Belmont Undergraduate Capstones and Letters Journal

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Table of Contents

War Poetry: The Horrors, Dehumanization, and Reality of War
By
Samantha Day

Sammy Day passed away before this journal was published, but she was part of the initial planning for the creation of this journal. This was an essay that she has submitted to several undergraduate journals as she was hoping to get the essay published. To honor her memory, her essay is included in this journal.

Wilfred Owen, as a renowned poet on the subject of war, never hesitated to express his disdain for it. Two such poems of his, "Dulce et Decorum Est" and "Strange Meeting", suggest the dehumanization that war brings about. There is no longer respect or concern for human life and war has become second nature to the men fighting. Enemy soldiers are not seen as people or individuals, but as another target that needs to be eliminated. For Owen, most wars are pointless and it is an over glorified goal for young boys to become soldiers. Young men look forward to the day that they can serve their country and possibly die for it, but Owen does not see this as beneficial to the youth. War numbs the human spirit and traumatizes those involved. There are sights and sounds that soldiers will never be able to forget and will always be haunted by. In his scholarly article, "Strange Meeting", Harold Bloom discusses how Wilfred Owen uses his poem "Strange Meeting" to evoke the wickedness of war. He addresses Owen's stance on the ignorance and inhumanity of war. Also stated in the article is Owen's political pursuit to bring forward the injustices of war to the public. While Bloom only discusses these objections to war within the poem, "Strange Meeting", Owen also articulates his ideas in other poems such as "Dulce et Decorum Est". In my essay, I will address how Owen conveys his beliefs not only in "Strange Meeting", but also "Dulce et Decorum Est" where he again reflects on the Day 2 unnecessariness of war and its dehumanizing nature. I will use Bloom's article to compare the two poems and further expand upon Owen's stance.

While analyzing Owen's poem "Strange Meeting", Bloom emphasizes Owen's concentration on human nature. "Strange Meeting" illustrates how the act of war causes soldiers to lose their humanity by participating in an act that dehumanizes their fellow human beings. However, "Strange Meeting" also explores the possibility of an afterlife that comes with the opportunity for redemption. During the war, enemy soldiers are not seen as fellow human beings, but as enemies that must be conquered and overcome. In the poem, when the soldier enters Hell through the trenches, he is greeted by an 'enemy'. This is a moment of connection, of forgiveness: "[E]nemies are not expected to meet face to face in a spirit of reconciliation but rather in search of revenge" (Bloom 1). On Earth, they would continue to be enemies, but in the afterlife, there is no purpose for enemies. The poem reflects on the blood that is shed above the trenches in the war, and how despite being in Hell, there is a subtle peace below ground. This suggests that no Hell will be as awful as the one of war. The two men in the

poem are enemies, yet they have much in common. One thing is their lost years, the ones taken from them before they could be lived.

The meaningless loss of life only further progresses the disregard for human dignity. War is a time where there are few rules and regulations and therefore the number of deaths increase dramatically. The emphasis in war is more on the survival of one's army than the preservation of other life. War is about who has the best strategies, along with the greatest survival instincts—this can create increasingly dangerous territories in a war zone:

> As the image of the second Fall, "Strange Meeting" is terrifying in its representation of the ultimate retrogression of humanity and its disintegration of values. In this time of crisis, when 'none will break ranks' and nations send their youth to battle like lambs to the slaughter, the role of the poet is forced to undergo a transformation. (Bloom 2)

The absence of regard for human life has lead Owen to speak of his political standpoint through his art. This stance is intended to demonstrate the complications of war and the shortcomings that all combat faces. Owen speaks of the dehumanization that occurs, the traumatic aspects of the war, and the essential uselessness of wars. These subjects were not commonly thought about until the First World War, after individuals began to question many aspects of their society, including their patriotism.
In his article, Bloom continues to dissect Owen's opinions on war by illustrating the lack of beauty in such an activity. Human nature is one made for art and beauty; in war, there is no such thing. War brings destruction:

The pursuit of beauty is no longer possible, the soldier begins, in a world destroyed by war, when future generations have only this bloody legacy and 'will go content with what we spoiled / Or, discontent, boil bloody.' If he had been left to his pre-war pursuits, the fallen soldier suggests, he would not have been responsible for the death of others. (Bloom 2)

There is no beauty found in the death of others. War destroys the human spirit. War affects individuals in a way that will prevent them from returning to their previous way of life. This is why future generations will have "this bloody legacy" (Bloom 2). Owen finds disgust and despair in the human nature that is brought about by war, this is why he addresses his concerns to the masses.
The beauty of human nature that Owen seeks cannot be seen during wartime, but it can be seen before and after the battle. Bloom states in his article that after the war the enemies refer to each other as a friend, thus showing the true capabilities of human nature when a battle is not involved. Human nature conquers the nature of war, even if it is only after the war:

> But in the course of this strange meeting, even the most basic and essential distinctions of war—between 'I' and 'you,' 'enemy' and 'friend'—will be dislocated and, at least momentarily, overcome. From the moment the two figures in "Strange Meeting" speak, the differences between them fade into the background. (Bloom 2)

