman, after vocally supporting the Harvard student strike and criticizing the administration and his planning faculty colleagues, was fired in 1970 through an acrimonious process that rejected his teaching approach as "political strategy more than …city and regional planning." And what of the PEO's attempts to shift the professional establishment? One of the PEO's founders remarked at the sudden demise of an institution "that had been an important force in planning issues … but which essentially had withered away by the early 1970s."8 Advocates of New Left urbanism found themselves, after a brief moment at the center, at the margins once again. And U.S. city residents, having pressed for a more humane strategy of urban renewal, were left instead with basically none at all.

The paths of similar movements abroad led in both overlapping and divergent directions. In London, resistance to the urban renewal order appeared at least as early as the 1959 plan to redevelop Piccadilly Circus, which was delayed and eventually dropped. A more systemic freeway revolt was manifested citywide by the late 1960s, under the banner of "Homes before Roads," and gained traction within the Labour ranks by 1971. When that party won control of the Greater London Council (GLC) in 1973, the new official policy became "Stop the Motorways."9 This shift abruptly halted work on the West Cross Route, notably leaving the section of the M41 begun near the Shepherd's Bush area of London with an ele-

vated highway spur to nowhere. All of this paralleled NIMBY-style developments in the United States.

By the mid-1970s, though, community groups were poised to move beyond NIMBY opposition, and advocacy planning began taking hold in the United Kingdom just as its influence waned in U.S. cities. For example, residents opposed a redevelopment plan for London's Covent Garden neighborhood. A lead planner on that very redevelopment proposal, Brian Anson, with strong attachments to the working-class community, defected from the GLC and organized residents to develop alternative plans for their neighborhood. He brought together locals with students from the Architectural Association to make counterproposals for reusing abandoned industrial buildings. After the national government intervened to stop the clearance scheme and provide historic preservation designations, the GLC incorporated some opposition group members into a citizen participation body, and in 1979 the redevelopment of a former printing factory closely followed the ideas developed by Covent Garden residents.[10]

More extensive examples flourished in Canada, particularly in Toronto. There, practically the entire civic reform movement could be understood as a large-scale experiment in New Left urbanism, encompassing consecutive municipal administrations that gained power throughout the 1970s. Once again, freeway revolts provided the spark: the rejection of Toronto's urban renewal order was catalyzed by an expressway proposal for the Spadina Road corridor, which prompted a grassroots rebellion that included Jane Jacobs, who had recently immigrated to Toronto. In contrast to U.S. examples, however, scattered opposition groups citywide united,

even crossing class lines, behind a slate of nonpartisan, anti-renewal candidates. While such alignments formed in U.S. cities only as fleeting ad hoc opposition to specific projects, the Toronto reform movement gained a foothold on city council in 1969 and soon came to dominate, capturing the mayoralty by 1972 under a slogan of "community organizing." This urban regime change empowered a series of administrations to transform – not just oppose – traditional urban policies; a primary objective became preservation of the character of Toronto's "core area" against threats from both destructive public policies, as well as private market forces. The new planning ideals were demonstrated most clearly in a forty-five-acre public/private redevelopment project for a former industrial area near the waterfront. The St. Lawrence Neighborhood, largely redeveloped between 1974 and 1979, featured new construction that extended Toronto's traditional street grid, mixing uses, building types, and incomes, while avoiding displacement and demolition. The experiment went a long way toward realizing the sort of humane urban renewal that citizen groups had advocated in New York. Not coincidentally, Jane Jacobs was a key advisor to the project.[11]

Contrasts within Anglo-American urbanism should not be overdrawn, particularly in the long view. Just after the Covent Garden episode, grassroots planning was completely marginalized in London's Docklands, the signature redevelopment project under Margaret Thatcher, whose administration was even more hostile to leftist urbanism than Nixon's had been. Toronto's reform movement eventually dissipated back toward traditional party rule. And by the 1980s, preserving neighborhoods – not just architecturally, but by assur-

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ing affordability for a mix of income groups – was difficult all around; communities in London, Toronto, and New York all wrestled with the challenges of gentrification. Nevertheless, each of these cities witnessed vigorous expressions of a more democratized urban

politics through the advocacy planning initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s. Those experiments with New Left urbanism, some modest, others more ambitious, have left behind tangible legacies in the built environment of these cities.

ENDNOTES

[1] Raymond A. Mohl, "Stop the Road: Freeway Revolts in American Cities," *Journal of Urban History* 30 (5) (2004): 674–706.

[2] Christopher Klemek, "Placing Jane Jacobs within the Transatlantic Urban Conversation," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 73 (1) (2007): 49–67.

[3] Denise Scott Brown, "A Worm's Eye View of Recent Architectural History," *Architectural Record* 172 (2) (1984): 69–81.

[4] Chester W. Hartman, *Between Eminence and Notoriety: Four Decades of Radical Urban Planning* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for Urban Policy Research, 2001), 6, 18–20.

[5] Architects' Renewal Committee in Harlem report, *East Harlem Triangle Plan* (Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, 1968).

[6] Walter Thabit, "A History of PEO: Planners for Equal Opportunity" (unpublished manuscript, City Planning Dept., Cornell University, 1999).

[7] "Urban Concepts: Architectural Design Profile 83," *Architectural Design* 60 (1–2) (1990): 14.

[8] Hartman, *Between Eminence and Notoriety*, 29, 380.

[9] Mick Hamer, *Wheels Within Wheels: A Study of the Road Lobby* (London: Routledge, 1987), 60–63.

[10] Brian Anson, *I'll Fight You for It: Behind the Struggle for Covent Garden* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1981).

[11] Christopher Klemek, "From Political Outsider To Power Broker in Two 'Great American Cities': Jane Jacobs and the Fall of the Urban Renewal Order in New York and Toronto," *Journal of Urban History* 34 (2) (2008): 309.

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Risking Ralph Ellison

When Ralph Ellison said that "the joke [is] at the center of the American identity," he also meant that the joker is at the center of American life. In a rapidly changing liberal society, with fluctuating standards and values, the joker is an "American virtuoso of identity who thrives on chaos and swift change."[1] For the joker, identity is not a fixed principle, established once and for all, but a fluid masquerade, an ironic display of masks and styles, gestures and titles, which accrue around a space that comes to be known as the "self."

A great deal of work on identity politics has focused on similar constructions of racial identity through complex cultural appropriations linked to masking, minstrelsy, and passing. But Ellison is more optimistic about these dynamics: he sees the absurd mix of styles that emerges from what he calls "pluralistic turbulence" as the only appropriate response to the absurdities of American politics and history.[2] Accordingly, anyone who assumes too serious a relationship with his own identity – anyone who refuses to play the joker – will likely be duped by more powerful jokers still.

In Ellison's most important and best known work, *Invisible Man* (1952), the narrator does not learn how to joke until the end, when he finally concludes, "[I]t was better to live out one's own absurdity than to die for that of others."[3] Even then, however, the Invisible Man hardly proves a comfortable and confident joker. He retracts a joke he plays on a drunken woman attempting to seduce him, and he abandons the joke he plays on the Brotherhood almost as soon as he undertakes it. Ellison endorses joking as a survival strategy in liberal societies, but he also worries about the power jokers could acquire, and the violence they might do with it. If the joke really is at the center of American identity, *Invisible Man* raises the possibility that those in power might claim joking as their own prerogative, and systematically deironize politics and identity for everyone else. Ellison poses that problem but doesn't resolve it, issuing an insightful and still-relevant caution about the politics of mid-century liberalism. Liberal society might facilitate joking through its own chaotic turbulence, Ellison hopes, but it also might inhibit joking, if it merely simulates that turbulence by structuring daily life ever more comprehensively through the modern calculus of risk.

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Ellison's master metaphor for American liberal society in *Invisible Man* is the game. The Invisible Man equates experience with a game dozens of times, and Bledsoe and Burnside "the vet" both urge him to play it better. Ellison stocks the novel with many different kinds of games, the most prominent of which is boxing, but he grounds his analysis of joking specifically in the dynamics of gambling. When the Invisible Man eventually wonders, "What if history was a gambler, instead of a force in a laboratory experiment," he begins to see the world as Ellison does, as a game ideally suited to jokers, rather than agents of brute force. The Invisible Man clearly has poker in mind because he goes on to wonder whether history has an "ace in the hole."[4] Poker, especially stud poker, surfaces regularly throughout the novel at a number of key moments. The seven letters the Invisible Man receives from Bledsoe seem to him like "a hand of high trump cards" in a game of seven card stud; Burnside advises him to "Play the game, but raise the ante."[5] And in an oblique but telling reference, a taxi driver archly pronounces the Invisible Man a "game stud."[6]

That Ellison prefers the term "joker" over the traditional African American folk term "trickster" reveals much. Brer Rabbit and other tricksters defy and disrupt the plantation hierarchy from within, but that hierarchy is fundamentally unshakeable. Jokers, however, disrupt a different kind of hierarchy, the aristocracy of kings, queens, and jacks who rule the deck of cards. Whereas Southern slave-owners patterned their social relations on fixed aristocratic castes precisely to inhibit social mobility, the aristocracy of the deck of cards undergoes periodic reshuffling. Standing in for modern liberal society, the deck of cards acknowledges real power disparities,

but it also expects regular power upheavals. More importantly, it makes the joker the most consequential card in the deck, because only the joker can change identities, temporarily usurping and using royal power while leaving the basic power structure intact. Such disingenuousness has an important role for poker players, too, because poker rewards, and even requires, the sanctioned deceit otherwise known as bluffing. Poker often functions in American culture as a metaphor for the entire system of liberal-capitalist competition between equals. With no house to take a cut, and no referee to enforce the rules, the players manage things for themselves. The preferred game of cowboys and rugged westerners in countless frontier novels, poker allows stoic heroes like Owen Wister's Virginian to act out key liberal values in a world both refreshingly and terrifyingly free of law and order.

However, even as *Invisible Man* absorbs and extends this traditional account of poker, the novel also presents a second set of references to a very different kind of gamble, the lottery. When the Invisible Man pays Mary Rambo a hundred dollars, he pretends the money came from "playing the numbers." Later, he compares his superstitions to those of "chronic numbers players." But of all the gamblers in the novel, the most important is B. P. Rinehart, the "number man," who runs an illegal private lottery in Harlem.[7] Unlike poker games, lotteries are centrally organized and vertically structured. They inhibit interactions between players and make each bet a private affair between a single player and the house. So if poker idealizes liberalism as free and voluntary play among equals, the lottery introduces important cautions and qualifications, and suggests that a liberal society might be more systematically structured and centralized

than it first appears. This is especially true given that "Rine the gambler" is also the most flamboyant and successful joker in *Invisible Man*; for like the joker in a deck of cards, Rinehart has no identity except when passing for someone else. By shadowing its persistent references to poker with equally persistent references to the lottery, and by linking both to jokers and joking, *Invisible Man* asks readers to consider that perhaps American liberal society is not just a game that facilitates joking, but is, instead, a game perpetrated by a joker. That joker promises to dispense what the Invisible Man calls "infinite possibilities" through the energizing risks of gambling, but he does so without actually participating in the game.[8]

Poker and lotteries do share certain basic features intrinsic to all gambles. In both, players make deliberate choices that lead to, or correspond with, one of a number of different possible outcomes that cannot be known in advance. Possible outcomes are always finite and limited, however, so when the die is cast the player does not exactly throw open the doors to chaos and anarchy. Instead he or she starts an operation that has just six possible results: gambles generate uncertainty, but they structure and limit uncertainty, too. Compared to the potentially limitless set of contingencies one might experience in daily life, the gamble actually narrows the possibilities considerably. In doing so, the gamble compels deliberate choice at the moment of uncertainty, as the gambler bets on the future course of events and accepts full responsibility for the outcome.

Traditional liberal economic theory tends to treat gambles in terms of rational choice. Informed agents choose to take risks through investments, in occupational hazards, or at the roulette table, having calculated whether they stand to gain or lose in the process. But rational choice theory has never been very good at explaining why people bet against the odds or the house, and so it charges many gamblers with calculating badly, acting irrationally, or substituting superstition for reason. Ellison turns that argument on its head. The Invisible Man's determination to "play in face of certain defeat" sounds like an irrational choice, but it also may have a more political purpose.[9] To put it simply, free and responsible individuals do more than just choose to gamble; the ritual of the gamble also validates players as responsible and free. At the moment of the gamble more than one thing can happen, which confirms the open-endedness of the world. At the same time, the gamble compels an act of choice at precisely the point where multiple paths branch toward the future. The differences between those possible outcomes confirm that the gambler's choices are decisive. Thus it matters not at all whether the gambler wins or loses; it only matters that the gamble structures his or her choices as *real* choices, both freely made and genuinely consequential, which losing demonstrates just as well as winning.

If these dynamics were limited to casinos and card games, they would be interesting but isolated cultural phenomena. Ellison, though, recognizes that gambling is really just one manifestation of a much broader politicizing of risk by a burgeoning risk industry. Modern risk analysis turns a whole range of activities into gambles: statistical prediction and analysis makes eating shellfish, driving small cars, breathing urban air, or even exposing oneself to the sun seem like wagers in an uncertain game. The point is not that these kinds of activities are gambles in any essential way, but that

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modern society defines them as such, by estimating odds, publishing that information widely, and then asking citizens both to choose wisely among the various options and to bear responsibility for the results. Purveyors of risk information usually claim that their rational and scientific assessments help individuals choose safer or more beneficial courses of action. Perhaps so, but in the process they also confront risk consumers with an ever proliferating array of private risk situations. Attempting to mitigate one risk, such as the risk of breast cancer, forces an encounter with a new risk, such as the risk of radiation from a mammogram. The island of safety and security that risk analysis promises to deliver never comes into view because each risk decision only delivers us to ever more numerous and vexing risk assessments still.

German risk theorist Ulrich Beck argues that residents of modern risk societies undergo what he calls risk "individualization," a process in which the apparatus of risk analysis produces citizens who regard themselves, and agree to be regarded, as private, decisive, and responsible agents, capable of navigating a complex and changing world. According to Beck, in a risk society "new forms of 'guilt ascription' come into being," as risk experts "dump their contradictions and conflicts at the feet of the individual and leave him or her with the well-intentioned invitation to judge all this critically on the basis of his or her own notions."[10] I would take Beck's analysis a step further and say that encounters with risk actually produce liberal individuals, ideal subjects thereby validated as responsible and free, and so theoretically equipped to go it alone. In this context, institutionalized gambling is but one of many instruments of liberal subject formation, and not

substantively different from risk institutions like the weather bureau or a department of public health. Even as institutions of risk analysis cater to an alleged capacity for free choice, they also create the capacity for free choice by structuring uncertainty in ways that afford agents with endless opportunities for decisive action. Gamblers, then, do not really gamble at all, but simply lay claim to liberalism's most cherished virtues – freedom and responsibility – which, at worst, they buy at the cost of their long-term losses.

Although *Invisible Man* acknowledges the appeal of these dynamics, it also recognizes their danger. Again and again, the Invisible Man discovers that he had been "[a] tool just at the very moment I had thought myself most free."[11] The primary gamble through which this occurs is not a conventional gamble at all, but the risky business of improvisational speaking. To speak without a script, to voice words spontaneously and impulsively, promises freedom from rigid prescription and plan. Superficially, the novel can be read as the story of the Invisible Man's growing ability to speak spontaneously and for himself. His first speech after the Battle Royal cribs Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition address. In it the Invisible Man "spoke automatically" and "could not leave out a single word. All had to be said, each memorized nuance considered, rendered." Only when he deviates from the script, either by accident or impulse, and says "social equality" instead of "social responsibility," does he seem to speak for himself.[12] Eventually such impulsivity becomes the norm. When he speaks at the eviction he confesses, "I didn't know what I was going to say." During his first speech to the Brotherhood he admits that he "gave up trying to memorize phrases and simply allowed

the excitement to carry me along." By speaking improvisationally, the Invisible Man courts risk, hazarding something that might be lost in the process, which turns out to be nothing less than the self: "If they laugh, I'll die!"[13]

The novel predicates its apparent approval of improvisation's risks on the aesthetics of jazz, about which Ellison himself was expert. One common account of jazz sees it as a proving ground for spontaneous, free, and improvisational self-assertion. If early versions of that argument sometimes linked jazz improvisation to suspect notions of African primitivism or libidinal irrationality, more recent arguments read improvisation more productively, as an escape from false consciousness or as opposition to Western rationality. Such claims have a great deal of merit, but mapping them onto the Invisible Man's oratorical improvisations implies a similar affirmation of his own unscripted impulses, a reading the novel finally does not sustain.