When the two soldiers are in Hell, there is nothing left to dispute, thus allowing human nature to conquer and shed its true beauty among the two. Human decency is lost

within a war. Bloom interprets Owen's poem to express this loss by emphasizing what can occur when war is not a crucial part of life. Bloom accurately addressed many aspects of Owen's poem, however, there is a deeper discussion to be found not only in "Strange Meeting", but also in "Dulce et Decorum Est". The occurrence described in Owen's "Strange Meeting" is one between a soldier and the man he had killed while in battle. The soldier attempts to escape his almost certain death by entering into the trenches but does not expect to slip into the realm between life and death, the descent into Hell. Here he meets the man whom he recently killed. The dead man's appearance makes it obvious that the soldier has arrived in Hell. This confrontation causes the soldier to become aware of his actions within the war. No matter what happens, the battle leads to death:

> They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress. None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress Courage was mine, and I had mystery; Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery; To miss the march of this retreating world Into vain citadels that are not walled ("Strange" 28-33)

Despite one's agility, position, intelligence, strength, or skill they cannot be saved in war, there is no safe ground. Death is unavoidable and occurs at a rapid pace among the soldiers. In "Strange Meeting", Wilfred Owen emphasizes the "undone years", the ones that the soldiers will never be able to experience (Strange 15). War is senseless because it causes the deaths of a multitude of men with no clear hope of change:

> 'I am the enemy you killed, my friend. I knew you in this dark: for so

you frowned Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed I parried: but my hands were loath and cold. Let us sleep now. . . .' ("Strange" 40-44)

When the war ends, those who have fought do not reap their reward. They will never see the freedom that they desperately fought for. They will, however, find their eternal damnation alongside those whom they fought against. The blood that is shed in war is meaningless, as the immense number of men killed will have been forgotten. "Dulce et Decorum Est" is another example of a Wilfred Owen poem that speaks to the tragedy of war. This poem, however, has more of a focus on the war itself and not on the aftermath. Owen uses examples throughout to contribute to his idea that war is often without reason and has lasting effects on soldiers:

> And towards our distant rest began to trudge, Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots, But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind; Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots Of gas-shells dropping softly behind. ("Dulce" 4-8)

War has become an instinctual and habitual behavior of the soldiers. The men are able to march forward and fight in all conditions. They battle through sleep deprivation, loss of clothing items, hunger, and fear. The explosives become a mere hum, something they are able to tune out and ignore. War has become second nature and has numbed those who fight.

Though the soldiers have become accustomed to their surroundings, fear and danger are always prevalent. Owen refers to these dangers as "ecstasy", a drug that keeps the men prepared for anything that could

come next ("Dulce" 9). If one is not aware of his surroundings his life is in danger:

> Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time, But someone still was yelling out and stumbling And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.— Dim through the misty panes and thick green light, As under a green sea, I saw him drowning. ("Dulce" 9-14)

War is a traumatizing experience. The constant threat of danger is always lingering in the soldiers. The fear is paralyzing. Watching close friends, and fellow soldiers die is traumatic, an experience that will haunt soldiers forever. Owen speaks of the need for dreams to pace themselves. The horrifying thoughts flood into the minds and dream—the subconscious—of the men who fought for their country. For Owen, if war does not lead to death, it leads to traumatic moments that one can never escape. Perhaps Wilfred Owen's position on war can simply be concluded through his final stanza of "Dulce et Decorum Est". He addresses the false glory that is found in war. There is a desperate attempt to form patriotism, one that seems to only be found in the sacrificial love of one's country. Owen does not approve of this push for war:

> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest To children ardent for some desperate glory, The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori ("Dulce" 17-21)

It is sweet and proper to die for one's country. This is a lie told through generations to promote war. Young men are told that their glory can be found on a battlefield. They are told that they will be heroes if they sacrifice themselves for their country. They are promised a better world. Owen, however, disagrees. War is simply a traumatic experience for him, one that leaves people wishing they had died on that battlefield. Combat is filled with meaningless death and unconstrained violence. The weapons are ceaselessly firing, held so long that they feel to be a part of the body. War becomes second nature, the blood is now decoration, and the screams, a lullaby. Men of battle know no different and cannot escape the world which they have now entered.

The monstrosities of war are conveyed through some of Wilfred Owen's works. "Dulce et Decorum Est" and "Strange Meeting" are two of his poems that focus on the issues of war. Harold Bloom, in his article "Strange Meeting", draws out the theme of war which decays a soldier's humanity; he does so through an analysis of Wilfred Owen's poem of the same title. In this article, he draws upon human nature and how war can deteriorate it. He focuses on how the poem is placed outside of the war and how the soldier is only able to understand what is occurring outside the context of the war. While this is an important analysis of "Strange Meeting", the poem can also be interpreted differently. "Strange Meeting" holds within it Owen's belief that war is unnecessary. When the war is over everything is destroyed, including families. War has more harm than benefit, and there is a lack of respect for human dignity. "Dulce et Decorum Est" is another poem in which Owen's addresses his disdain for the war. In this poem, the traumatizing effects of war, as well as its dehumanization can be seen. These two poems, along with Bloom's article, "Strange Meeting" express and emphasize Wilfred Owen's disapproval of the war

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Sammy Day graduated from Belmont Abbey College in English and Great Books in May 2021. She was accepted into a Masters in Technical Communication program. During her time at the Abbey, she was very involved in committees, classes, and groups. She passed away on June 1, 2021.