The most obvious problem with that reading is that Brother Jack informs the Invisible Man that "you were not hired to think," only to speak.[14] His improvisation thus must be purely formal, merely channeling the ideas of others. Ellison's reservations about improvisation appear more subtly in the novel's treatment of a conflicted source, Ralph Waldo Ellison's own namesake, Ralph Waldo Emerson. *Invisible Man* is haunted by Emerson. Two characters named Emerson play key roles in the Invisible Man's fortunes, and a third, Mr. Norton, espouses an obviously parodic theory of Emersonian transcendentalism and self-reliance. Ellison's quarrel seems to be specifically with "Self-Reliance" and with the sovereign self that dominates that essay, and which commands circumstance, answers only to its inner

constitution, and grandiosely writes "on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*."[15] Ellison might approve of the whim itself, but he largely rejects Emerson's confidence that whims issue from stable selves that precede such impulsivity. In *Invisible Man*, the only people who command circumstance to this degree are powerful despots like Bledsoe, or powerful egotists like Mr. Norton, who advises the narrator, "Self-reliance is a most worthy virtue."[16] Accordingly, Ellison's Emerson is not the exuberant egotist of "Self-Reliance," but the depressive stoic of "Experience" and, more importantly, the visionary daredevil of "Circles," whose identity also turns out to be tied to the experience of risk.

Emerson's "Circles" describes a world that could be the Invisible Man's own: "The universe is fluid and volatile"; "The new continents are built out of the ruins of an old planet"; "Permanence is a word of degrees"; "All that we reckoned settled, shakes and rattles"; "People wish to be settled: only as far as they are unsettled, is there any hope for them"; "Life is a series of surprises"; "The way of life is wonderful: it is by abandonment."[17] Such a richly contingent world is ever ripe for the visionary self, at home in these dynamic conditions. Ellison would agree to a considerable degree, but more than Emerson, Ellison worries about the political and institutional sources of that self. Late in "Circles," Emerson tells a parable of precarious life that helps to clarify the nature of their disagreement. "Geoffrey draws on his boots to go through the woods, that his feet may be safer from the bite of snakes," Emerson says. He continues:

> Aaron never thinks of such a peril. In many years, neither is harmed by such

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an accident. Yet it seems to me that with every precaution you take against such an evil, you put yourself into the power of the evil. I suppose that the highest prudence is the lowest prudence.[18]

Aaron's risk-taking, his vulnerability to harm, in fact protects him from the greater danger of precaution. But crucially, Aaron "never thinks of such a peril," acting with a blithe indifference that registers as openness to experience. A listener, rather than a reader, can more easily detect a telling pun: the ear would not be able to tell whether Aaron "never thinks of such *a peril*," the snakes, or whether he never thinks of "such *apparel*," the boots. In fact, Aaron must never think of either. Just as "a peril" is both the double and the opposite of protective "apparel," so, too, the instinct for precaution is embedded in the very perception of danger. This helps explain why Emerson finally dismisses the deliberate, conscious courting of risk through "gaming," an artificial contrivance he likens to "drunkenness" and "the use of opium and alcohol."[19] The courting of danger simply inverts, rather than escapes, the cringing care for safety. For Ellison the case is different. There simply is no available mode of pure improvisation that lacks consciousness of risk; there can be no natural spontaneity that has not been transformed already into a self-conscious and deliberate game.

As a result, the novel finally punctures the Emersonian fantasy that improvisational speech might release a real, true, or stable self that preexists the act of speaking. Indeed it is during improvisational moments most of all when the Invisible Man becomes aware that he is speaking for someone else, a possibility that haunts his composition of the book and that finds expression in its famous last line. After the Invisible Man's

first Brotherhood speech, he says, "What had come out was completely uncalculated, as though another self within me had taken over and held forth." Later he says, "I had uttered words that had possessed me."[20] Sometimes in Emerson the spontaneous self is literally reborn, but at this moment when the Invisible Man feels that "the new is being born," his journey down an auditorium tunnel toward the light replays his earlier and more violent rebirth at the factory hospital, where doctors performed some sort of lobotomizing electro-shock treatment without his consent. Nothing damages the fantasy of self-reliant improvisation more than the thought that flits through the Invisible Man's mind when he likens the microphones at the Brotherhood speech – "shiny electric gadgets," he calls them – to the "little gadget" of the lobotomy device.[21] Linking an instrument of improvisational speaking with one of psychiatric control and even punishment, Ellison finally collapses any meaningful distinction between them.

Accordingly, when the Invisible Man wonders, "[W]hat if history was a gambler, instead of a force in a laboratory experiment," his second metaphor, the laboratory, reveals his real target. The problem with the members of the Brotherhood is not that they think like communists, but that they think like scientists, "cultivating scientific objectivity" and affirming that "everything could be controlled." In rejecting the merits of the gamble, the Brotherhood's scientific rationality endorses the rigid and riskless dynamics of the machine. "Don't kid yourself," the Invisible Man finally retorts, "The only scientific objectivity is a machine."[22] As if to remedy this situation by transforming the laboratory into a gambler's den, the novel arranges a gallery of failed and unreliable instruments that cannot, or do not, stabilize

the world. Clocks refuse to agree; blueprints lie abandoned; even a steam gauge in the paint factory's "uproar department" proves defective.[23] That machines break and fail is entirely for the best in a novel more worried that machine rationality might succeed too well. For in this regard, Ellison and Emerson wholly agree that a fluid and volatile world is far superior to a rational and mechanical one. The greatest danger in Ellison's novel would be the imposition of a logic so complete that hierarchies of status and power never could be shuffled again.

Remarkably, then, Ellison refuses to wax nostalgic for the alleged purity of the living human voice, despite the novel's skepticism about machine rationality. Although the novel is preoccupied with jazz music, it does not represent a single live jazz musician. The Invisible Man hears live organ music, a blues song, and boogie-woogie church hymns, but he only hears jazz through mechanical recordings on the radio-phonograph in his basement, in "groovy music on the juke," and over a "record shop loudspeaker."[24] There is no pure and natural human voice in the novel that can try to claim the spontaneity and authenticity of jazz improvisation because there can be no pure and natural self prior to the systems that give rise to it. Even the radio-phonograph in the Prologue, which at first seems an instrument of liberation, becomes, by novel's end, just another identity-producing gadget. The jazz music it plays actually replays earlier performances, which it rehearses over and over again, the same way every time.

Rather than countering the machine with an allegedly spontaneous and natural human voice, the Invisible Man pits machine rationality against machine rationality, through his plan to play five separate recordings of Louis Armstrong's "What Did I Do to Be So Black and Blue" simultaneously. Mechanical cacophony, contrived through imperfect synchronization, mixes up mechanical routine. Once the Invisible Man recognizes that his own voice is already engraved by other voices, once he understands that even his improvisations are just reassemblies of other speeches, he also realizes that his best option is to practice an eclectic and messy misalignment of forms and styles that can be combined – though never created – anew.

Despite Ellison's obvious skepticism about liberal individualism in its most traditional forms, Emersonian and otherwise, he attempts to rehabilitate and affirm the individual by defining him or her in far more qualified terms. Rather than recovering that natural, Adamic innocence that Emerson called "originality," Ellison prefers to "improvise upon the given," as he put it in one of his most important essays on art and music, "The Little Man at Chehaw Station."[25] Improvisation turns out not to be a matter of authentic or spontaneous self-expression at all, but a method of assembling a specific cultural inheritance, which accumulates over time and even against one's will, like the clutter that gathers in the Invisible Man's briefcase. In other words, improvisation does not necessarily militate against conformity, as in Emerson, but against mechanical rigidity, whether in private identity or social structure. In this way, an individual's improvisations are really the source of the "cacophonic motion" and the "chaos of American society" that Ellison prizes most, and that scramble all relations of status and power so that no hierarchy can ever become permanently and intractably fixed. Ellison's

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"pluralistic turbulence" generates pluralistic mingling, and so, too, a messy mix of classes, races, nations, languages, cultures, styles, and aesthetics that never do settle down: "in this country things are always all shook up, so that people are constantly moving around and rubbing off on one another culturally."[26] No one ever starts from scratch, nor is anyone purely and entirely himself. Jazz improvisation is valuable not because it liberates the player from the composer's score, but because it reassembles preexisting scores, mixing up the codes, misaligning the records, and shuffling the deck.

One of Ellison's most richly imagined metaphors for the effects of such pluralistic turbulence appears in "Chehaw Station" as a "light-skinned, blue-eyed, Afro-American-featured individual" who stops Manhattan traffic and pedestrians alike with his "Volkswagen Beetle decked out with a gleaming Rolls-Royce radiator," from which he emerges wearing "black riding boots and fawn-colored riding breeches" and a "dashy dashiki." American, European, and African forms and styles blend the cultures of the *Volk* and the aristocratic elite. The resulting figure bursts from his vehicle like "a dozen circus clowns," which is to say that he is not only a little ridiculous, but also a self-conscious "American Joker."[27] His eclectic reassembly of recognizable forms recycles available materials and makes a joke of them in the process.

In contrast, the Invisible Man's problem in most of the novel is not that he lacks a true self, or even a useable self, but that he lacks the ability to play jokes like this, as even Tod Clifton finally learns to do. Against Burnside the vet's advice to "Play the game, but don't believe in it. . . . Play the game, but raise the ante, my boy!" the Invisible Man continues to believe in the game too readily and too often. Burnside should know: he pronounces himself "more clown than fool," which is to say, more given to joking than to mental illness.[28] When he tells the Invisible Man to "raise the ante," Burnside's poker slang reminds the Invisible Man that he had better learn how to bluff, too, given the hand he was dealt, and given that no one, really, is ever exempt from the game. Even Brother Jack is in the game, despite his pretensions to scientific objectivity. His name marks him as a minor aristocrat among the face cards and, as such, a key player in power's most formidable configurations. Though Jack would deny it, the Invisible Man eventually concludes that even Jack is out to "ball the jack," gamblers' slang for staking everything on a single bet. Bledsoe is more candid about his role in the game: "after you win the game, you take the prize and you keep it," he says. And having done so, he is "still the king," not just royalty, but the mightiest face card of all.[29] These kings and jacks are jokers, too, of course, for every king is only a joker in the master's clothes. The stratagems they use to claim and keep power show why the Invisible Man, if he is to keep his shirt, will have to stop believing in the game and assume the ironic detachment that would allow him to start playing it instead.

If poker thrives on, and even requires, the ironic distance of joking, the lottery positively inhibits joking. What joke could a lottery player contrive? Structurally resistant to irony, the lottery requires players to believe in the game, even though the real winners are those who operate the racket. In *Invisible Man*, the real lottery winner is Rinehart himself, with whom Mary Rambo may be placing her bets in a lottery she has been "playing for years," despite her mount-

ing debt.[30] Jack and Bledsoe do not need to play the numbers because they have no shortage of ways to experience their own freedom and power, but Rinehart sells liberal selfhood to Mary Rambo on the installment plan. Like any other commodity, the prerogatives of liberal selfhood are in greatest demand where they seem to be in the shortest supply, and so the numbers game has always flourished among the poor and the working classes, for whom structural inequalities most limit options and opportunities. The risk apparatus of modern liberalism, including all of Beck's methods of risk individualization, are thus especially good at keeping people like Mary Rambo committed to key liberal ideals, ideals that entail, most importantly, accepting responsibility for one's own fortunes. As an instrument of risk individualization, as a technology of liberal self-production, the lottery eliminates opportunities for irony, producing a more traditional, self-reliant liberal identity, and fixing it in place. The only thing worse than having no jokers in such a game is having a joker in charge of the game, as Rinehart takes charge of the numbers. The joke is on the players, courtesy of "Rine the rascal."[31] He doesn't play the lottery himself, but he doesn't need to: he takes the bets, keeps the profits, and knows the score.

In the end, Ellison's novel permits nothing to stand as a master metaphor for "the beautiful absurdity of ... American identity," not even poker, which the lottery finally challenges and undermines.[32] Several years after publishing *Invisible Man* Ellison offered a more pointed caution about the lottery when he acknowledged that Rinehart "transforms (for winners, of course) pennies into dollars, and thus he feeds (and feeds on) the poor."[33] Those parentheses seem to mark minor qualifications, but in fact they quarantine devastating facts that Ellison could not incorporate into his more optimistic accounts of joking. Crucially, Ellison penned this extra caution about Rinehart in 1958, just a few years before state-sponsored and state-run lotteries began replacing private games like Rinehart's, following the widespread legalization of gambling in the United States. Ellison may not have anticipated the incorporation of the lottery into the apparatus of the state, but he certainly did recognize that if society were structured like a lottery, it might fix identity in place and stabilize, rather than shuffle, hierarchies of status and power. Unlike the fanciful game in Jorge Luis Borges's "The Lottery in Babylon" (1941), with its ruthless egalitarianism, Ellison's more culturally specific lottery suggests that Americans' widespread enthusiasm for chaos and swift change might be used against them institutionally and even governmentally, inculcating low-income quietism while shifting costs and responsibilities down the socioeconomic scale. If liberalism really is more like the lottery than like poker, the joke is on the players, because the capacities they regard as innate – the capacities they believe they bring to the table – are really produced through their participation in the game.

Ellison never does link American society exclusively with either poker games or lotteries, and so he avoids committing to either a naively optimistic or a cynically paranoid view of American society. Instead he keeps both versions in play and tacitly acknowledges that even his own faith in democratic pluralism might already be compromised, if it turns out to be enrolled in a higher game still. For a writer who really was a committed lib-

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eral pluralist, that is an extraordinary concession, and one that shows how rigorously Ellison could scrutinize even his own most cherished positions. That is to say, Ellison himself finally refuses to believe in the game completely and uncritically, and in fact ironizes his own political commitments. No doubt one of the things he liked about liberalism was that it changes substantively and continually over time, as it has through its various classical, corporate, and social-democratic permutations. More than fifty years after the publication of *Invisible Man*, when liberalism and now neoliberalism increasingly seem like the only game in town, Ellison's fear that the joker might capture the operation without anyone knowing it seems more relevant than ever to how the game is being played.

ENDNOTES

[1] Ralph Ellison, *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison*, ed. John F. Callahan (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 108, 110. All references to Ellison's *Collected Essays* refer to one of two essays: "Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke," originally published in *Partisan Review* in 1958, and "The Little Man at Chehaw Station," originally published in *The American Scholar* in 1977–1978.

[2] Ibid., 504.

[3] Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Vintage, 1952), 559.

[4] Ibid., 441.

[5] Ibid., 163, 153.

[6] Ibid., 531.

[7] Ibid., 324, 381, 491.

[8] Ibid., 576.

[9] Ibid., 577.

[10] Ulrich Beck, *The Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, trans. Mark Ritter (London: Sage, 1992), 136–137. For important reflections on related risk dynamics, see the essays collected in Tom Baker and Jonathan Simon, *Embracing Risk: The Changing Culture of Insurance and Responsibility* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[11] Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 553.

[12] Ibid., 30–31.

[13] Ibid., 290, 341, 276.

[14] Ibid., 469.

[15] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Alfred R. Ferguson and Jean Ferguson Carr (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1987), 30.

[16] Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 108.

[17] Emerson, *The Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ferguson and Carr, 179–180, 184, 189–190.

[18] Ibid., 186.

[19] Ibid., 190.

[20] Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 353 – 354.

[21] Ibid., 346, 341, 235.

[22] Ibid., 505, 382.

[23] Ibid., 322, 175, 212.

[24] Ibid., 425, 443.

[25] Ellison, *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison*, ed. Callahan, 511.

[26] Ibid., 508, 504, 518.

[27] Ibid., 509 – 511.

[28] Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 153 – 154.

[29] Ibid., 576, 142 – 143.

[30] Ibid., 325.

[31] Ibid., 498.

[32] Ibid., 559.

[33] Ellison, *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison*, ed. Callahan, 110.

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Reconciling American archaeology & Native America

Shortly after William Bradford and his fellow pilgrims arrived on the eastern shores of the New World in the cold autumn of 1620, a small group of men set out to make a "full discovery" of the snow-covered land.[1] After some days of wandering the unknown rivers and hills, they grew hungry. With Providence observing, they thought, the men happened upon a store of corn and grain that Indians had cached underground. The ravenous pilgrims took the food for their own. The next day, Bradford reports that the company wandered into the wilderness deeper still, following the well-beaten trails of the Indians, in the hope that they would find a town; they encountered no one. Eventually the company came to a flat area covered with boards. Curious, the men began to dig.

A layering of grass mats and boards sat just beneath the surface, concealing a few strange bits of bowls, trays, and dishes. Encouraged, they burrowed further and discovered a prize of two bundles. A heavy scent of mildewed earth drifted over them. They unwrapped the first bundle. In their hands they saw a few tools and, as Bradford recalled, "a great quantitie of fine and perfect red Powder, and in it the bones and skull of a man." They opened the second bundle. It, too, was packed with the fine red powder, though this time laced with small bones and the skull of a child. The child's remains had been carefully swathed and decorated with bracelets of pearl-white beads. "We brought sundry of the pretiest things away with vs, and covered the Corps vp againe," Bradford later wrote. "After this, we digged in sundry like places, but found no more Corne, nor any things els but graues."

Bradford's and his fellow pilgrims' investigations constitute the first known archaeological excavation in North America. Although the discipline would not be fully formed for another two-and-a-half centuries, Bradford's group unknowingly set the pattern for how Euro-American explorers entered Indian country to satisfy their curiosity, driven by a desire to conquer and control the land, to claim and possess all that made up their new home. Indeed, Bradford and his men put in motion one of the defining narratives of the American self, a self exalted for exploring and exposing American Indian history.

American Indians weren't just a part of history, though. Settlers soon encountered living Indians who posed an immediate political problem for colonization. Villages and farms, hunting grounds and sacred quarters filled the land Europeans envisioned as their own. Indians, so long as they were alive, could argue and defend against invasion with words and violence. Indians who had passed long ago were another matter; they could not fight their own plundering. The stories of unconcealed resistance – Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Geronimo – now sound America's mythic chords of memory. But the silent taking of graves in the name of nation and science is a collective remembrance that has yet to seep into America's historical consciousness.

The story of archaeology in America is coiled with the colonial experiences of Native Americans. The exploration and exposition of American Indian history has often been a means of defining and narrating the American soul. The alternating image of the savage and noble Indian has provided a mirror for Americans to see themselves. Far from an innocuous pursuit, archaeological explorations have played a role in the drama of Native American efforts to protect their lands and to dictate their own religious beliefs, identities, and histories. The archaeology of Native America is not only about the power to shed light on the past, but also the ability of native peoples to shape their own futures.

Many Native American communities now regularly, and vocally, oppose scientific practices that they believe violate human rights. As a result of such opposition, as well as new laws sympathetic to Indian civil liberties, archaeology has begun a slow metamorphosis, changing from an agent of colonialism to a vehicle of Native American empowerment.

Now, for the first time in the field's history, substantial numbers of Native Americans are pursuing academic degrees in archaeology. Scores of tribes have started their own archaeology and heritage management programs. And many Native Americans regularly collaborate with archaeologists on innovative projects to integrate traditional knowledge with scientific inquiry.

Illuminating the tangled history of archaeology and the social context of its present-day practice reveals no easy answers to America's colonialist inheritance. However, by deeply engaging with this difficult chronicle, we may come to a fuller understanding of why Native Americans are insisting that their voices be heard, and why archaeologists are at last listening to them. The recent paradigm shift in archaeology to more inclusive and collaborative modes is not a quick solution to an entrenched problem so much as an uneven and negotiated process of coming to terms with the skeletons in America's closets. After all, the remains of the man and child that William Bradford took from the Indian crypt nearly four centuries ago will likely never be found, never reburied. Once unearthed, some things are not easily put back where they came from.

Legacies of colonialism in archaeology were finally confronted in the 1970s, when activists began interrupting excavations, protesting the sale of sacred objects, and demanding the return of human remains. But long before the raging demonstrations in front of museums and the heated words traded on editorial pages, there were the quiet moments of taking, when Indian bodies were transformed from human beings in their final repose into specimens for scientific study. The collection of human bodies and funerary

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objects explains the anger that fueled the flames of dissent in Indian country and ultimately turned museums into political battlefields.

Consider this example. As a bitterly cold winter receded in early 1871, dozens of Apaches surrendered as prisoners of war to the army soldiers at Camp Grant, outside Tucson, and established the beginnings of a permanent peace.[2] News of the accord quickly spread throughout southern Arizona, and, as flowers were coming to bloom in the desert, a new hope to the end of war unfolded across the land. Apaches from the Pinal and Aravaipa bands gathered in the shadow of Camp Grant, at a traditional farming site used for generations along the gentle waters of Aravaipa Creek. After three months, the Apaches held a feast to celebrate, for no longer would they be hunted as animals in their own homeland; no longer would their fields of corn and their homes of brush be set aflame by soldiers; no longer would they need to raid in Mexico to feed their families. So the people sang and danced and ate, elation mixed with relief.

The feast dwindled and night fell over the sleeping village. Then, suddenly, in the stillness of the early morning, a hail of bullets tore into the encampment, killing not just the dream of peace, but scores of Apache men, women, and children. Behind the guns was a vigilante group of Tucson men who believed that all Apaches should be killed for the crimes of a few – for the violent raiding that unrelated Chiricahua Apache bands continued throughout the first months of 1871. After emptying their guns, the Tucsonans walked through the village, stripping several girls naked and raping them, hacking bodies apart, and capturing nearly thirty children as slaves. In less than an hour, the attackers had com-

pleted their gruesome labor of murdering more than one hundred Apaches. After breakfast they returned back to a jubilant Tucson.

The next day the surviving Apaches returned to the ruined village, expressing their grief "too wild and terrible to be described," as one witness wrote. A mass grave was dug and the bodies placed within it. But for at least one victim this makeshift sepulcher would not be her final resting place. Close to a year after the massacre, a surgeon with archaeological ambitions visited the site. Dr. Valery Havard proceeded to unearth the burials and stole the head of a young Apache woman, mailing it to the Army Medical Museum in Washington, D.C. In 1900, the skull was transferred to the Smithsonian Institution, "America's attic," for the purpose of scientific study and exhibition; it has remained there for more than a century.

A small but significant portion of the bodies that ended up at places like the Smithsonian came from grisly nineteenth-century massacre and battlefield sites, including those infamous slaughters at Camp Grant, Sand Creek, Washita, and Wounded Knee. Many skulls, scalps, and personal effects served as war booty for American soldiers and pioneer settlers, but others were gathered with the express intent to serve science. In 1862, the Army Medical Museum was founded, and Union medical officers in the field were ordered to collect "specimens of morbid anatomy…together with projectiles and foreign bodies removed."[3] Initially the main objects of study were those solders that perished in the Civil War. With Lee's surrender at Appomattox, the museum began looking west, focusing on the fresh bounty of the Indian wars. Thousands of bodies and funerary objects were amassed over the de-

cades, part of a larger national project to gather up the bodies of Indians in the name of scientific progress.

The Army Medical Museum was particularly interested in documenting the effects of war on the human body, but American Indian remains also provided a means to illustrate ideas about human biology prevailing at the time. Samuel G. Morton published in 1839 his seminal *Crania Americana*, which employed a scientific framework that implicitly proved the inferiority of various races, including Indians. Not only did Morton's book legitimize the despoliation of Indian lifeways and lands, but it also inspired generations of Americans to plunder Indian sites. With the rise of craniology came the demand for craniums to study: soldiers, Indian agents, traders, settlers, and others were enlisted to gather Indian bodies from both ancient and recent graves. Nineteenth-century anthropology museums, with their self-appointed mission to understand and document human evolution, soon became vast repositories of Indian skeletons.

Some Indian bodies were taken directly from graves, often in stealth. At times anthropologists expressed conflicted feelings about their excavations, but felt science demanded it of them. As the "father" of American anthropology, Franz Boas, once wrote, "It is most unpleasant work to steal bones from a grave, but what is the use, someone has to do it."[4] Such acquiescent sentiments reflected a broader viewpoint in America that Indian bodies, like their lands and resources, were for the taking. As recently as 1965, a U.S. court ruled in favor of a man that had removed the skull from a grave of a Seminole Indian who had died just two years earlier, because unmarked Seminole burial places then did not meet the legal definition of "cemeteries." Several years later, in

Iowa, twenty-seven human bodies were discovered during a road construction project. While twenty-six of the bodies were identified by headstones, one had none and was accompanied by glass beads and brass rings. The twenty-six bodies, presumed to be Anglo-Americans, were immediately reburied in the Glenwood Cemetery, while the one body, presumed to be Indian, was taken to a museum.

The idea that Indian bodies could serve science and the nation was codified in laws, which uniquely empowered archaeologists to collect and study Indian remains. The 1906 Antiquities Act, for instance, required researchers, among other things, to have a permit to conduct excavations on federal land. The permit could only be obtained with academic credentials and proof "that the examinations, excavations, and gatherings are undertaken for the benefit of reputable museums … with a view to increasing the knowledge of such objects, and that the gatherings shall be made for permanent preservation in public museums."[5] Such laws divorced Native Americans from their own heritage while privileging academic researchers who were to preserve Indian history and culture for all Americans.

By far, most American archaeologists over the twentieth century were not nefarious, but rather were following the laws of the land and long-standing Western intellectual traditions. They had a genuine interest in Indian cultures and history, and their studies laid the groundwork for a national heritage that honored America's first inhabitants. Indeed, archaeologists have been building on the excavations of, for example, Thomas Jefferson, who dug and studied Monticello's ruins, in a genuine effort to know the country's deepest human origins. They have been following in the

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footsteps of Ephraim Squier and Edwin Davis, who in the 1840s used systematic archaeological methods to determine that the "mound builders" of the American heartland were ancient Indians rather than ancient Greeks, Chinese, or lost Israelites. Archaeologists trail the work of the Bureau of American Ethnology, which in the late 1800s preserved a multitude of objects and studied scores of sites, particularly in the American West, just as Native American communities were reaching their depths of despair and waves of migrants were flooding into America's last open lands.

Millions today visit national parks across the United States – Mesa Verde National Park, Hopewell Culture National Park, Washita Battlefield National Park – built from archaeological studies and preserved because of archaeological advocacy. These sites are the foundation of America's proud national patrimony. Today, when a federal project is developed, such as a new dam to provide electricity or a new highway alignment to make a road safer, it is archaeologists who first survey the area. Often with water nearly lapping at their feet or bulldozers roaring behind them, archaeologists excavate sites that would otherwise be obliterated, preserving native histories that would otherwise be lost to time. The scientists often remove and study American Indian human remains in the path of such destruction.

Despite their political disadvantage over much of the last two centuries in the United States, Native Americans have long resisted the theft and appropriation of their ancestors' bodies and belongings. In one of the earliest documented examples, in 1883, Apaches demanded the return of looted heritage objects several cavalrymen had taken from a cave in central Arizona. In 1902,

archaeologists from the American Museum of Natural History excavated a burial ground on Long Island and were told by the local Shinnecock Indians that the scholars "would lose the friendship of the tribe if [they] dug up any more bodies."[6]

Protests of these kinds were haphazard, variously successful; it wasn't until the pan-Indian movement gained momentum in the early 1970s that museums, archaeologists, and the public began to take Indian objections seriously. In the summer of 1971, members of AIM, the American Indian Movement, vandalized an archaeological excavation in Minnesota. More protests followed in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, resulting in some of the first repatriations of human remains. Museums began removing Indian bodies from public display. After the controversial twenty-seven bodies were discovered in Iowa, the Iowa State Historical Society was picketed until, by order of the governor, the lone Indian body was also reburied, alongside the Anglo-American remains.

By the mid-1980s, the call for returning and reburying indigenous bodies had spread around the world. "Our heritage – your playground," poignantly phrased by one Australian Aboriginal leader, captured the mood of many in native communities across Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States.[7] Many archaeologists and museum professionals acknowledged the claims of native communities, but were concerned about how to return objects fairly and transparently to tribes. Other museum curators and directors were conflicted about how repatriation might contradict their duties to care for objects in the public trust. Still others flatly dismissed the protests as political ploys. Large swaths of the public, however,

sympathized with archaeology's critics, and so, too, did America's politicians.

On November 16, 1990, Congress passed NAGPRA, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which requires museums to return human remains and particular kinds of sacred and communal objects to Native American tribes.[8] At the time, some observers estimated that anthropology museums in the United States alone held the remains of more than two hundred thousand Native American men, women, and children. The mood in museums and anthropology departments across the country was dark for the first few years after NAGPRA took effect. Detractors predicted that museums would become empty shells – like vast libraries with no books – and that the legislation signaled the death knell for physical anthropology. Yet with time museum professionals began to acknowledge that their worst fears were misplaced. The law required museums to compile inventories of their collections. Some museums created a complete list of their holdings for the first time. The law required museums to determine "cultural affiliations," the relationship between past Native American groups and present-day tribes. Physical anthropologists suddenly had more work, rather than less, often conducting research on human remains in collections that had for years sat unnoticed and untouched. The law required museums to consult with tribal political and religious leaders. For the first time many museums began an open dialogue with American Indians, learning that they shared common concerns and interests.

Controversies still emerged, most notably in 1996 after a nine-thousand-year-old skeleton was accidentally discovered near Kennewick, Washington.[9] A con-

sortium of tribes wanted the body returned and reburied, while a small group of archaeologists sued to study the remains. The battle was waged in federal courtrooms for nearly a decade, and in the court of public opinion the rhetoric dwelt on issues of academic freedom, religion versus science, and the rights of the dead. Over the last year, the University of California at Berkeley's Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology was swept up in similar debates when administrators sought to eliminate the museum's NAGPRA Unit, though reportedly some twelve thousand Indian bodies still sit on storage shelves at the museum. What doesn't make front-page news is the daily burden and obligation – for tribes and museums alike – of repatriation, a complex negotiation of law, ethics, politics, and economics. Tribes are overwhelmed by inventories listing objects and remains in the hundreds, sometimes thousands that must be sifted through and responded to expediently while honoring traditional beliefs. Museums continue to struggle balancing their legal duties with their ethical responsibilities as stewards of a public trust: to preserve, celebrate, and honor America's material past.[10]

The repatriation crusade that began in earnest in the 1970s and continues today is arguably among the most important human rights campaigns in American history, equal to the search for African American civil rights and equality for women, for it established that Native Americans have the same rights as all Americans, in life and in death. Repatriation legislation is also important to archaeology's history and future, shifting the relationship between Native Americans and archaeologists and altering the flow of objects and remains away from

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museums and back to source communities.

Some have described this process as "mending the circle" of American Indian history and culture, a circle broken apart in the wake of colonialism, outright war, stolen lands, forced schooling, and imposed religion.[11] Like native-language programs, a return to traditional farming and foods, and reclaiming sacred sites, repatriation is a means for Native Americans to salvage their past while moving forward into the future. Repatriation is a kind of restorative justice; it is focused on the healing of breaches instead of the logic of eye-for-eye retribution. Still, repatriation raises important questions about "who owns the past," about academic freedom and religious rights, that are far from settled.[12]

A year before NAGPRA was passed, Congress put into law the National Museum of the American Indian Act, which not only guided repatriation for the Smithsonian Institution, but also established a museum to honor Native American culture. In 2004, the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) opened its doors, with pride of place at the foot of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. The express goal of the museum is to work in collaboration with native peoples throughout the western hemisphere to protect culture by sustaining worldviews, cultivating artistic expression, and empowering indigenous voices. From its architecture to its cafeteria and exhibits, the NMAI reflects native perspectives and values while bringing wide and critical attention to the history and living traditions of the Americas' first nations.

Praise for the NMAI has been abundant, though criticism has been plentiful, too. At the heart of many of these debates is an unsettled argument about whether culture should be presented in essentialist or relativist terms. Should objects be exhibited objectively (by outside scholars) and hierarchically, representing timeless aesthetic values – or should objects be presented subjectively (by the communities themselves) and democratically, by which the values of things are considered transitory and contingent?[13] In contrast to museums such as France's new Musée du Quai Branly, which features exhibits and art of indigenous peoples of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas from the perspective of entrenched Western notions of universal values, the NMAI makes an unambiguous commitment to the relativist presentation and interpretation of objects.

Whether deemed successful or not, the NMAI clearly presents the profound transitions of museum anthropology and archaeology over the last several decades. In particular, the NMAI's collaborative partnerships with indigenous communities – in which "community curators" design exhibits and collection storage areas – and the museum's many community-based outreach programs represent a radical departure from long-held attitudes. Not musty storehouses of dead and dying cultures, museums like the NMAI project an image of indigenous peoples as vibrant. Although the NMAI has borrowed strategies from other institutions, such as the Arizona State Museum's soulful 1992 "Paths of Life" exhibit, the country's new national museum, from its size to its unwavering commitment to inclusion, signifies a real and meaningful change in the public presentation of American Indians.