MEDB OF CONNACHT, THE *TÁIN BÓ CUAILNGE,* AND CLASSICAL TRADITION:
THE SOVEREIGNTY GODDESS DISTINCTION
By
Lauren Elizabeth Harper

The *Táin Bó Cúalinge,* or the Cattle Raid of Cooley in modern-day English, presents a glimpse into the culture of a time from which few primary sources remain. It portrays a medieval Ireland torn by rivalries between kingdoms, a young hero striking his name across the bodies of his enemies, and an element of otherworldly prowess that cannot be explained by natural means. The *Táin* represents the epitome of Old Irish literature, often cited as the "Irish *Iliad,*" and upheld as an epic to rival the classics. The comparisons to the *Iliad* are mostly carried out by scholars drawing parallels between the conventions of the epic genre and the *Táin,* as well as applying the concept of the epic hero in comparing Achilles and Cú Chulainn.[1] As an extension of this comparison, it is often argued that the *Táin* is little more than an Irish recasting of classical literature. While it's true that the *Táin* exhibits many of the conventions of the epic genre, and parallels can be drawn between it and the *Iliad*, claiming that the *Táin* simply rehashes classical literature is reductive. The *Táin* has many distinctions that mark it as a work of Gaelic Irish literature rather than an adaptation; the most important of these is the character Medb. The treatment of gender and sex is a quintessential discussion topic in classical and medieval literature, and the *Táin* especially warrants examination: how are the women treated differently than in classical tradition, and how are they not?

Most of the women have direct parallels to each other, between Irish and classical tradition, but Medb's distinction from other female characters marks an important divergence from classical epic in the *Táin.*

However, The *Táin's* comparisons to the *Iliad* are certainly warranted. Cecile O'Rahilly, well-known for her editing of the most important recensions of the *Táin*, acknowledges the Homerian similarities in her introduction to the *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*:

> In his *Cours de Littérature Celtique*, H. D'Arbois de Jubainville compared the civilization of the Celts with that of Homer's Greeks, and discussed the agreement between the picture of Irish heroic life in the Ulidian tales and the accounts given by various classical writers of life among the Gauls and Britons before the Roman invasion… In these points, as he shows, the background and setting of the Ulster cycle and the characteristics and weapons of the Ulster warriors agree to a remarkable extent with the descriptions of the classical authors. (x)

O'Rahilly presents the same comparisons that other scholars in the field at the time had made: she explains that what is portrayed in the Old Irish body of literature bears remarkable similarities to Iron Age Britain and Gaul. Given the similarities, O'Rahilly posits a few theories surrounding the *Táin's* composition: some scholars

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[1] Michael Clark has written an essay titled "An Irish Achilles and a Greek Cú Chulainn" that explores their parallels in more depth.

believe it had a long oral tradition, and some do not. Her first suggestion is "no later than the last pre-Christian or the first post-Christian centuries" (xii). However, she acknowledges that internal evidence is sparse (xii), and that based on the depictions of Gaulish and Northern British influence, the composition could also "[fall] somewhere between the second century B.C. and the fourth century A.D." (xii). She also makes note of the general belief of oral tradition, some speculating as much as 650 years of oral tradition prior to the recording of the *Táin*, but most believe there to have been around 300 years of oral circulation.

Though there is debate about the origin of the *Táin*, the story as it has survived has done so in three recensions. The twelfth-century *Lebor na hUidre* ('The Book of the Dun Cow') (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 E 25) (LU) and the late-fourteenth-century Yellow Book of Lecan (Trinity College Dublin, MS 1318) (YBL) comprise the first recension with similar language and episodes included. The twelfth-century Book of Leinster (Trinity College Dublin, MS 1339) (LL) contains more detail and updated language and forms the second recension. The third recension, according to O'Rahilly, "is found in fragmentary form in two late manuscripts. It has generally been taken to represent a recension of the LL-version, adapted from an earlier form of that version much shortened and altered, but containing also matter found in the earliest recension" (*Stowe Version* vii). O'Rahilly and Rudolf Thurneysen both catalogue the differences between the recensions in their works.[2]

Thomas Kinsella's translation, the version upon which the rest of this analysis is predicated, is based upon the combined *Lebor na hUidre* and Yellow Book of Lecan, with supplements from the Book of Leinster as needed.[3] Notably, the Book of Leinster has "besides a care of completeness, a generally florid and adjectival style, running at times to an overblown decadence" (Kinsella x-xi). The Book of Leinster, while being useful in providing a complete narrative, features updated language and a change of interest—the text of the Book of Leinster reflects a shift towards the interiority of the characters, particularly in how it handles Cú Chulainn. The episode of Ferdiad and Cú Chulainn is an insertion into the earlier narrative, but starkly it centers on Cú Chulainn's grief after he kills Ferdiad in single combat at the ford. Cú Chulainn cries aloud to his charioteer, Laeg: "What have I to do with spirit? / Stupor and sorrow weigh me down / after the deed that I have done / this corpse I have hacked so harshly" (Kinsella 198). Cú Chulainn's mourning draws learned readers' attention to a notable parallel: Achilles mourning Patroklos[4] in

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[2] O'Rahilly cites Thurneysen's comparisons in his work *Die irische Helden- und Konigsage.* O'Rahilly also catalogues her own list of comparisons in the introductions to *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge*

and *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster.*

[3] Kinsella justifies his usage of the earlier manuscripts instead of the Book of Leinster in his introduction.

[4] I use the Greek spellings for two purposes: to keep my analysis consistent with Peter Green's translation and for reasons that Green himself posits in his preface: "The problem itself is one legacy of Rome's complete cultural domination…which dictated (among much else), not only that Greek names be Latinized, but that the gods of the Greek pantheon should be replaced in translation by their nearest Roman equivalents" (xii). Returning to the Hellenic spelling further contrasts the Irish and the

book 18 of the *Iliad*. The parallels that can be drawn between Achilles and Cú Chulainn, as well as the subject matter of both texts and their episodic nature, provide evidence that the *Táin* resembles the *Iliad* purposefully. To add to this, the manuscripts that contain the *Táin* were penned during a period when many classical texts were being translated into Irish. Still, the earliest narrative as recounted in the *Táin* was produced in a culture that escaped Roman colonization, and the reach of Homer's writings, in particular, is speculative.

Despite the timeline incongruence, scholars note the importance of cultural exchange between the Irish and Romano-British as possibly influential upon later literature. Clare Downham, historian and author of *Medieval Ireland*, makes a distinct claim that ogham is proof that Ireland assimilated some of Roman culture: "This script was not a simple derivative of the Latin alphabet, but developed from knowledge of how Latin grammarians analyzed the sounds of language. Thus the development of ogham indicates thoroughgoing contact with the Roman world" (13). In contrast to Downham's argument, the connection between ogham and Latin grammarians is still a matter of debate. The origins of ogham, though, are widely agreed upon to be a Roman influence. It was through the introduction of Christianity, with Palladius in 431 C.E. and the later St. Patrick in 432 C.E., that Latin script reached Ireland. Because of the contact with the Roman Empire and Christianity filtering into Ireland—St. Patrick himself being a Romano-Briton—it becomes easier to argue that because of the cultural exchange, the *Táin must* have been influenced by classical literature. However, the presence of classical

Greek cultures and emphasizes the translation choices being made.

literature in medieval Ireland is also a matter of debate, as Brent Miles explores in his text, *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic in Medieval Ireland:* "The romantic view that Ireland was the place far away from the continent where reading and copying of the classical poets flourished in the 'Dark Ages' continues to have some popular currency. This view, however, has a diminished hold on paleographers and editors" (21). Miles attempts to place the work of Virgil into context with the state of learning in medieval Ireland, pointing out that "antiquity's greatest Latin poet was read in the seventh and eighth centuries in Anglo-Saxon England, as can be reasonably inferred from Aldhelm and Bede" (22). Miles ultimately claims that Virgil's absence from surviving Irish manuscripts, which others use to argue that Virgil was not read on the island at an early date, is in fact because the poet was read 'too much':

> According to Hofman's theory,[5] the manuscripts of Virgil which the Irish knew were evidently those with the Servian commentary copied alongside the poetry in parallel columns. These were working texts which would have been worn out with classroom use and ultimately discarded. This view not only gives a common-sense explanation for the lack of surviving manuscripts from the early period, it posits that the lack is attributable not to the poet's being neglected, but to his being read too much. (Miles 22-23)

Whether or not Virgil was being read in the eighth century, *Imtheachta Aeniasa* ("The

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[5] Both Rijcklof Hofman and Brian Ó Cuív, whose research Miles cites, have probed this question at greater lengths than I can briefly describe here. Miles' work in *Heroic Saga* provides a helpful survey.

Irish *Aeneid*"), which retells the *Aeneid* to an Irish audience in the 14th century, certainly proves that the Gaelic Irish were familiar enough with his works by then to write their own version. *De Excidio Troiae Historia*, ascribed to Dares Phrygius, circulated as the *Togail Troí*, its first recension estimated to be from the 11th century.[6] *Togail Troí* is much expanded on from *De Excidio,* and more notably, translated into the Irish vernacular. The translation from Latin to Irish removes the classical work from the culture and language it was composed in, assimilating it into the culture and language of the translation. *Merugud Uilix Maicc Leirtis* ("The Wanderings of Ulysses, Son of Laertes"), recovered in a 14th century manuscript, is a much abridged version of the *Odyssey* and offers a much more violent, daring recounting of the original text. In Book IX of the *Odyssey,* when Odysseus and his men encounter the island of the Kýklōpes, Polyphēmos has an exchange with Odysseus before killing two of the sailors. In *Merugud,* he does not speak with Odysseus: "They saw the Cyclops coming towards them. And he did not ask tidings of them, but as they were there, so he went among them. Where there was a hero or a battle-soldier he closed his arms around them, and broke and minced their bones and their flesh" (2-3). Odysseus escapes Polyphēmos but returns to stake Polyphēmos' eye in *Merugud,* but in the *Odyssey,* he is captured and trapped with his men, and describes himself as helpless: "I realized we were too weak to move / the mighty stone he set in the high doorway. / So we stayed there in misery till dawn." (*Odyssey* IX.304-306). The differences between the Irish Uilix and the Greek Odysseus point to a striking realization: the

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[6] Gearóid Mac Eoin has catalogued and dated the different manuscripts and recensions of the *Togail Troí* in his work *Das Verbalsystem von Togail Troí.*

classical texts of the *Aeneid*, the *Odyssey*, and *De Excidio* are not just being translated across languages, but across cultures. The cultural identity of the hero is not taken from classical literature, but rather, classical literature is adapted and molded into the Gaelic Irish tradition.