Ironically, many Native American tribes have transformed the traditional tools of colonialism, archaeological science and museums, and now use them

for their own ends. More than two hundred tribes across the United States have their own museums and cultural centers. Many of these are tied to casinos, such as the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, which has a massive exhibit hall, two libraries, and live performances of contemporary art and culture. However, other museums run without casino revenue, such as the Pueblo of Zuni's A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center in western New Mexico; it has a humble exhibit space and is explicitly geared toward serving the Zuni community. In the 1970s, a handful of tribes began conducting their own research by developing cultural resource management programs, and now several dozen have active programs. Tribes have been further empowered by the 1992 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act, which established Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO) that parallel state-level preservation efforts. Today, more than sixty-five tribes have gone through the rigorous process of establishing their own THPOs.

Non-native archaeologists have also begun increasingly to work closely with native communities throughout the research process.[14] The San Pedro Ethnohistory Project is one recent example of a collaborative project, conducted in partnership with four Arizona Native American tribes: Hopi, San Carlos Apache, Tohono O'odham, and Zuni.[15] Archaeologists have detailed the Pedro Valley's twelve thousand years of human occupation, but never before had researchers systematically sought to document the traditional histories of the region's native communities. Over the course of three years, this collaboration resulted in a better understanding of how descendant communities conceive of their ancestors, the cultural val-

ues of place, and the historical narratives embedded in tribal traditions. Projects of this kind also put more scientifically-based archaeologists in close contact with tribes. Wesley Bernardini, for example, has used Hopi clan narratives of ancient migrations to create hypotheses, which can then be tested against archaeological data. "At multiple points in the research, traditional knowledge raised novel possibilities that turned out to have empirical support once we knew where, and how, to look," Bernardini concluded. "Incorporating Native American knowledge into archaeological research is not only a way to establish a meaningful dialogue with an important constituency, but a way to improve our collective understanding of the past."[16]

Only recently have Native Americans begun to see archaeology as a practicable occupation. Arthur C. Parker, of Seneca decent, was the first Native American to become a professional archaeologist, starting his career in 1900 under the tutelage of Harvard University's Frederic W. Putnam. While Parker was successful as an individual – becoming a noted museum director, the first president of the Society for American Archaeology, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences – it was decades before native people began following in his footsteps.[17] Today, out of several thousand, only fifteen archaeologists who claim Native American heritage as their primary identity hold a PhD.[18]

To make intellectual space for native participation, the concept of "indigenous archaeology" has emerged as a fresh paradigm, encompassing any form of archaeology conducted in collaboration with native communities and that challenges the historical political economy of the discipline.[19] Some have argued that indigenous archaeology is not

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intellectually viable because it depends upon fallacies of race by perpetuating a stereotype of Indians as somehow metaphysically different (caught in cyclical thinking, innately connected to the land) from non-Indians.[20] However, the special rights of indigenous communities to archaeology need not be founded on essentialist imaginings. The legacies of colonialism, socio-political context of scientific inquiry, and insights of traditional knowledge provide a strong foundation for community-based archaeology projects by, for, and with indigenous peoples.

Despite such promising trends, the tension between archaeologists and Native Americans is often strained. NAGPRA and the public archaeology movement have encouraged archaeologists to begin meaningful dialogues with native communities, but conversations on heated topics cannot always end in amity and goodwill. Professional archaeologists today are not the progenitors of injustice, but they are nonetheless its inheritors. More than 32,000 Indian human remains have been repatriated, but another 118,000 bodies continue to sit on museum shelves across the United States, as "culturally identifiable" remains, unclear to whom, or if, they should be returned. Incalculable numbers of Indian body parts and sacred objects are stored in museums outside the United States, as there is no law to guide their repatriation. Even when objects are returned, sometimes their sudden arrival can reignite old animosities and rivalries within a native community. Museum exhibits and books continue to be produced without native input, presenting Native Americans as the timeless noble or savage other. Native Americans continue to represent a fraction of the archaeological profession, despite the fact that most ar-

chaeology in the United States focuses on Native American history. Native Americans continue to have their sovereignty undermined, struggling to protect their sacred places and cherished cultural landscapes from looters and developers. Much progress has been made toward the reconciliation between American archaeology and Native America, but there is still much work to be done.

In recognition of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's 150th anniversary in 1998, Bruno Latour, in the journal *Science*, wrote about the difference between science and research:

> Science is certainty; Research is uncertainty. Science is supposed to be cold, straight and detached; Research is warm, involving and risky. Science puts an end to the vagaries of human disputes; Research fuels controversies by more controversies. Science produces objectivity by escaping as much as possible from the shackles of ideology, passions and emotions; Research feeds on all of those as so many handles to render familiar new objects of enquiry.

He distinguishes science as an ideal, an abstract goal of uncorrupted objectivity, and research as the messy reality of our projects. As archaeologists have come to recognize the multifaceted social context and historical contingencies of their discipline, many have come to see their work as a craft, a dynamic process of creation. In the previous model, society was divorced from science; in the research model society is inseparable. "One cliché says it all," Latour explains, "in one palace, Galileo deals with the fate of falling bodies while, in another palace, princes, cardinals and philosophers deal with the fate of human souls."[21]

Nearly since the founding of modern archaeology, its practitioners have debated whether the discipline is art or science, in search of a common humanity or in search of universal laws. At different points in the profession's history, certain sides of this debate have held rein. In the 1970s, "processual archaeology" drew the field to the natural sciences; in the 1980s, "post-processual archaeology" swayed scholars to the humanities. Today, many archaeologists work from both traditions, though it is unclear if the field has profitably synthesized these different ways of knowing the past, or if the field suffers from acute schizophrenia.

The history of the relationship between Native Americans and American archaeologists makes plain that the field cannot return to a time of innocence, or view itself as detached from society and politics. This realization, however, does not mean that research with the goals and methods of science cannot proceed. Indigenous archaeology – as well as its cousins feminist, collaborative, and community-based archaeologies – provides an epochal path through the wilderness of the discipline's future, a blending of the arts and sciences that will create more just and accurate understandings of the past and the nature of our material world.

In the United States, this change in perspective allows us to move beyond the stereotypes of Indians, so long a source of spectacle in the American imagination. One only has to think of James Fenimore Cooper's last Mohican or the University of Illinois's mascot Chief Illiniwek to trace this troubling legacy. The collection, study, and display of Indians further objectified Indians, transforming them into things of morbid curiosity and scientific inquiry. It is time to move on. Archaeologists must no longer see Indians as mere objects of study; they must no longer see Indians without seeing their humanity.

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Looking out, looking in: competing organizational interests & the proliferation of Soviet WMD expertise

The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s raised concerns about the security of its nuclear weapons.[1] In response, the United States joined forces with countries of the former Soviet Union, especially Russia, as well as the European Union and other states, to create a series of programs aimed at securing former Soviet weapons of mass destruction (WMD), weapons-relevant materials, and scientific expertise. Of these efforts, the most troubled has been the one aimed at containing WMD skills and knowledge. Former Soviet weapons experts haven't sold their knowledge around the world; indeed, there have been almost no documented cases of such proliferation (although concerns remain about what goes unreported). Rather, it is the means chosen for fighting such proliferation – working with and reemploying WMD experts – that have proven problematic.

Cooperation with former cold war enemies certainly created a host of difficulties, as did the secrecy that surrounds nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons efforts. But there's a significant barrier to success found much closer to home. The U.S. bureaucracies tasked

with implementing programs focused on the proliferation of WMD expertise came up against a problem common to all organizations: the need to pursue and protect their own interests.

The notion that organizations have their own interests is well-established, although too often national security issues are assumed to be so important they trump this self-interested behavior. Organizations, the literature claims, seek to manage the environments in which they act. In particular, organizations that have to please similar authorities and that face comparable constraints exhibit isomorphic behavior. That is, they often respond to external pressure by aligning their interests with the interests of powerful external forces. This, in turn, means that organizations that face similar environments come to resemble one another, either through coordinated duplication or mimicry. But organizations also need to fit in at home. When organizations are given new tasks, these tasks come to be defined and implemented in ways that accommodate and reinforce the interests of the parent organization.

U.S. nonproliferation programs tried both to accommodate their external environments and to match their goals with the goals of their parent organiza-

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tions. The two largest programs, one in the State Department and another in the Department of Energy, adopted similar narratives about how their activities furthered nonproliferation. Each program, however, also adopted an implementation strategy that was heavily influenced by its parent organization. What resulted were two programs that accommodated their internal and external environments but were unable to achieve their original nonproliferation goals.

As the Soviet Union entered its final days, concerns increased about possible proliferation from its WMD complex, in part because of the potential for a violent transition, the accidental or unauthorized seizure and use of weapons, and uncertainty about the future of political relations with any Soviet successor state. Concerns also grew because Soviet security had focused on external border points, paying less attention to protective measures at individual facilities. When the Soviet Union collapsed, many newly independent states inherited weapons facilities that lacked sufficient measures to ensure that the weapons and material inside were safe from theft. In many cases, the contents of the facilities were inadequately inventoried, and sometimes little was known about what had happened inside. Moreover, economic conditions were grim for most people in the former Soviet Union, including guards and experts at the weapons facilities. Salaries were low – a weapons scientist might make $100 per month or less, for example – and paychecks were often delayed by several months. Weapons facilities saw severely reduced government subsidies, and goods and services overall cost more.

This combination of poor security, uncertainty, and dire economic prospects

led the United States to fund a variety of efforts, collectively known as Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR), aimed at countering proliferation from the former Soviet WMD complex. Some parts of CTR focused on securing the weapons themselves; other efforts dealt with weapons-relevant materials; and several programs were created to deal with the possible proliferation of weapons expertise. This last group of programs concentrated on providing income to weapons experts by funding short-term research contracts and, in the long term, working to reemploy the experts in commercial or non-defense, government work. Such programs were created in the Departments of Defense, Energy, and State, and included a variety of private and quasi-government efforts. The two largest programs were the Science Centers, managed by the State Department, and the Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention (IPP) program, in the Department of Energy.

IPP and the Science Centers date from the first years of CTR. In early 1992, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced the creation of the Science Centers during a visit to the closed nuclear city of Snezhinsk, Russia. The United States, along with members of the European Union, Japan, Canada, Sweden, and later Norway and South Korea, would create two centers that would fund short-term research projects involving former Soviet weapons experts and an outside research collaborator. The first center (also the largest) is the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), based in Moscow, which works with scientists from Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The smaller Science and Technology Center of Ukraine (STCU), based in Kyiv, fo-

cuses on Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Uzbekistan. Until 2004, the United States provided at least half of the funding for both centers; U.S. influence has dominated center policy and implementation strategies.

Although the ISTC was to be up and running in 1993, domestic political problems in Russia caused delays. Some legislators questioned the motives behind the center, wondering whether it was an excuse to spy on Russia's national security complex. Further delays arose from the wider struggle for power between the Duma and Russian President Boris Yeltsin. In September 1993, Yeltsin dismissed the Duma, which had not yet approved the measures needed to start the ISTC. By the end of the year, Yeltsin himself approved the necessary documents, and the ISTC was able to begin operations in March 1994. The STCU was also delayed, largely due to administrative issues associated with creating a government in the newly independent state of Ukraine. It began operations in November 1995.

Delays with the Science Centers prompted calls for more immediate action from the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories. U.S. nuclear weapons experts had a long history of scientific collaboration with their Soviet counterparts that dated from discussions in the early 1960s about research on large magnetic fields. Later, joint experiments were conducted for the purposes of arms-control verification. By the early 1990s, some experts from the U.S. labs were well-aware of the dire economic and security problems in Russia, so when the Science Centers were delayed, U.S. labs at Los Alamos and Livermore began to fund research collaborations with a few key Russian nuclear weapons facilities. In 1993 funding was appropriated by Congress, and the next year IPP became a formal program.

Similar to the Science Centers, IPP funds collaborative, non-defense-related research between former Soviet WMD experts and outside scientists. Unlike the Science Centers, collaborators in the IPP program usually come from the U.S. lab complex. Careful not to be perceived as duplicating the work of the Science Centers, IPP created a second type of cooperative research that required matching contributions from U.S. industry. In theory this would help businesses enter the market in a post-Soviet country and hire away former weapons experts whose skills and products had been evaluated through the small-team research collaborations made possible by IPP.

Both the Science Centers and IPP were born from the assumption that economically desperate weapons experts are potential proliferation problems. The founding documents and debate that led to each of the programs show that they share the same mandate. In the short term, they are to fund collaborative research between teams of weapons experts and an outside collaborator. Besides providing income to the former Soviet scientists, engineers, and technicians, such research is supposed to help them become aware of Western research standards and how weapons skills can be translated into private, non-defense-related jobs. Over the long term, the Science Centers and IPP are supposed to help these former Soviet experts transition to reemployment outside of the weapons complex. This long-term mandate, designed to help Russia and other post-Soviet countries permanently reduce the size of their weapons complex, uses commercial interests as a way to, over time, end U.S. government funding of such efforts. This mandate gave both programs significant discretion to implement their programs and to respond

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to constraints they would encounter in the United States and the former Soviet Union. As predicted by the literature, both programs ultimately sought to accommodate the constraints that arose from these external environments in much the same way.

Organizations have no choice but to accommodate the demands of their external environments.[2] These environments set not just standards for results, but assumptions about legitimate outcomes, and about how outcomes are to be measured and what constitutes significant progress. When the actors who control an organization's funding, scope, and autonomy also define these assumptions, the actors can be ignored only at great cost to an organization's budget, mission, and possible future. Thus organizations come to do and measure what is valued by their environments, regardless of whether it is a rational or efficient means of achieving their original goals.

Further, the literature on organizations suggests that when asked to perform similar missions in a similar environment, organizations will adopt the same myths as justifications for their tasks. And they do so without conscious coordination. Over time organizations tend to look and act alike, not because there is general agreement that they are rationally and efficiently pursuing their goals, but because they share the same myths about what they consider to be legitimate activity.

The Science Centers and IPP demonstrate this isomorphism in several significant ways, including how the two programs prove that their projects involve genuine weapons experts; their responses to pressure to develop an exit strategy; their measurement of job creation; and their recent decisions to

cease work in Russia in favor of other countries. In each case, the programs adopted similar rules and procedures as legitimate, yet they did so without significant coordination. This unintentional alignment caused the programs to stray from their original nonproliferation goals.

Both IPP and the Science Centers are supposed to focus on engaging people with WMD credentials, including engineers and technicians, but especially scientists who have the core skills needed for making weapons. Both programs needed to demonstrate that they were dealing with the most dangerous proliferation concerns, but the legacy of mistrust and secrecy between the United States and the Soviet Union often made it impossible, or at least impolitic, to inquire about the skills of specific WMD experts. The programs, therefore, adopted two strategies for legitimization. One used the process of selecting project teams to make claims about reaching people with critical weapons skills. The second drew from the notion that U.S. project managers "just knew" who was or was not a weapons expert.

Without any obvious coordination, both IPP and the Science Centers came to focus on the rules of project selection as a means of verifying the weapons credentials of the people involved. At IPP, projects are normally not approved unless at least 60 percent of the project members are weapons experts. Although the Science Centers were largely independent of each other, they also adopted similar criteria: for basic scientific collaboration, project teams need to be at least 50 percent, preferably 60 percent, WMD experts before U.S. funding is considered. Both programs assumed that, as long as they funded at least some WMD experts, they addressed proliferation concerns;

thus the number of experts on each project team took priority, with little emphasis on the quality of those weapons skills or whether they were critical or tangential to weapons development. Moreover, there is no evidence that either program identified the weapons experts most likely to proliferate, or considered whether program funding should be focused according to the poverty level of experts or in terms of the relative value of their skills to a potential proliferator.

As a second measure to verify weapons credentials, the Science Centers adopted a process by which they asked each weapons expert to identify his or her particular skills according to a standard list of specialties and sub-specialties. IPP adopted a process and list that was close to identical, and neither program insisted on much external validation of the Soviet experts' self-identified skills – despite potential incentives to misrepresent abilities. Having more team members with weapons credentials increased the likelihood of a project being funded, and project funding meant that weapons institutes, crippled by economic conditions, stood to gain updated equipment, spare parts, and supplies for their operations. Eager for such enhancements, institute directors had little incentive to make sure their employees were forthright about their skills.

Instead of verifying weapons credentials rigorously, both the Science Centers and IPP assumed that secrecy prevented this. Over time, trust did develop between the United States and former Soviet institutes, and verification became less sensitive, even at places in Russia still engaged in nuclear weapons work. Instead of pursuing more rigorous options however, both programs relied increasingly on the "you just know"

method of verification. Program managers claimed that over time they got to know weapons experts in specific facilities and that their own expertise suited them to judge commensurate ability. Rather than collect additional information or verify what was offered by former Soviet experts, U.S. programs relied on an ambiguously described and informally gained sense of the skills of former Soviet experts.