Ireland, then, becomes a unique island that possesses a familiarity with classical literature and yet has a strong enough local culture to offset the typical overwhelming Romanization that accompanies such development. The island can produce texts inspired by classical literature without idolizing it—a fate that befell Anglo-Saxon literature and its heavy Christianization. Elva Johnston, author of *Literacy and Identity in Medieval Ireland,* draws the correlation between Christianity transforming Ireland with the literature produced as a result:

> Within a century of Patrick's mission there is evidence for serious literacy in Latin and within two centuries he himself was the hero of some of the first major productions of Hiberno-Latin hagiography… This picture is made even more intriguing by the fact that the Irish were apparently the first western European people to develop a full-scale vernacular written literature expressed in a range of literary genres. (Johnston 15)

The Irish are not only writing epics in their own vernacular, something no other western European culture was doing at the time, but they are translating classics into their own culture. Ireland had the unique set of circumstances that allowed its literature to flourish as native Gaelic expression, while also being equipped with the tools of written language. This ability to explore genre while

unlimited by Roman suppression created a fertile ground for native Irish literature to root in. The native Irish composed in their own language as often as they composed in Latin, freely expressing both languages in their literature. The Prologue to the *Senchas Már,* the largest and best surviving collection of Old Irish law texts, correlates Christianity with native Irish culture and provides a framework for the relationship between the two:

> Then all the people of skill in Ireland were convened, so that each exhibited his skill to Patrick… Then it was entrusted to Dubthach to exhibit judgement, and all the poetry of Ireland, and every law which had held sway among the men of Ireland, in the law of nature and the law of the prophets. (Carey 18)

Patrick's place in the Prologue is that of a Christian leader encouraging the formation of Irish law. Christianity playing such a strong role in the production of Irish texts implies that Christianity ran deeper than religion—it transformed culture, reading, writing, and served as a foundation for society moving forward. The written word's connection with the Church was so intense that some scholars argue that the political scene of the church of Armagh influenced the composition of the *Táin.*[7]

But while one can find parallels to classical literature in the *Táin*, there is much more going on in the *Táin* than with an adaptation like *Imtheachta Aeniasa*. There are important differences that function as key distinctions. For one, we can consider the

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[7] Pádraig Ó Riain, "The *Táin*: A Clue to its Origins," *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference of the Ulster Cycle of Tales, Belfast and Emain Macha, 8-12 April 1994,* An Sagart, 2005, 31.

assumed role of the *Táin:* Brent Miles, author of *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic in Medieval Ireland,* makes the assertion that it was never intended to be read as a work of fiction: "[The scribe] acknowledges that the work may be a *fabula,* 'fable,' a genre which Christian writers tended to loathe. However, the Irish had a strong tradition of regarding such texts as the *Táin* as *historia,* 'history,' a genre highly prized in Christian tradition" (2). Miles' claim rests upon the generic differences between the *Táin* and the epics of classical tradition. The *Táin* served as a reminder of a pre-literate Iron Age to an audience now largely Christian; the *Iliad,* while also telling a story of the past, would have been received in a much different way: a heroic ode to mythical heroes and an ideal age of man. The *Táin* differentiates itself from classical literature by its distinctly Irish themes, its treatment of its characters and their flaws, and especially in the main character Medb: a warrior-queen with no equal in classical tradition.

One of the most significant ways in which Irish literature diverges from the classical is in the concept of the sovereignty goddess, an idea unique to Celtic culture and which features in many works. Outside of Celtic literature, the concept is nonexistent. Pagan Romans believed in emperors who were semi-divine themselves, and pagan Irish people believed in kings that claimed their power by marrying the land and making her his bride. Medb, a prominent character in the *Táin*, displays not only the Irish concept of a sovereignty goddess, but also equality in her marriage, unprecedented agency, and status as a warrior-leader, that make her a unique character amongst the cast of the classical *Iliad.* The presence of Medb as the sovereignty goddess allows the *Táin* to be read not as a recasting, but as a piece of native Irish literature that parallels classical

literature but distinguishes itself from the classical tradition.

WOMEN OF THE *TAÍN BÓ CUALINGE* AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE

To understand Medb's uniqueness, her relief must be understood first. The other women of the *Taín* and of classical tradition can be easily defined by the categories that they fall into. As in classical literature, the named female characters of the *Taín* are few and relegated to specific roles in the story. There are only a handful in the text—Finnabair, Fedelm, Emer, the Morrígan, and Medb. Most of these women fulfill similar roles to women in the *Iliad* and other classical literature—except Medb, who alone defies categorization of the typical female characters. Steven Farron attempts to categorize the women of the *Iliad* into a definable category of tragedy: "despite the tremendous differences between them, Homer treated them all in the same manner. He emphasized how intense and deep were their emotions and sentiments and how little regard the male characters had for these emotions and sentiments" (15). The women of the Homeric epic, despite their various positions, are all tragic figures whose feelings are continually ignored by the men surrounding them. Examining the women of the *Taín* side by side with the women of the *Iliad* allows the reader to come to an understanding of the place of women in the epic genre: subservient to a man and lacking agency in their lives in nearly every case.

Finnabair of the *Taín* can most easily be compared with Helen of the *Iliad.* They both are seen as seducers by the other characters in the narrative, manipulating the men around them to get what they want. These are typical portrayals of the seductress stereotype, but the characteristic that

Finnabair and Helen also share is that, while the men accuse them of being lustful and manipulative, their actions prove that this view is not true. Katherine Henderson and Barbara McManus explain the stereotype of the seductress further in *Half Humankind*: "The most heavily stressed stereotype is that of the seductress: the image of a woman as enticing, sexually insatiable, and deceitful in the service of her lust" (47).[8] *Half Humankind* does not necessarily make the argument that a seductress must, in reality, be lustful and deceitful, only that the men around her view her in that way. Finnabair certainly is seen by Cú Chulainn as a liar:

> Finnabair, the royal daughter
> —she is nothing but a snare.
> She played false with the others,
> and ruined them as she ruins you.
> (Kinsella 185)

Despite Cú Chulainn's accusations against Finnabair, she has remarkably little agency. Medb promises her in marriage to whomever can beat Cú Chulainn, but Finnabair herself has no dialogue in the *Taín* at all, and only appears to be active in her role when she seduces Ferdiad:

> Finnabair was put beside [Ferdiad].
> She handed him the goblets and
> cups, with three kisses for every cup.
> And at the neck-opening of her shirt
> she offered him certain fragrant
> sweet apples, saying that Ferdia was
> her darling and her chosen beloved
> of the whole world. (168-169)

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[8] While Henderson and McManus' text examines Renaissance feminist writings, they explain the shifting of feminism in the medieval period and the history of the viewpoints that lead to Renaissance writings. Their text is useful only in that it serves as a backward-looking lens upon the time period I am interested in.

Finnabair finally demonstrates active complicity in Medb's plan to kill Cú Chulainn, but Cú Chulainn himself carries the opinion that Finnabair is lying to Ferdiad in order to manipulate him. He also implicates Medb in the same speech to Ferdiad: "This is the same girl who was promised / falsely to fifty men" (186). Finnabair is blamed by Cú Chulainn for seducing the men that Medb has promised her to—an action she had no control over in the first place.

In a similar role as Finnabair, Helen of Troy is the ultimate "prize" of both Paris Aléxandros and Menelaös as they fight for her hand in Book 3 of the *Iliad.* Paris Aléxandros proposes that they duel for Helen:

> Set me there in the middle with
> warlike Menelaös
> to battle it out for Helen and the sum
> of her possessions.
> Whichever one of us wins, and
> proves himself the stronger,
> Let him claim the goods and the
> woman. (*Iliad* 3.69-72)

Immediately, Helen is an object to be claimed by the victor of this battle, much in the same way that Medb uses Finnabair: both of them pawns in a larger war, both of them used as rewards for men who defeat their enemies. In contrast to Finnabair, Helen has more interiority and shows more emotion over her situation. Steven Farron raises the idea that guilt and shame drive Helen's character more than any other emotion: "Helen seems to be the only person with what we would call a guilty conscience. However, despite the intensity and depths of her sensitivity, she is treated as an object by the men who control the course of events" (Farron 16-17). Where Finnabair is shown

as someone that seems to enjoy the seduction of her role, Helen despises it and hates herself for it. She lashes out at Aphrodītē when Paris Aléxandros wins the duel: "I'm not going back there—it would be too shameful— / to lie in that man's bed" (*Iliad* 3.410-411). Helen's shame is ignored by the men around her that believe her to be a seductress. Hektōr goes so far as to call her Menelaös' "lusty bedmate," despite Helen having a passive role in her abduction by Paris Aléxandros (3.53). Helen is much more reluctant to assume the role of the seductress, in contrast to Finnabair's eventual choice to seduce Ferdiad. Helen's role carries an air of tragedy and helplessness, whereas Finnabair's place seems to be a grudging resignation, if not an eventual full acceptance of her role.

Another role that women often get relegated to in classical literature is the mystic, a person who can see the future, often coupled with powerlessness to do anything about it. The depictions of an oracle in classical literature are relatively common: Medea, best known from Euripides' *Medea*; Manto, a Theban oracle who allegedly struck two snakes and was changed into a woman for it; and Kassandrē.[9] Romans and Greeks both would have been familiar with the role of the Sybil, a priestess in Greek tradition who was given the gift of prophecy by Apollo. Pseudo-oracular visions are also common in classical tradition; Andromachē, wife of Hektōr, begs him to stay with her and not to fight Achilles: "Crazed man, your might will destroy you: you show no pity / for your infant son, or for me, luckless woman,

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[9] Kassandrē (Cassandra, in her Latinized name) is scarcely referenced in the *Iliad,* and her oracular gift is not mentioned in the epic at all. She is further elaborated on in the lost epic *Cypria* attributed to Stasinus, but she would have been very well known to the audience of the time.

who'll soon / become your widow"
(6.407-409). The women of epics are often uncannily accurate in their fears, as Andromachē exemplifies; her son is thrown off of the ramparts of Troy, her husband is killed, and she is taken into slavery. Andromachē possesses no gift of premonition, but she shares powerlessness and fear with traditional, mystical seers.

Kassandrē, arguably the most famous seer of classical tradition, was of particular interest in classical literature and features in Homer, Virgil, and Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.[10] Her role in each of these is a mad prophetess, cursed by Apollo to never be believed in punishment for rejecting his sexual advances. In *Agamemnon,* Kassandrē is kidnapped and taken to the house of Agamemnōn as a slave after the Trojan War. Klytaimnēstra, planning revenge on her husband for killing their eldest daughter as a sacrifice to Artemis, waits to kill Agamemnōn and Kassandrē when they enter the house, which Kassandrē foresees before she enters:

> KASSANDRA: [scream] what
> [scream] how
> [scream] what in the world
> is this [scream] strange
> new [scream]
> big as the house
> evil in the house
> who can lift it who can heal it
> help is a world away
>
> CHORUS: Some of this I don't get.
> Some of it is old hat. (*Aeschylus* 783-793)

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[10] Kassandrē also appears in Dares Phrygius' *History of the Fall of Troy*, a text that is translated into Irish and circulated as the *Togail Troí*.