In 1997, both the Science Centers and IPP came under increased pressure in the United States to show concrete results and to demonstrate an exit strategy for U.S. government assistance. In response, both programs reinvigorated their efforts to move beyond short-term research collaborations between scientists to more commercial-focused efforts that involve partial funding from businesses. At IPP these were referred to as Thrust II projects. They required that companies match U.S. government contributions and that research emphasize a commercial application. (There had always been a commercial component of IPP activities, but most funding had gone toward Thrust I projects, involving collaborations between scientists over basic research questions.) Similarly, the Science Centers also began to emphasize projects with contributions from third parties, only some of which were private companies. Referred to as Partner Projects, the research focused more on potential commercialization and less on basic research. Beginning in 1997, the Science Centers and IPP both placed more emphasis on these activities, and by 2000 they constituted at least half of project funding in both programs.

These new types of projects, with third-party participants, represented the means by which both programs sought to reemploy former Soviet ex-

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perts, reduce the number of potential proliferation problems, and, in turn, provide a strategy for eventually ending U.S.-funded assistance. Economic conditions in the former Soviet Union, however, dampened hopes for business expansion or investment. Repeatedly, teams of weapons experts found it difficult to meet international quality standards, produce on a competitive basis, or incorporate market demands into their products. Moreover, the State and Energy Department personnel who managed these projects had, on average, little commercial business experience. As evidence multiplied that significant job creation was probably impossible, some in academic and policy communities suggested other alternatives, such as retirement subsidies, increased immigration to the West, or subsidies for U.S. companies to transfer and hire former Soviet experts in the United States, although there is no evidence that any alternative was seriously considered.

As both IPP and the Science Centers concentrated on creating jobs for former weapons experts, Congress pressured the programs to demonstrate their success. Instead of measuring the number of jobs created, both programs emphasized the number of scientists "engaged." According to the Science Centers, through 2005 their projects have involved almost seventy thousand people. IPP claims to have engaged some sixteen thousand, as of the end of 2006. These figures, however, raise three issues. First, both programs record the number of project participants in general, not the number of weapons experts in particular. If both programs adhere to the goal that 60 percent of project teams are weapons scientists, this makes questionable the proliferation danger of the remaining 40 percent of people engaged. Further,

neither program established a concrete estimate of its target population. In the absence of this context, it is difficult to know whether the reported numbers represent significant progress.

Second, even though the goal is job creation, neither program measures this result rigorously. The Science Centers keep no records of job creation, and although IPP does ask for this information periodically, it is satisfied with gross estimates from project managers or, sometimes, no information at all. Indeed, repeated investigations by the U.S. Government Accountability Office have faulted IPP for poor record keeping. Additionally, neither IPP nor the Science Centers investigates the activities or jobs of WMD experts once they cease working on U.S.-funded projects.

Finally, IPP and the Science Centers do little to coordinate their project funding. Therefore, it is difficult to assess reliably the degree to which they fund duplicate projects or the same former Soviet experts.

In the face of external pressure to develop concrete indicators of success, both the Science Centers and IPP focused on the myth that the number of people who participate in their activities is a legitimate measure of progress. The programs ignored measures that would have more accurately reflected progress toward the reemployment of WMD experts or the ultimate goal of reducing the danger of the proliferation of WMD expertise.

The response to U.S. concerns about Russia's reassertion of power illustrates further isomorphism between the Science Centers and IPP. During the early 2000s, under Putin the internal security forces in Russia regained authority. In turn, they were more likely to use

security as an excuse for limiting cooperation, making it more difficult to interact with former Soviet weapons experts and gain access to facilities. Russia also began to resist U.S. priorities for such cooperation, and broader foreign policy disputes brought some programs to temporary halts. The Bush administration, in fact, pursued an across-the-board rollback of cooperative work with Russia.

The Science Center in Moscow and IPP both responded by claiming that Russia could now afford to assume more of the burden for nonproliferation efforts, freeing the United States to focus funding in other countries. In the early 2000s, both programs began to reduce funding for projects in Russia and redirect efforts toward other parts of the former Soviet Union and points farther afield, such as Iraq and Libya. Four years later the State Department proposed including North Korea, South Asia, and the Middle East. In 2006, IPP, too, expanded its activities to Libya and Iraq and changed its name to Global Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention.

This expansion, done with no obvious coordination between programs, arose from the increased external constraints of working in Russia. Yet as both programs moved into other countries, they did so in the knowledge that Russia remained a key proliferation concern. Neither program had demonstrated significant job creation for former weapons experts, and Russia, while committed to downsizing its nuclear workforce, hesitated to do so until jobs were available for the excess workers. Economic improvements did not extend to all areas of the nuclear weapons complex, and even where they did they were contingent upon oil and gas prices, the source of much of the Russian government's revenues. Some policy experts

expressed concerns that the Russian government, despite an increased ability to do so, had been unwilling to invest in the utilities, spare parts, and equipment necessary to keep U.S.-funded cooperative security upgrades in place and functional. They lamented the absence of a "security culture" in Russia. Thus, in response to external constraints – and with plenty of evidence to the contrary – both the Science Centers and IPP adopted the myth that Russia could assume more of the funding and administrative burden itself.

Organizations face one set of constraints from the environments in which they operate; they face a different set at home. New organizations created to implement novel tasks are more likely to be successful if they do so in ways that reinforce the mission, interests, and goals of their parent organization. In other words, new programs need to fit in at home.

The literature on organizations attests to the problems experienced by programs that are significantly different from their parent organizations.[3] Goals and activities that contradict standard routines, or that require significant changes to them, tend either to be marginalized, given away, or terminated, or implemented in such a way that forces them to line up with the interests of the parent organization. Although both IPP and the Science Centers adopted the same strategies for dealing with external constraints, they adopted significantly different implementation strategies, in an attempt to align their program goals with the interests of their parent organization.

For the Science Centers, this meant overcoming several characteristics that put them out of sync with normal State

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Department routines. The Centers are multinational organizations, and U.S. participation is managed by the State Department. At first glance, this would appear to indicate key commonalities: the Centers require the sort of skills and processes that make up the core of the State Department's diplomatic activities. However, some in the department saw the Science Centers as a security issue that more appropriately belonged to the Defense Department. To others, the Science Centers seemed out of place because they were functional activities, focusing on a particular type of work, in contrast to the State Department's tendency to organize along country or geographic-specific lines. Further, the Agency for International Development (AID), a quasi-autonomous part of the State Department, oversees most cooperative efforts like the Science Centers. In the past, there have been frequent conflicts between AID and the State Department over priorities, strategy, and program direction. The staff of the Science Centers also tends to be drawn from the executive service, rather than Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), and so they often do not enjoy the clout, authority, or career advancement opportunities that the State Department affords its FSOs. Finally, the Science Centers were out of step with normal State Department routines because they inherited especially strict oversight and accounting rules from the Defense Department, which helped lay the groundwork for the Centers in the early 1990s.

Conscious that they did not share many of the features of usual State Department programs, the Centers attempted to fit in by adopting the State Department's focus on process. The State Department negotiates agreements and implements decisions that

are made elsewhere, and is widely consider to be a "process organization," focused on the routines needed to ensure implementation, not on the decision-making needed to determine policy itself. Similarly, the Science Centers made administering the Science Centers their main focus. They established and came to value a set of detailed rules and procedures for project development, selection, and management, thereby helping to facilitate decision-making between the different member nations, all of whom retained the right to determine their own funding priorities while emphasizing decision-making by consensus. For these reasons, the Science Centers emphasized the process of project administration, reasoning that nonproliferation goals were met if due process was respected.

Unfortunately, this led the Centers to neglect the periodic reexamination needed to ensure that program activities still furthered nonproliferation goals. Take the Partner Projects, for example. The Science Centers, through U.S. leadership, considered these projects a success because they involved external funders and met established project criteria. However, they neglected to consider whether they resulted in job creation – a serious problem given that the vast majority of partners are now U.S. government agencies and not commercial entities.

At IPP, the pressure to fit in was different. IPP was conceived and established by experts from the U.S. nuclear weapons labs. These labs are part of the Department of Energy, which has traditionally allowed them considerable autonomy. As a result, IPP remained a largely decentralized program in which most significant decisions, including those about strategic direction and program funding, were made by the individual

labs. There was a small IPP staff, but it had the power only to persuade, not command.

Initially the independence of the labs proved very useful, enabling the flexibility and individual variation necessary to develop trust and cooperation with former Soviet weapons institutes. Over time, however, this independence led to coordination problems as each lab sought to send their own teams of experts to Russia. The result was frequent and excessive visits, which raised concerns in Russia about spying. In the United States, the labs allocated IPP resources through logrolling rather than prioritization, so project spending tended to reflect the need to harmonize funding between U.S. labs rather than the allocation of money according to project merit. Additionally, IPP was unable to force the labs to keep accurate or detailed records of their projects or the former Soviet experts involved. This led to a series of problems, including discoveries that more U.S. funding was going to U.S. labs than to Russian ones, and, most recently, to concerns that the U.S. labs have funded project teams in Russia that are also involved in nuclear energy and, possibly, weapons activities in Iran.

Looking at U.S. nonproliferation activities through the lens of organizational interest yields important policy-relevant conclusions. Both the Science Centers and IPP pursued inefficient strategies for fighting the proliferation of WMD expertise from the former Soviet Union, largely because they skewed implementation of their given tasks in an effort to conform to the activities valued by their parent organization. For the Science Centers, this meant emphasizing the process of project selection rather than considerations of project quality, relevance, and outcomes. Focusing on rules and proce-

dures over substance helped the Centers overcome some of the factors that put them at odds with normal State Department activities. IPP, on the other hand, preserved the structures of authority that typically characterize relations between the U.S. labs and the Department of Energy. As a result, IPP was unable to enforce overall priorities or standards of accountability.

But another source of pressure forced the Science Centers and IPP away from their original nonproliferation goals: that of their external environments. Because of domestic political demands in the United States and constraints in Russia, both programs adopted similar narratives for justifying their actions and answers to how they verify weapons credentials, pursue exit strategies, measure success, as well as why they are pulling back from work in Russia. These actions, responses to organizational interests and external constraints, ultimately caused both programs to diverge from the successful and efficient pursuit of their nonproliferation goals.

These cases show that the literature on organizational interests has important implications for U.S. nonproliferation policy. However, this study of the Science Centers and IPP also provides leverage for understanding organizational interest. Although it is well-established in the literature that organizational interest requires the accommodation of both external and internal constraints, there is insufficient attention to how organizations manage these conflicting demands. The cases of IPP and the Science Centers demonstrate how organizations become isomorphic as they adopt strategies to legitimize their activities in a way valued by their external environment, but also remain different in an effort to fit in with their parent organization.

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ENDNOTES

[2] For a good summary of this literature, as well as a discussion of isomorphism, see John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83 (2) (1977): 340–363; and Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality," in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 63–82.

[3] Classic examples include Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little Brown, 1967); Charles Perrow, *Complex Organization*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1989).

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Rebalancing American foreign policy

The United States faces unprecedented foreign policy and national security challenges.[1] Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the global war on terrorism, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the increasing assertiveness of Russia, the growth of Chinese military power, global climate change, not to mention the spread of poverty, infectious diseases, and ethnic and religious strife around the world: the challenges aren't limited; the resources to meet them are. The high operational tempo of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has stretched the military to the breaking point. The ongoing financial crisis and economic recession will severely limit the ability of the federal government to sustain or increase expenditures for defense and foreign aid.

The Obama administration has a unique opportunity to reorient American foreign policy and lay out a new national security strategy that more effectively strikes a balance between the ends we seek and the means we possess. Such a strategy would recognize that the United States faces considerable constraints in the realm of foreign policy. Some of these are self-inflicted: the war in Iraq, for example, proved to be a costly undertaking that has severely burdened the U.S. military. Other constraints stem from developments outside of Washington's control. The rise of new regional powers and the erosion of the liberal consensus will increasingly limit the exercise of American power. Given these developments, Washington must not only scale back American ambitions, but also demonstrate prudence with the nation's limited resources.

In his classic book on the subject, Liddell Hart defined strategy as "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy."[2] While armchair generals often focus on the application of force, identifying and prioritizing the "ends of policy" are of equal, if not greater, importance. For without a clear sense of the ends, foreign policy will not only be incoherent, but often ineffective. Moreover, without realistic prioritization, foreign policy will attempt everything while, often, accomplishing nothing.

Elected on a foreign policy platform that preached modesty, the Bush administration came to define the goals of the United States in broad and lofty terms. In its 2006 *National Security Strategy*, for

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example, the White House boldly argued that the "ultimate goal" of U.S. policy would be to "end tyranny in our world" by creating "a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system."[3] Among the specific tasks listed as essential to realizing this vision were strengthening alliances to defeat global terrorism, working with others to defuse regional conflicts, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, encouraging the development of democratic societies, and promoting free trade and open markets.

In the abstract, each of these goals is laudable, and to its credit, the Bush administration did make selective progress toward realizing its vision. But as a guide to practical planning, there are serious limitations with this vision of America's place in the world. To begin with, there is little sense of which of these goals should be prioritized. The lack of a clear hierarchy of objectives is particularly problematic given that many of these abstract policy objectives are in tension with one another. For example, efforts to strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism in countries such as Saudi Arabia or Pakistan were frequently at odds with attempts to champion human dignity or promote democracy. Similarly, encouraging countries to open their economies to global trade and investment may pay dividends in the long term, but in the short term these policies often have the effect of exacerbating inequality and generating domestic strife. The strategy also lacks clarity on how achieving the goals it outlines will directly protect the United States. The spread of democracy may encourage the emergence of friendly regimes, but it is also possi-

ble that militant groups will use the ballot box to achieve power, as was the case with Hamas in the 2006 Palestinian elections. Working to defuse regional conflicts might promote peace and stability in some cases, but it could also embroil the United States in distant conflicts of little direct interest.

The so-called "global war on terrorism" epitomizes the drawbacks of casting the core goals of American foreign policy in such abstract and contradictory terms. Various Bush-era planning documents describe the United States as engaged in a conflict in which "the enemy is terrorism" and "building and maintaining a united global front against terrorism" is an important component of victory.[4] These statements are not particularly useful as guides for public policy. According to the State Department, some forty-two groups around the globe employ terrorism as a strategy to accomplish their specific aims.[5] To lump these groups together is to define the threat in a way that is overly broad: it conflates Islamic extremists in Algeria with Marxist rebels in Colombia, Shiite fundamentalists in Lebanon with Sunni radicals in Pakistan. To claim that we can or should fight terrorism in all of these locations, or that these conflicts comprise some coherent war in which a single strategy will prove effective, is unhelpful.

Trying to undermine particular terrorist groups can be an appropriate foreign policy goal of the United States. But formulating policies based on transcendental goals or vague threats muddies what we clearly know to be more urgent: that the influence of Al Qaeda is a greater priority than Basque separatists or splinter factions of the Irish Republican Army; or that the influence of Islamic fundamentalists in Pakistan is a much more pressing danger than

terrorist cells in Central or Southeast Asia. Given limited resources and the multifaceted nature of the threat, the United States must define its needs in precise and direct terms.

What, then, should be the main foreign policy goals of the United States? In many respects, it is easier to identify what the goals *shouldn't* be. First, the United States should abandon the notion that it can or should seek to discourage others from challenging its political leadership or military primacy. As recently as September 2002, the White House declared that an important benefit of America's military might was its ability to "dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States."[6] The global distribution of power, however, is already beginning to shift away from one defined by U.S. predominance and toward one that is much more multipolar, regionalized, and complex.[7] Rising powers such as China, India, and Brazil are becoming major players in the global economy. Potential adversaries such as Russia and Iran are assertively challenging American influence within their respective neighborhoods. The National Intelligence Council (NIC) recently concluded that in the future "the United States' relative strength ... will decline and US leverage will become more strained."[8] American power won't evaporate overnight, nor will Washington cease to play a leading role in global affairs. But, as the NIC report makes clear, the unrivaled dominance of American power can no longer be taken for granted.

Second, the United States needs to moderate its attempts to spread democracy around the globe. Promoting democracy is laudable, but it is not clear that U.S. efforts have produced, or can produce, their intended effects. Attempts by the United States to bolster moderate Muslim politicians often have the reverse consequence of decreasing their legitimacy in the eyes of local populations. Moreover, new democracies or countries undergoing political transition are rarely bastions of stability and political moderation, as was evidenced by Georgian President Saakashvili's clumsy and ill-fated attempts to provoke Russia for domestic political gain. The increasing prevalence of semi-authoritarian regimes – those that adopt democratic practices, such as elections, alongside authoritarian ones, such as one-party rule – suggests that it is not clear that liberal, multiparty democracy remains the most attractive model of domestic governance.