Kassandrē prophesies Klytaimnēstra's plot to kill Agamemnōn and bemoans her powerlessness to stop the events. Her helplessness is emphasized by the fact that she is a slave to Agamemnōn, and she sees her own end in his home, as a victim to Klytaimnēstra.

A parallel to the mystical woman can be seen in the *Taín*: Fedelm, a trained seer with the gift of foresight, appears in the beginning of the *Taín* to deliver a chilling prophecy to Medb's army: "I see it crimson, I see it red" (Kinsella 61). She repeats this prediction three more times at Medb's disbelief before delivering a much longer prophecy detailing the defeat of Medb at the hands of Cú Chulainn. In much the same way as Kassandrē is cursed to never be believed, Fedelm is not believed by Medb: "'It can't be true… Conchobor is suffering his pangs in Emain with all the rest of the Ulster warriors" (61). Despite her warning, Medb takes her armies to Ulster, and eventually Fedelm's prophecy comes true in every aspect. Fedelm herself does not reappear in the rest of the *Taín*, but her prophecy dictates the events that follow for the rest of the epic. Her prophecy—or perhaps Medb's failure to heed it—dooms Medb from before the *Táin Bó Cúalinge* can even begin—she is fated to watch her army slaughtered by Cú Chulainn.

Deities, or children of deities, instigate most events of classical literature. Aeneas, son of Venus, flees Troy and founds Rome with the blessing and guidance of his mother. God and goddess infighting drives much of the *Iliad,* with Athēnē favoring Achilles and Aphrodītē protecting Helen throughout the epic. While intervention of the divine is much less present in the *Taín,* the Morrígan's role does not precisely compare to the goddesses of the Iliad; they are similar in that they both serve limited functions as

dictated by their godly domains. Still, Sarah Pomeroy cautions against analyzing goddesses as reflective of women in society:

> In spite of their specialized functions, goddesses were very active in a wide range of human affairs. But the careers of goddesses do not reflect a less-limited scope for women, at least in historical times. Except for those outside the pale of respectability, the lives of mortal women were circumscribed by domesticity. Goddesses, on the other hand, even if married, were not constrained by familial obligations. (Pomeroy 9)

As tempting as it is to analyze deities as reflective of the real-life women of antiquity, despite the power that the goddesses wield, the female deities of Greek myth are flattened, stylized archetypes of women as fashioned by the male authors that wrote these stories. Therefore, the goddesses of the *Iliad* and the Morrígan of the *Taín* demand a different kind of analysis: as plot devices not meant to reflect real-life women, but instead metaphors for the types of women that these authors caricature.

Goddesses direct much of the plot of the *Iliad*—Hērē, Athēnē, and Aphrodītē involve themselves in the mortal plot of the Trojan War, alternating between directly interceding on behalf of their favorite mortals and pleading for Zeus' action on their chosen side. Aphrodītē meddles between Paris Aléxandros and Menelaös in order to ensure that Helen returns home with Paris Aléxandros:

> Aphrodītē wafted Paris away, easily, as a god can, veiled him in a dense mist,

> set him down in his own fragrant bedchamber, then herself went off to summon Helen. (*Iliad* 3.380-383)

Homer reminds the reader that Aphrodītē possesses this power because she is a goddess, placing a line of distinction between her and even the most powerful women of classical epic. Aphrodītē is subject to different rules and different restrictions, since her power is understood as symbolic and divine. These rules are what flatten goddesses into stereotypes, serving as mere metaphors on occasion: for example, Aphrodītē serves as a stand-in for infatuation in *Medea:*

> Chorus: Overwhelming love never leads to virtue,
> or a good reputation.
> Just enough Aphrodite is the greatest blessing. (ll.619-621)

The goddesses, while exerting extraordinary agency in consideration of them as women, are reduced to much less than ordinary female characters—in Homeric epic, they function merely as plot devices. The goddesses of the *Iliad* often only appear to incite some plot event or to symbolize a conflict:

> Homer always used gods to initiate actions, even when they were not needed. Second, Homer could not express divided feelings and internal conflict in a person's personality. He would represent an internal conflict either as a division between the person and an internal organ or between the person and a god who personified the emotional drive against which he was fighting. (Farron 19)

Aphrodītē standing in for Helen's own sexual attraction to Paris Aléxandros has been well-argued by other scholars.[11] This idea of a goddess' appearance instead having a symbolic meaning does not only apply to Aphrodītē, though—a goddess' intercession representing a conflict of feelings in a mortal can be drawn as early as the first book of the *Iliad:*

> To him then spoke in answer the goddess, grey-eyed Athēnē:
> "I have come here to check your
> rage—if you'll listen to me—
> down from high heaven, sent by the goddess, white-armed Hērē,
> who loves and cares for you both alike in her heart.
> Come now, leave off your strife, take your hand from your sword. (*Iliad* 1.206-210)

Athēnē, goddess of not just war, but wisdom, appears to Achilles as he impulsively moves to strike down Agamemnōn. In this scene, she "grasped Pēleus' son's fair hair," physically restraining him from acting against his reason (1.197). Athēnē here not only embodies the emotion that Achilles is conflicted against—anger—but employs the faculties of reason: restraint, rationality, and subduing the more impulsive and hot-headed actions in favor of patience.