Not just democratic institutions, but many of the major elements of the postwar liberal order are being called into question. The collapse of the latest round of the Doha trade talks, for example, raised doubts about the continued viability of the global trade regime. The credibility of the United Nations has been tarnished by recent peacekeeping failures in Darfur and the Congo. The nonproliferation treaty regime is in crisis following North Korea's testing of a nuclear device and Iran's continued intransigence over its nuclear program. Russia has taken advantage of its role as one of the world's leading oil and gas exporters to bully and intimidate its neighbors, while China has proven willing to undermine global human rights regimes to protect its economic interests in Africa. Even the United States' traditional allies in Europe appear reluctant to contribute to multilateral efforts such as NATO's operations in Afghanistan. In short, the spirit of ac-

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commodation and multilateral cooperation that Washington had encouraged and exploited in the past appears in limited supply today. Recently, leading powers have approached core issues so divergently that it is unlikely that the Obama administration will be able to rebuild quickly or easily the foundations of the international system around a new multilateral consensus.

If the United States cannot retain its leading position or easily reconstruct the postwar liberal order, what options does it possess? One possibility would be for Washington to accept the erosion of its hegemony and simply withdraw from global affairs. But the short-term challenges facing the United States, such as the worsening insurgency in Afghanistan, political instability in Pakistan, and the Iranian nuclear crisis, limit the attractiveness of a rapid retreat from global affairs. In addition, just because the United States will face a more complicated and fractious international environment does not mean that its leadership will always be ineffective. As Fareed Zakaria has argued, the challenge is not one of American decline, but managing the "rise of the rest."9 There may be distinct limits to American power in the future, especially in regions where new economic or military rivals are increasing in strength. But the United States will still be able to work with these new regional powers on select issues of common interest.

By developing more robust bilateral economic and security relationships with regional partners, the United States can cultivate relationships that have the potential to endure despite a weakening of American economic and political influence. American foreign policy would, as a result, move away from the urge to reconstruct some grand liberal bargain and instead focus on specific threats,

whether the proliferation of nuclear weapons, instability in Iraq, terrorist attacks launched by global jihadist networks such as Al Qaeda, or increased Russian assertiveness. Such a policy should be comprised of three core principles. First, the United States must possess willingness to compromise on issues of limited importance. Washington should indeed continue to draw bright lines with regard to interests it considers vital to defend. But by accepting and acquiescing to the prerogatives of rising powers in areas of minor importance, the United States can signal its moderation while also garnering more support on issues of major importance. Second, Washington should strive to restore its position as a good faith broker in world politics, rather than play the role of global policeman or moral arbiter. In this context, standing alliances and multilateral institutions will be of less importance than impromptu diplomacy arrangements through which the United States works with ad hoc coalitions of major powers to resolve particular crises. Finally, the United States must develop the ability to anticipate new threats before they emerge and respond to them in a flexible manner once they do – not least of all for the benefits this sort of preventative approach will yield in the long run.

What might this alternative approach look like in practice? Consider nuclear proliferation, one of the top foreign policy priorities of the new administration. The issue turns on whether the emerging multipolar international system should be one with only a handful of nuclear powers, or one in which a significant number of states, both great and small, possess nuclear arsenals. While all of the major powers have an incentive to avoid the proliferation of nuclear weap-

ons, the inherent uncertainty and ambiguity of the emerging international environment create significant incentives for mid-range states or aspiring regional powers to embark on a nuclear weapons program, or to hedge their bets by acquiring the technical infrastructure to construct a weapon if necessary. In the past, the United States has met this challenge through multilateral diplomacy, but the nonproliferation regime is under serious strain. Non-nuclear weapons states increasingly question whether the nuclear weapons states intend to fulfill their nonproliferation treaty obligations, whether ensuring the supply of peaceful nuclear technology as guaranteed by Article Four or working toward eventual disarmament as required by Article Six. Moreover, the recent cases of North Korea and Iran have raised questions about the ability of the major powers to enforce the regime reliably and equitably.

Rather than focusing solely on multilateral solutions, the United States needs to approach nonproliferation questions on a case-by-case basis. Given the limitations of the global nonproliferation regime, Washington should instead seek to work together with regional powers and local allies to bring pressure on aspiring proliferators. Such an approach has produced modest success in the case of North Korea and could be possible with Iran, if the United States were to engage seriously in diplomacy with Iran instead of delegating that responsibility to the European Union. Moreover, the United States should demonstrate greater flexibility in the types of bargains it is willing to accept. For example, there may be very justifiable reasons to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technology, but it may be impossible to do so in each and every case. Washington should consider accepting compromises on access to the fuel cycle for countries such as Iran. The United States could allow a limited research-scale enrichment program, provided it could be coupled with a robust verification regime. Not only would this create possible ground for a long-term compromise with Iran, it would also generate international support for aggressive action should Tehran divert material to a weapons program. Finally, the United States should consider negotiating agreements outside of the nonproliferation regime in appropriate cases. The recent bilateral U.S.-India nuclear deal, for example, was criticized in some quarters for legitimizing India's nuclear program, which was pursued outside of the multilateral treaty framework. While there are certainly problems with the deal, especially as it relates to U.S.-Pakistani relations, the arrangement helps draw New Delhi closer to Washington and reaffirms India's general commitment to nonproliferation. Washington might even consider a similar bilateral agreement with Pakistan, could it be tied to important guarantees regarding the export of nuclear material and technologies.

There are similar opportunities to develop tailored solutions to specific policy challenges in other areas. In the case of Iraq, for example, the United States reached an agreement with the Iraqi government in November 2008 to draw down its combat forces over the next three years, but it remains to be seen whether this plan will produce a stable regime or lead to a renewal of sectarian violence. The answer is not solely dependent upon politicians in Baghdad: the policies adopted by Iraq's neighbors, such as Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, matter, too. Washington should build upon bilateral talks

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it has previously held with foreign diplomats in Baghdad and work toward a formal agreement among the regional powers that would commit Iraq's neighbors to policies designed to foster political stability during this critical transitional period. As in the case of managing nuclear proliferation, this may require the United States to accept some unsavory outcomes, such as a heightened degree of Iranian influence in Iraq's internal affairs. But this cooperation is vital to achieve the more important goal of the prevention of a renewal of sectarian violence, which would threaten to draw Iraq's neighbors into a broader regional conflict.

Similarly, much has been made of Russia's recent aggression against Georgia and the possibility of a "new cold war." But the solution to rising tensions with Russia lies in finding areas of common interest, and not in political brinksmanship. To this end, the United States should seek to accommodate Russian interests in areas of minor importance while articulating to Moscow the cost of renewed competition. For example, as is presently being considered, the Obama administration could seek to arrange a deal with Moscow to cancel the planned deployment of missile defense systems to Eastern Europe in exchange for renewed progress on bilateral arms control. A similar compromise could be struck on the planned expansion of NATO, with the United States agreeing to moderate the scale or speed of enlargement in exchange for a public commitment from Russia to cease meddling in the internal affairs of countries in the near abroad, such as Georgia and Ukraine. Even while striving to be moderate, Washington nevertheless should be clear about what bright lines must not be crossed, whether aggression against allies or the coercive manipulation of

oil and gas shipments to Europe. Such a strategy will not transform Russia into a friend or ally, and it is entirely likely that Russia will continue to behave like a regional bully. But given Russia's increasing power, the United States must be modest in its goals. Occasional cooperation with Moscow on vital issues relating to arms control may not lay the groundwork for unending friendship, but it can help moderate the consequences of competition.

Moderating U.S. goals in the face of a changing international environment is especially important given the limits of America's military capabilities. The high operational tempo of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has degraded the current capabilities of the U.S. military. Nearly two-thirds of home active-duty army brigades are rated as not ready for service, largely because they lack the equipment to train properly between overseas deployments.[10] Inhospitable operating environments and lengthy deployments have also contributed to the decline in the reliability of hardware and equipment, as well as soaring maintenance costs. The army has also had a difficult time retaining mid-career officers and meeting elevated recruiting goals.[11] The cost of recruiting and retaining active-duty military personnel has skyrocketed, both because of the need to increase pay and because of rising health care expenses for veterans.[12] Rebuilding America's military capabilities in the wake of these two conflicts is an important priority for the new administration.

Adding to this challenge, the Pentagon is in the midst of an ambitious program to transform the military.[13] The navy is committed to developing a new generation of surface ships, while the air force is in the process of modernizing its fleet

of tactical fighters and tanker aircraft. Such efforts have been complicated, however, by the fact that many of the next-generation weapons systems have been plagued by cost overruns and delays. For example, the army's Future Combat System is an estimated 48 percent over budget and more than four years behind schedule.[14] This example is not unique: since the end of the cold war, the acquisition costs of major weapons programs have increased an estimated 120 percent while the funding provided for these programs has increased only 57 percent.[15] According to John Christie, the inability of the military to continue to finance its acquisition needs raises the gloomy prospect that "the U.S. military will cease being a significant influence in world events because of a shrinking force structure."[16] This impending shortfall is even more alarming given the rapid growth of military budgets in the past eight years. Under the Bush administration, spending on defense almost doubled, from $294 billion in FY 2000 to more than $647 billion in FY 2008. Given a weak economy, shrinking tax receipts, and a ballooning federal budget deficit, it is unlikely that the Obama administration will be able to increase the size of the Pentagon budget to meet the escalating costs of defense acquisition.

Further complicating matters is the uncertainty about what missions the U.S. military will be asked to perform in the coming years and whether the Pentagon should focus on acquiring new capabilities relevant to fighting terrorists and insurgents or focus on modernizing weapons systems designed to meet threats from potential state competitors.[17] The military could, in theory, develop multiple competencies, including both counterinsurgency operations and conventional maneuver warfare, to meet these multifaceted challenges. In practice, however, there are important tradeoffs. For instance, the burdens of the Iraq and Afghanistan operations have already eroded traditional war-fighting capabilities. A recent army white paper estimates that more than 90 percent of soldiers in field artillery units are operating outside their occupational specialties and thus are uncertified to perform their artillery support role.[18]

The growing emphasis on fighting insurgencies and unconventional wars has also muddied defense acquisition. For example, the Pentagon has invested billions of dollars to develop and acquire new surface ships that the navy had claimed would enhance its ability to support counterinsurgency missions in inshore waters. Critics charge that these new ships, which include the *Zumwalt*-class "stealth" destroyer and the Littoral Combat Ship, may be too large to accomplish the inshore missions for which they are intended, yet too vulnerable to contribute to the navy's traditional mission of maintaining blue-water supremacy. Indeed, after an estimated $11 billion in research and development, the navy recently reversed course and recommended scaling back the *Zumwalt* destroyer program, citing evidence that these ships could not conduct traditional blue-water missions such as area air defense and anti-submarine warfare.[19] Thus, in the absence of clear direction, the Department of Defense may find that in an effort both to maintain a traditional war-fighting capability and to acquire the capabilities to meet new threats, it might end up with costly weapons systems that can do neither.

What type of military capabilities should the United States seek to rebuild

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in the period of diminished resources? The typical answer to this question begins by listing a number of expensive and allegedly irrelevant weapons systems that should be cut. The usual suspects include Ballistic Missile Defense, the F/A-22 Raptor advanced fighter, the aforementioned *Zumwalt*-class destroyer, and the army's Future Combat System. Assuming cuts to these specific weapons systems would be prudent, they make up only a relatively small portion of the defense budget. A recent report by the Institute for Policy Studies recommended the elimination or reduction of eleven different defense program areas, but the combined savings of these cuts would have been $48.7 billion – about 8 percent of total military spending.[20] While this is an important start, policies to scale back unnecessary systems and reform the acquisition process alone are not durable solutions to increased budgetary pressure.

Rather than simply tinker with existing programs, the United States needs to rethink fundamentally what it hopes to accomplish with its military forces in the coming decades. Without any genuine military competitor at this exact moment, the United States misdirects its resources by investing in expensive weapons systems designed to ensure dominance against every imaginable adversary, everywhere around the globe. At the same time, building a military that is designed exclusively to combat asymmetric threats posed by insurgents and terrorist groups risks degrading the ability of the United States to respond to more assertive rising regional powers in the medium to long term. Instead, a force must be created that can respond to the diversity of missions that will be faced in the coming decades.

In doing so the military should seek first to create a hybrid force capable of meeting diverse threats across a variety of areas of operations. Rather than training individual units broadly, the military should allow for greater specialization and the development of forces tailored to meet specific challenges. In addition, this force should consist of units that are more tightly integrated across services and with civilian agencies. Individual military branches should not be viewed as isolated instruments and should be coordinated more closely with all of the elements of American power.

What might this look like in practice? Take the U.S. Army, for example. At the moment, the army is focused on training units for "full-spectrum" operations, whether counterinsurgency or traditional high-intensity combat.[21] However, the expectation that individual units can do everything is unrealistic, especially when high operational tempo leaves little time for training and has thinned the ranks of skilled officers. This policy also encourages a "one force fits all" approach, with only a single option to meet any challenge. Going forward, army leadership should consider proposals to develop a more specialized force consisting of a mix of units of different sizes, each with a different core competency.[22] Some units could be tasked with preparing to fight conventional wars against regional competitors while others could train to perform nontraditional tasks such as counterinsurgency or post-conflict reconstruction. In developing this specialized force, the army should focus on improving the particular skills of its soldiers, rather than the technological sophistication of their armored vehicles. Advanced technology is no substitute for soldiers who can interface effectively with a local population. To this end, the army should continue to invest in developing critical language skills and in expanding training

for non-combat roles, including military advisors and reconstruction teams. At the same time, the army cannot become too intellectually focused on any one region or any one particular threat. In an unpredictable world, with multiple regional powers, the army must be specialized for particular roles but not overly specific.

There are similar opportunities in the other military branches. The air force needs to develop a correspondingly hybrid force that is not simply dominated by advanced tactical fighter aircraft. Developing advanced airlift capabilities to move American forces quickly to hot spots is a pressing need, as is meeting the growing demand for unmanned aerial vehicles to support counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions. Similarly, despite occasional rhetorical statements to the contrary, the navy remains committed to a blue-water fleet organized around the carrier strike group. Given the potential threats posed by submarines and anti-ship cruise missiles to expensive platforms such as aircraft carriers, there may be reasons to shift emphasis toward a more diverse fleet with surface ships capable of operating in a variety of different contests, including hostile and contested waters closer inshore.[23]

To a certain extent these recommendations echo those made by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who in a recent *Foreign Affairs* article encouraged the United States to develop a "better balance in the portfolio of capabilities it has" and to "institutionalize capabilities such as counterinsurgency and foreign military assistance."[24] This is an important step in the right direction. Over the long term, however, the military must go beyond simply shifting priorities. The distinction between the services is becoming increasingly obso-

lete; operations on land, at sea, and in the air are not easily separated from one another. In the short term, the four branches need to work more closely with each other to increase the effectiveness of military operations, whatever their specific purpose. Over the long term, the military should move toward an integrated force divided more by specialized role than by branch or service.[25] One could imagine the development of standing forces with integrated components: a counterinsurgency rapid reaction force consisting not simply of army trainers and advisors, but also of air force unmanned aerial vehicles to provide intelligence and navy vessels to interdict arms smuggling and combat piracy in littoral waters.

Finally, the United States should promote greater coordination between the military and civilian agencies, especially in the context of counterinsurgency and nation-building efforts. A promising model is the Provincial Reconstruction Team, first used in Afghanistan, in which a small military contingent works closely with civilian experts and host government representatives to encourage governance, provide security, and deliver targeted assistance to a local population.[26] Going forward, the military should formalize this cooperation, encouraging the development of units tasked for nation-building and advisory missions in which there is a dedicated civilian contribution.[27] By combining hard and soft power, the United States can maintain its influence despite constraints on available resources.

The United States is at a crossroads in its foreign and national security policy. The national security challenges are extensive while the capabilities available to meet them are under severe strain. New political and economic powers are

Paul K. MacDonald

emerging across a variety of regions, and the United States can no longer be assured of unrivaled power and influence. These trends suggest that Washington cannot wield its power indiscriminately in pursuit of ambiguous and wide-ranging goals. Rather, it must marshal its limited means to accomplish specific goals in vital areas, working in conjunction with long-standing allies, emerging powers, even potential enemies. To help accomplish these limited goals, the U.S. military must become a much different institution. It can no longer remain a collection of branches dedicated to fighting large-scale conventional wars against rival states, but must transform itself into a hybrid force that can meet specialized challenges in a diverse and chaotic world in coordination with its civilian counterparts.

Observers have anticipated America's decline numerous times before and have been proven wrong: just think of the military rebuilding itself in the aftermath of Vietnam or following post–cold war trimming of the defense budget. But the argument presented here is not another simple, overly pessimistic exercise in what Samuel Huntington has called "declinism."[28] The rise of new regional powers has not eliminated America's influence; it has simply attenuated and complicated it. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have not destroyed American military power; they have simply exposed certain limits to its effective application. But while it would be a mistake to prophesy the imminent decline and fall of America in the world, it would be just as erroneous to engage in American triumphalism. There is no more certain way to accentuate the limits in American power or to accelerate the erosion of American influence than by adopting policies designed to prolong American dominance. In this respect, the United States is its own worst enemy. As evidenced by the complications in Iraq and Afghanistan, with great power comes the opportunity to make great mistakes. By moderating its ends and relying on specialized means, the United States can be prepared for whatever uncertainties await it in the coming decades while acclimating itself to a world where it has much to lose and little to gain.

ENDNOTES

[1] I would like to thank Stacie Goddard, Mike Glosny, Joe Parent, James McAllister, and Alex Montgomery for their helpful comments. Any errors are my own.

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Crystal N. Feimster

General Benjamin Butler & the
threat of sexual violence during
the American Civil War

Scarlett's breath came back to her as suddenly and painfully as after a blow in the stomach. A Yankee, a Yankee with a long pistol on his hip! And she was alone in the house with three sick girls and the babies! As he lounged up the walk, hand on holster, beady little eyes glancing to right and left, a kaleidoscope of jumbled pictures spun in her mind, stories Aunt Pittypat had whispered of attacks on unprotected women, throat cuttings, houses burned over the heads of dying women, children bayoneted because they cried, all of the unspeakable horrors that lay bound up in the name of "Yankee."

– Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*[1]

As a young girl growing up in the South, I was forced to watch *Gone With the Wind* throughout my primary and secondary education. As May dwindled into June, teachers grew weary of lecturing on multiplication tables or constitutional history and resorted to "historical films" to pass the time, with *Gone With the Wind* at the top of the list. I hated the movie at every age – and not because I wanted to crawl under my desk and die of humiliation every time a black person came on screen. Rather, the film's vio-

lent content, specifically its sexual undertones, gave me nightmares. In one instance, Scarlett, confronted by a Yankee soldier, shoves a pistol in his face and pulls the trigger. The viewer understands Scarlett's motivation: that implicit in the "unspeakable horrors that lay bound up in the name of 'Yankee'" is the threat of rape.

Few scholars have addressed the sexual threat captured in this confrontation between Scarlett and the Union solider. In fact, historians have accepted without question the idea that Union soldiers rarely raped southern women, black or white, and have argued that sexual violence was rare during the Civil War. Yet Mitchell's fictional account of one woman's wartime experience makes clear that a perceived threat of rape during the Civil War was all too real for southern women.

Wartime rape is an issue both ancient and contemporary, evident more recently in reports of mass rapes in the Yugoslavian wars of secession and the genocidal massacres in Rwanda, but equally present in accounts from the Torah, the Bible, Homer, Anglo-Saxon chronicles, and in mythological events like the rape of the Sabine women. Indeed, much historical evidence seems to suggest that whenever and wherever men go to war,

rape and the threat of sexual violence against women are inevitable, even strategic components of warfare.

During the Civil War many southern women feared sexual assault, and hundreds, perhaps thousands of women suffered rape. Even though the federal military defined rape as a crime punishable by court-martial, even execution, some Union soldiers were not deterred: at least 250 were court-martialed for the crime of rape.[2] In North Carolina during spring 1865, Private James Preble "attempted to rape" two white women, Mrs. Rebecca Drake and Miss Louise Bedard, and "did by physical force and violence commit rape upon the person of one Miss Letitia Craft."[3] When Perry Holland of the 1st Missouri Infantry confessed to the rape of Miss Julia Anderson, a white woman in Tennessee, he was sentenced to be shot, but his sentenced was later commuted.[4] Mrs. Catherine Farmer, also of Tennessee, testified that Lieutenant Harvey John of the 49th Ohio Infantry dragged her into the bushes and told her he would kill her if she did not "give it to him." He tore her dress, broke her hoops, and "put his private parts into her," for which he got ten years in prison.[5] In Georgia, Albert Lane, part of Company B, in the 100th Regiment of Ohio Volunteers, was also sentenced to ten years because he "did on or about the 11th day of July, 1864…upon one Miss Louisa Dickerson…then and there forcibly and against her will, feloniously did ravish and carnally know her."[6] Interestingly, the majority of the 250 court-martialed cases involved either black women raped by white men or white women raped by black men, suggesting that race played a key role not only in the cases the Union army sought to pursue, but also in who was willing to report rape.

Most rapes, however, likely went unreported because many women, especially women of the planter elite, considered sexual assault a fate worse than death. Because a white woman's virtue represented her most valuable commodity, much was at stake in making public a crime understood to tarnish that virtue. Women did, however, write about reported sexual assaults and the fear of rape in their diaries and letters. Mary Chesnut, a plantation mistress in South Carolina, complained in her wartime diary:

> I think these times make all women feel their humiliation in the affairs of the world. With men it is on the field – glory, honour, praise & power. Women can only stay at home – & every paper reminds us that women are to be violated – ravished & all manner of humiliation. How are the daughters of Eve punished?[7]

Her words capture the vulnerability and fear that southern white women experienced during the Civil War, but also reveal her frustration and anger over Confederate soldiers' failure to protect southern women during the war. With so many men taking part in the war effort, southern white women found themselves without male protection, forcing them for the first time to demand protection and participate in their own defense. Their acts of public protest and violent self-defense served not only as a political challenge to Union occupation, but also as a challenge to southern gender roles.[8] At the same time that southern women defied the image of the dependent and fragile southern belle, they also raised questions about southern white men's ability to provide proper protection.

As federal troops began to occupy southern territory, rumors that Yankees

planned to rape their way through the South spread. Refugees and local newspapers reported "outrages against women" and other atrocities allegedly committed by Union soldiers.[9] The Confederate Congress whipped up the rumors and intensified women's fears when it declared:

> The conduct of the enemy has been destitute of that forbearance and magnanimity which civilization and Christianity have introduced…clothing of women and infants is stripped from their persons… helpless women have been exposed to the most cruel outrages and to that dishonor which is infinitely worse than death.[10]

When Confederate propaganda did not succeed in keeping women in a state of constant fear, the mere presence of Union soldiers did.

In spring 1862, when General Benjamin Butler arrived in New Orleans with Union troops, he was greeted by a mob of men and women dismayed by defeat and outraged by the prospect of Union occupation. New Orleaneans challenged and resisted the authority of Butler and his 2,500 soldiers at every turn: shopkeepers refused to do business with "Yankees," ministers refused to say prayers for President Lincoln, and citizens destroyed Union flags. To maintain order, Butler declared martial law and set out to establish proper respect for his troops and the Union cause. Butler had William B. Mumford, a professional gambler who had torn the U.S. flag from the U.S. Mint in New Orleans, arrested and sentenced to hang.[11] When a New Orleans bookseller placed a skeleton labeled "Chickahominy" in the window of his store, a place where numerous Union soldiers had been slain, Butler sentenced him to two years' confinement at Ship Island, a federal prison during the war, off the coast of Mississippi.

A merchant who refused to sell shoes to a federal soldier had all of his stock sold at auction. Shopkeepers who closed their stores in protest were fined $100. A contractor who refused to do work for the army was imprisoned on bread and water until he agreed to perform the job.[12]

Storekeepers and businessmen, out of financial necessity, had little choice but to yield to Butler's orders; their wives and daughters were under no such compulsion. In fact, southern white women remained openly resistant to Union occupation, seeking not only to provoke Union troops, but also to compel Confederate men to action. If a New Orleans belle met a Union officer or soldier on the sidewalk, she contemptuously gathered up her skirts and walked to the other side of the street. When federal soldiers boarded streetcars or entered churches, southern women got up and left with a great to-do. They wore Confederate flags in their hats and dresses and hummed southern patriotic songs within earshot of northern troops. One woman, draped in a Confederate flag, walked up to a soldier standing guard, stared at him, and spat in the gutter before walking away in disgust; others spat directly in the faces of federal soldiers.[13] In fact, some went so far as to dump their chamber pots onto passing Union soldiers. Of displays like these, one general noted, "Such venom one must see to believe. Such unsexing was hardly ever before in any cause or country so marked and so universal. I look at them and think of fallen angels."[14]

If some southern women hoped that their actions would force Union officers to retaliate, they got their wish on May 15, 1862, when General Butler issued his infamous "General Orders, No. 28":

As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subject to repeated insults from the women (calling themselves ladies) of New Orleans in return for the most scrupulous non-interference and courtesy on our part, it is ordered that hereafter when any female shall by word, gesture, or movement insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation.[15]

Butler's Order licensed his troops not only to refuse protection, but to offer insult and to treat as prostitutes the women who offended federal troops and resisted occupation.

Butler insisted that Order 28 was not a call to rape, but he clearly believed that threatening sexual violence was a justifiable means of subduing southern women. When one of Butler's officers expressed concern that "troops may misunderstand the order," Butler defended:

Let us, then have *one* case of aggression on our side. I shall know how to deal with that case, so that it will never be repeated. So far, all the aggression has been against us. Here we are, conquerors in a conquered city; we have respected every right…and yet we cannot walk the streets without being outraged and spit upon by green girls. I do not fear the troops; but if aggression must be, let it not be all against *us*.[16]

Butler at once acknowledged his soldiers' remarkable restraint and conceded southern women's success in agitating his troops. The Order was an "absolute necessity from the outrageous conduct of the Secession women here, who took every means of insulting my soldiers and inflaming the mob," he explained to his superiors.[17] The women

of New Orleans, he argued, had left him no choice but to pass "an order characterizing [their] acts" as unwomanly and undeserving of protection.

Exploiting ideas about gender and class, Butler expected the threat of sexual violence to shame and force southern women into policing their own behavior. When asked why he had not just arrested the women, Butler explained the "Guard House" was no place for "lovely ladies" and insisted, "These insults come from the balconies of houses whence Juliet made love, and my men must have broken open private dwellings and chased the fair, feeble, fretful, and ferocious rebels to their bedrooms to have seized them." Using language of sexual seduction, Butler reasoned that if his soldiers had been reduced to "dragging screeching women through the streets to the Guard House," southern women would have succeeded. No southern man, he argued, would have stood by as Union soldiers carried "Mrs. Judge This and Mrs. Col. That and the honorable Miss so and so" kicking and screaming to jail.[18]

Those closest to Butler agreed the Order was necessary and the insult to southern womanhood justified. "Never has anything been more deserved," explained Butler's wife Sarah:

Their insolence is beyond endurance, and must be checked. Such forbearance was never shown to a conquered town as our people have shown them.…To show their appreciation of such forbearance, they step out of their parlor on the piazzas and grossly insult our officers as they pass along the street.[19]

Like her husband, Sarah Butler believed that the women of New Orleans forfeited their right to protection by refusing to behave as proper ladies. More impor-

tantly, Secretary of State William Seward openly supported the Order, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Gustavus Fox applauded Butler's actions, and President Lincoln, who received both domestic and international pressure to repudiate the Order, never did so.[20]

Confederates were outraged. The mayor of New Orleans, John T. Monroe, was the first to condemn the Order, accusing Butler of giving "license to the officers and soldiers…to commit outrages… upon defenseless women" and threatening to step down as mayor if Butler did not revoke the Order.[21] Butler, unswayed by intimidation, informed the mayor that "the language of the letter would not be tolerated, and if he believed that he could no longer control the 'aroused' passions of the people, he would be relieved of his responsibility" and sent directly to Fort Jackson, the Union prison. When the mayor protested that his only desire was to "vindicate the honor of the virtuous women of the City," Butler reassured him that the Order did not "contemplate any virtuous women," explaining that virtuous women would not insult "by word, gesture, or movement" federal troops and thus had nothing to fear.[22] Monroe accepted Butler's reasoning, rescinded his letter, and signed an official letter of apology. The next day, however, he withdrew his apology on the grounds that he had "misunderstood" Butler's explanation and called on the general to make a public announcement declaring that Order 28 did not apply to decent ladies, to which an impatient Butler insisted:

> There can be, there has been, no room for misunderstanding of General Order No. 28.…I shall not, as I have not abated, a single word of that order; it was well considered. If obeyed, it will protect the true and modest woman from all possi-

ble insult: the others will take care of themselves.[23]

Butler was adamant: southern ladies who resisted federal occupation by insulting and assaulting federal troops behaved like prostitutes, unworthy of protection.

News of Butler's Order circulated widely in the Confederacy, where it was understood as a direct attack on southern womanhood. The Jackson *Mississippian* offered $10 thousand for Butler's head, and Confederate generals read the edict to their troops to spur them to battle. From Corinth, Mississippi, General Beauregard declared:

> MEN OF THE SOUTH: Shall our mothers, our wives, our daughters, and our sisters be thus outraged by the ruffianly soldiers of the North, to whom is given the right to treat at their pleasure the ladies of the South as common harlots? Arouse, friends, and drive back from our soil those infamous invaders of our homes and disturbers of our family ties.[24]

Governor Moore of Louisiana proclaimed that the "annals of warfare between civilized nations afford no similar instance of infamy" and encouraged New Orleanians to rise up against Butler's occupation. Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, described Butler as possessing "instincts so brutal as to invite the violence of his soldiery against the women of a captured city"[25]; he, too, called for Butler's head. Southern women had succeeded in provoking southern men to their defense – at least rhetorically – because, as New Orleanian Clara Solomon wrote in her diary, "the insult offered to us is also to them."[26]

Butler's Order 28 entangled the threat of rape with more generalized anxieties about the limits of southern manhood

and the hollowness of antebellum gender and class politics. Across the South, women worried whether or not their husbands and sons, fathers and brothers would defend them from the horrors of invasion. Confederate newspapers published a plea from "THE DAUGHTERS OF NEW ORLEANS":

> AN APPEAL TO EVERY SOUTHERN SOLDIER. – We turn to you in mute agony! Behold our wrongs! Fathers! Husbands! Brothers! Sons! We know these bitter, burning wrongs will be fully avenged – *never* did southern women appeal in vain for protection from insult! But, for the sake of your sisters throughout the south, with tears we implore you not to surrender your cities, "in consideration of the defenseless women and children!" Do not leave your women to the mercy of this merciless foe! Would it not have been better for New Orleans to have been laid in ruins, and we buried up beneath the mass, than that we should be subjected to these untold sufferings? Is life so precious a boon that, for the preservation of it, *no* sacrifice is to great? Ah, no! ah, no! Rather let us die with you, oh, our fathers! Rather, like Virginius, plunge your own swords into our breast, saying, "This is all we can give our daughters."[27]

Limited in their power to resist occupation, the women of New Orleans called on Confederate men to fight on their behalf and clung to traditional notions of manhood. But the women's appeal also reveals uncertainty about these notions – and a recognition that proper manhood, as they understood it, was failing them.

Confederate officers and soldiers were notorious for abandoning cities and towns as federal troops advanced. In May 1863, Mary Ann Loughborough, who had followed her husband's regiment from Jackson to Vicksburg, record-ed how the women of the city greeted Confederate soldiers who confessed they were running from federal troops: "Why don't you stand your ground?" "Shame on you all!" and "We are disappointed in you! Who shall we look to now for protection?"[28] In a letter to her husband, Julia Davidson complained, "The men of Atlanta have brought an everlasting stain on their name. Instead of remaining to defend their homes, they have run off and left Atlanta to be defended by an army of women and children." She concluded, "God help us for there is no help in man."[29] In Virginia, a group of women declared the Confederate army incompetent and suggested the formation of a ladies regiment in the Army of Shenandoah.[30] In Jasper County, Mississippi, a group of "Ladies" petitioned the Confederate secretary of war for male protection; but they also requested weapons of their own to defend themselves from "the demonic invasion."[31]

Southern women's outrage at Butler's threat and their appeals for protection revealed that they were neither completely defenseless, nor content to be thought of as so. Before federal troops ever arrived in Louisiana, Sarah Morgan of Baton Rouge confided in her journal that she had a "pistol and carving knife ready." After learning of Butler's Order No. 28, she wrote, "Come to my bosom, O my discarded carving-knife, laid aside under the impression that these men were gentlemen."[32] Julia LeGrand of New Orleans recorded in her diary, "Mrs. Norton has a hatchet, a tomahawk, and a vial of some kind of spirits with which she intends to blind all invaders."[33] In August 1862, Miss Emma Holmes, of Charleston, South Carolina, wrote, "Mrs. Henry M. Hyams of New Orleans, the wife of the Lieut.

Governor of the State has rendered her name historic among Southern women, who have nobly avenged the insults of 'Butler, the Beast.'" Holmes explained in detail how a "Yankee officer" stopped Hyams and demanded that she bow in accordance with Butler's Order. When she refused, "the vile wretch threw his arms around her and kissed her," and upon his release Hyams "drew a pistol and shot him dead in all the flush of his insolence."[34] Mrs. Hyams, the story went, was spirited away by a sympathetic Union officer who helped her reach southern lines.[35]

Women all over the South armed themselves. From her family plantation, Oakland, eight miles north of Holly Springs, Mississippi, nineteen-year-old Cordelia Lewis Scales wrote to a dear friend:

> I wish you could see me now with my hair parted on the side with my black velvet zouave on & pistol by my side & riding my fine colt, Beula. I know you would take me for a Guerilla. I never ride now or walk without my pistol. Quite warlike, you see.[36]

In Macon, Georgia, a man explained that his mother and sister, who lived in the country, felt "quite secure" with the pistol and long knife that he had given them. To her husband, Julia Pope Stanley of Georgia wrote, "Oh that I had more faith. But when I hear of how our women are insulted by the Yankees, my heart almost faints within me"; however, she concluded, "Every woman ought to be armed with a dagger to defend herself."[37] Even Jefferson Davis made sure his wife, Varina, had a pistol for her protection. He made a point to show her how to use it herself, but in the end suggested, "You can at least, if reduced to the last extremity, force your assailants to kill you."[38] A woman's taking up

arms, it turns out, did not have to involve her direct use of the weapon: appealing to a perpetrator to turn that very weapon on her, she also acted in self-defense, in an effort to avoid that fate worse than death.

Butler's Order licensed Union officers and troops in their treatment of women well beyond New Orleans. Union Major Thomas J. Jordan told women in Sparta, Tennessee, that if they refused to cook for his troops he would be forced to "turn his men loose upon them and he would not be responsible for anything they might do"; in Selina he advised, "They had better sew up the bottoms of their petticoats" if they were unwilling to serve his troops. After stripping and spanking a group of young women who had emptied their chamber pots on passing soldiers, Union troops in Rome, Georgia, who were aware of Butler's declaration in New Orleans justified their actions accordingly: "No one but an abandoned woman would do a thing like that. Abandoned women had no rights that anyone was bound to respect."[39]

The geographical reach of Butler's Order ensured that the threat of sexual violence and the fear of rape were common to southern women and central to how they experienced the Civil War. In the face of fear, and eager to uphold pre-existing gender and class norms, southern women had little room to maneuver under Order 28 without being regarded as a "woman of the town." Yet southern women's ideas about men – and themselves – began to crack as they saw the many ways men were unable or unwilling to protect them during the war. Southern women challenged notions of their defenselessness and came to realize, as Butler predicted, that they had to "take care of themselves."

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[8] The gender and racial hierarchy of the plantation South sanctioned male dominance and discouraged female autonomy. Because southern white women were legally subordinated to and economically dependent upon their fathers and husbands, they had little choice but to accept paternalistic domination in exchange for male protection and a measure of discrete power within the household. For further discussion of nineteenth-century ideas about southern womanhood and manhood, see Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South* (New York: Pantheon, 1984); Ann Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small World: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Low Country* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

[9] Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians During Sherman's Campaign* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 84.

[10] Catherine Clinton, *Tara Revisited: Women, War & the Plantation Legend* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995).

[11] Robert S. Holzman, *Stormy Ben Butler* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1954), 69–70.

[12] For discussion of how citizens of New Orleans responded to Butler's occupation, see Christopher G. Pena, *General Butler: Beast or Patriot – New Orleans Occupation May – December 1862* (1st Books Library, 2003), and Chester G. Hearn, *When the Devil Came Down to Dixie: Ben Butler in New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997).

[13] On Butler and the women of New Orleans, see Mary Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 130–171; George C. Rable, "'Missing in Action': Women of the Confederacy," in *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War*, ed. Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 134–146; Hans L. Trefousse, *Ben Butler: The South Called Him Beast!* (New York: Twayne, 1957), 107–121; and Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 207–214.

[14] Thomas Williams, "Letters of General Thomas Williams, 1862," *American Historical Review* 14 (22) (1909): 307–338.

[15] "General Orders No. 28," in *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler During the Period of the Civil War*, vol. 1 (Norwood, Mass.: The Plimpton Press, 1917), 490.

[16] Quoted in James Parton, *General Butler in New Orleans: History of the Administration of the Department of the Gulf in the Year 1862* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1864), 327–328.

17 Major General Benjamin Butler, "Letter to Hon. E. M. Staton, Secretary of War (May 16, 1862)," in *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler During the Period of the Civil War*, vol. 1, 493.

18 Major General Benjamin Butler, "Letter to O. C. Gardner (June 10, 1862)," in ibid., 581 – 583.

19 Sarah Butler, "Letter to Harriet Heard (May 15, 1862)," in ibid., 486 – 489.

20 Hearn, *When the Devil Came Down to Dixie*, 109.

21 John T. Monroe, "Letter to Major General Benjamin F. Butler (May 16, 1862)," in *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler During the Period of the Civil War*, vol. 1, 497 – 498.

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23 Major General Benjamin F. Butler, "Letter to John T. Monroe (May 16, 1862)," in Parton, *General Butler in New Orleans*, 333.

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28 Mary Ann Loughborough, "In the Cave at Vicksburg," in *Heroines of Dixie : Confederate Women Tell Their Story of the War*, ed. Katharine Jones (Indianapolis : Bobbs-Merrill, 1955), 225 – 226.

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33 Julia LeGrand, "New Orleans is Full of Rumors (December 20, 1862)," in ibid., 193 – 195.

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36 Cordelia Lewis, "I Never Walk or Ride Without My Pistol (October 29, 1862)," in *Heroines of Dixie*, ed. Jones, 179 – 182.

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Poem by Arda Collins

From Speaking In The Fall

Was that the river?
No, it wasn't the river, oh, it was the sink.

We don't need a known reason, I say,
we can have our own ones;
we don't even have to know what they are;
they're from before all this,
they're from before everything,
from when the universe was a dark and cold place with nothing in it.
I feel that there is no telephone.
I see myself
as a cat who has learned how to imitate talking on the phone
through observation,
has learned how to pick up the receiver with its paw
and turns to look at the viewer
as though in mid-sentence; or maybe as a person
who has never seen a phone, and says blah blah blah
to the dial tone. The silence that once existed
in the dark cold universe: translated, the empty sound
is a place – the inside of the phone. Infinity,
I say, there it is.
This is where we all go to
when we touch each other;
this is what supernatural is.
I feel I can break
away everything. Today dark arrives
at a new hour.
Welcome, hour,
thank you
for transparenting yourself.
I will go quietly
into another room
into quietry
for you;
it'll just be us.

Poem by Matthew Dickman

Divinity

No angel blazing in rapture above my bed, you have been
as common as a swing
set, and I have been the child running toward you
from the sandbox. I felt your heart beating in the white tunic
I wore at mass
and watched the priest pass you out in little wafers of bread.
Whenever I set out to find you, on a park bench
or in pop songs, I am never so far
as the skull is from the brain.
When, in fact, have I ever been without you?
You sat politely on the couch, never directing or reproaching,
while I was losing my virginity, 13 October 1993,
and you stood on the shore
the night I walked into the ocean, deep enough
to cover my shoulders –
not teasing death, just exchanging names.
On New Year's Eve, when I saw twelve men dressed as Santa Claus,
drinking bourbon, I thought you had gone crazy,
and when my brother and I sat
at the hotel bar in Los Angeles, drinking beer
served to us by a bartender named Jesús,
I thought you were funny. People come back
from the dead so they can talk about you, the light at the end
of the hall, the feeling of weightlessness.
In the thirteenth century you pulled your clothes off
and showed yourself for the bloody mess
you could be. As time went by you drifted from Rome
and hid yourself
in the Survival of The Fittest; scientists found you
in tailbones and fossils. Darwin laughed in your face.
Bonhoeffer and Merton
have sat at your table and almost all of the twentieth century

has checked your coat, shined your shoes.
What would life be without you, our great compensation for suffering,
bound to earth
with a handful of stars, a moon? Biting into a cold piece
of watermelon, the mirror
whenever I dropped acid, trigonometry and lakes,
Einstein's eyebrows, in every orgasm, insect, honeycomb,
each blade of grass,
and John's Book of Revelation,
there you are
dressed to the nines
in a top hat and gloves, ready for all hell to break loose.

Poem by Dawn Lundy Martin

Excerpts from *Discipline*

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On CNN a girl's fingers slack, empty of weapons. Behind her, shrapnel fires. My mother says, O, holy, O, O, and then presses her lips together like a snake. Our purposeful living spaces made from taciturn rooms. Entire houses of trapped utterances – mouths saturated with them. Bodies can be easily carried across borders. Tangy fissures created from single breaths. Wooden slights bribe doctors to say *This is a whole body. It's complete and useable.* We all believe that anyway. A useable body must demonstrate its use.

How do we encounter the many hours past twilight? We understand that the light is something other, that it catapults us toward a desire or two if we're lucky. But, lately, daylight eats itself, and is percussive in its chewing, a carnival of curses and thumps. Nothing is wrong. In the hours after the whinny of the long train passing, we continue to think, how special we are, how born and cosmic, how just plain individual, but it is not enough. Nothing out there. Everything out there. What does it matter then, if the body climbs into a plastic car, drives into a deserted driveway and becomes another self? Elsewhere: One body found. One policeman shot. One 4-year-old girl shot. Teeter, tweeter, la, la, la, la, la. I am the I watching the I lift. Roads are short with darkness. I think, this is what they mean when they say, Savage.

Every night the body winds through the unlit corridors of the house. It tries to be quiet but there is nothing more quiet than the quiet itself. At the first glimpse of sun rising, panic. We are separated from the city. If this is a room in the country then there are other rooms

like this one. A boy smells of hemp and bug spray. Cool cats, you know, float up, a mystery. Domesticity lingers.

Women in dresses, men in shirts.
Just an approach –
– a waiting or
since there is time, some tea
                and wallpaper.

The body-carts are of a particular shape and size so everyone doesn't have one. We are assured that there were errors. Sleep, little bodies, sleep.

People are fond of saying, "Everything happens for a reason," which is complete bullshit. Required reading dots the bookshelf. There's Fanon breathing holes into us. And my brother reading in the halty sidesteps of a grade schooler. I know what my brother smells like when he's sick, angling for air, his body deep in the sweat of acquiescence. I want him to be someone else. My father liked to blame any crime in our neighborhood on "American blacks." When he mumbled under his breath, I think he was saying "Goddamned niggers," but I can't be sure.

Poem by Meghan O'Rourke

Ophelia To The Court

My shoes are unpolished, my words smudged.
I come to you undressed (the lord, he whispers
smut, that man, he whispered that). I bend
my thoughts, I submit, but a bird
keeps flying out from my mind, it slippers
your feet and sings – barren world,
I have been a little minx in it, not at all
domestic, not at all clean, not at all blinking
at my lies. First he thought he had a wife, then
(of course) he thought he had a whore. All
I wanted (if I may speak again) was : more.
If only one of you had said, I hold your
craven breaking soul, I see the pieces,
I feel them in my hands, idle silver, idle gold.
You see I cannot speak without telling what I am ;
I disobey the death you gave me, love.
If you must be, then be not with me.

Poem by Matthew Zapruder

The New Lustration

Last night I heard faint music moving
up through the floor. The feeling
I could be one who falls asleep
and dreams some brave act
and wakes to actually do it
through me flapped, brief breeze
through a somnolent flag.
Across the room my cell phone
periodically shone a red light
indicating someone was failing
to reach me. Your body
kept barely lifting the sheet.
I think my late night thoughts
and feelings about my life compose
fine particles that drift far
from me nightly to settle
on apartment or office buildings.
Feel the heat and pulsation within.
A man sits in the Institute
of National Memory examining files.
They contain accounts of what
certain people believed other
more powerful people would want
to believe regular people
were choosing to do all through
the years that like terrible
ordinary babies one after another
crawled, grasping daily acts
and placing them into these files
anyone now can hold. Read
about the life of the great
ordinary Citizen Z. How

he attended funerals and horrible
boring literary parties, aging
and thinking of his anonymity
and writing journals he later
felt he must destroy, and calmly
against his will meeting in hotel bars
with the sad men who asked
questions that along
with the answers would end
in these yellow files. Each
has a label marked with three
or four obscure numbers
followed by a dash followed by
three initials. Europe you had your time.
Now it is ours to drag everyone into
a totally ghost free 21st century whiteness.

Notes on Contributors

Arda Collins is a Ph.D. candidate in the poetry program at the University of Denver. She holds an M.F.A. from the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she was a Glenn Schaeffer Fellow. Her poems have been published in *The New Yorker*, *A Public Space*, *The American Poetry Review*, and elsewhere. Her collection of poems *It Is Daylight* won the 2008 Yale Series of Younger Poets Award, and is forthcoming from Yale University Press. She is among the recipients of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences's Poetry Prize.

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Matthew Dickman is the author of *All-American Poem*, winner of the 2008 APR/ Honickman first book prize from *The American Poetry Review* and Copper Canyon Press, as well as the 2009 Kate Tufts Discovery Prize. His work has recently appeared in *Tin House*, *The Boston Review*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Dossier* magazine, and *The New Yorker*. He lives and works in Portland, Oregon. He is among the recipients of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences's Poetry Prize.

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Meghan O'Rourke grew up in Brooklyn, where she now lives. After earning her B.A. from Yale University in 1997, she joined *The New Yorker* as an editorial assistant and

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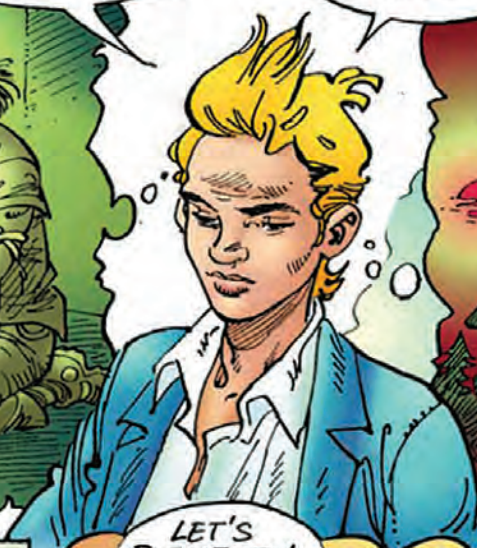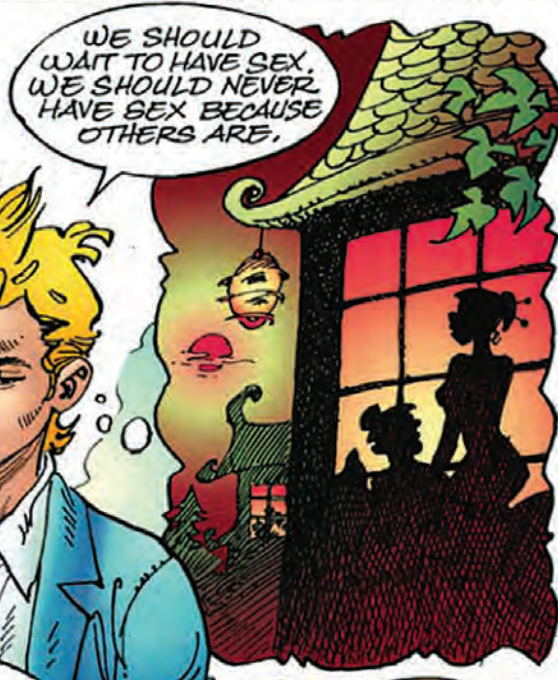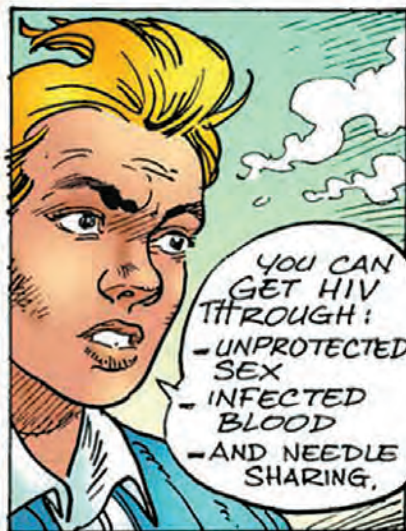
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