The Morrígan, the Irish goddess of war, fate, and impending doom, appears in brief episodes throughout the *Taín*, always heralding a conflict. While her status as a goddess seems to place her above the constraints of mortal women, she, too, is bound to only serve specific functions relating to her domains of power. Her realms of war and fate are shown in her first

appearance in the *Taín* to the Donn Cúailnge (Brown Bull) that Medb pursues, heralding a prophecy of his impending demise:

> Dark one are you restless
> do you guess they gather
> to certain slaughter
> the wise raven
> groans aloud
> that enemies infest. (Kinsella 98)

She warns the Donn Cúailnge of Medb's closeness and his fate if he should stay. This appearance aligns with her interest in war and death; she continues, "cattle groans the Badb[12] / the raven ravenous / among corpses of men," indicating that all of Ireland would be covered in the bodies of men due to this war (98). The Morrígan indicates herself as the raven, the most common depiction of her, hungry for the upcoming war. While her motivations for warning the Donn Cúailnge are unclear in the text, she says "war everlasting / raging over Cúailnge / death of sons," possibly hinting to a notion that the longer the Donn Cúailnge evades capture, the longer Medb will carry on the war, and the more people will die (98).

The Morrígan's secondary domains of fertility and wealth center in her second appearance in the *Taín.* She appears to Cú Chulainn in an attempt to seduce him, promising him a powerful ally if he takes her. When her sexual advances are rebuffed, the Morrígan grows angry with Cú Chulainn and retaliates against him, attempting to defeat or even to kill him for daring to refuse her request. Where Finnabair and

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[11] Steven Farron, "The Portrayal of Women in the *Iliad*."

[12] Badb is one of the three aspects of the Morrígan, most closely associated with fear and confusion. She often takes the form of a raven and most often appears to predict oncoming battles or deaths. Her prophecy to the Donn Cúailnge evokes the assumption that this is that prediction.

Helen assume the stereotype of the seductress perhaps reluctantly, Morrígan's interaction with Cú Chulainn perhaps seems to align with the archetype in a more traditional way: a woman eagerly manipulating a man into bed with her, employing whatever means necessary. Morrígan first deceives Cú Chulainn about her identity: "I am King Buan's daughter…and I have brought you my treasure and cattle. I love you because of the great tales I have heard" (Kinsella 132). She uses status and gifts to attempt to bribe Cú Chulainn into sleeping with her. Petra Hellmuth, in *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia,* lists the Morrígan as having two associations: "A minister and attendant of fate" and "fertility and wealth" (Hellmuth 1314). Her two functions of fate and fertility appear to be more related than an initial guess would assume: "This function is seen, for example, in *Cath Maige Tuired* ('The [Second] Battle of Mag Tuired'), where the Morrígan mates with the Dagda, one of the leaders of the Tuath Dé, just before the decisive battle. She then promises the Tuath Dé her assistance against the Fomoiri" (1314). The Morrígan's union with the Dagda unites her role of fertility (sexuality) to her role of fate, as she is decisive about the upcoming battle by casting her allegiance.

The Morrígan's association with death and with fertility are an unusual combination, although perfectly in line with typical Irish mythology—the sovereignty goddess is often linked to both warfare and sexuality. The mythic connection between death and fertility strongly associated with female deities indicates a sense that a woman's reproductive system was connected to the underworld, darkness, and the unknown. The Morrígan, closely associated with uncanniness and fear, embodied a fear of the chthonic through not just her connection to warfare and death, but equally through her connection to femaleness and sexuality.

Medieval understanding of uterine-centric reproductive systems was drastically limited by both what people could see and by what they chose to believe, and therefore, it was prone to misconceptions. In contrast to a phallocentric body, whose anatomy could be understood without the usage of technology or invasive procedures, a uterine-based reproductive system was entirely internal and thus much more difficult to study. The limitations of medieval people's knowledge can be understood with a look at the *Trotula,* a well-known compendium of women's medicine in the 12th century. The *Trotula* encompasses uterine health as whole, as well as remedies for common ailments that affect women: problems with menstruation, birth, afterbirth, and menopause. The *Trotula* bases its remedies on humor theory, the idea that four fluids in the human body and their balance are responsible for the health and temperament of a person: blood, choler (yellow bile), phlegm, and black bile. The humors form the basis of the prevalent medieval theory that men and women have different temperaments, and female bodies are inferior to male bodies due to their natural temperaments. The *Trotula* explains the temperaments of men and women and their significance in its introduction:

> [God] created the male and the female with provident, dispensing deliberation, laying out in the separate sexes the foundation for the propagation of future offspring. And so that from them there might emerge fertile offspring, he endowed their complexions with a certain pleasing commixtion, constituting the nature of the male hot and dry. But lest the male overflow with either one of these qualities, He

wished by the opposing frigidity and humidity of the woman to rein him in from too much excess, so that the stronger qualities, that is the heat and the dryness, should rule the man… while the weaker ones, that is to say the coldness and humidity, should rule the weaker person. (Monica Green 66)

The uterine-based reproductive system was widely understood to be the inverse of the male, with the temperaments of men and women in mind. Menstrual blood, the inverse of semen, was thought to "[mark] the inability of the body to become warm enough to refine blood," as explained by Salisbury in "Gendered Sexuality" (89). The fear that women's bodies could become poisoned by sin or impurities led to a fear that those illnesses could be transferred to the men engaging in sexual activity with them—a sexually active woman could become a threat to the health of her male partners. This presents a sexual woman as dangerous: Albertus Magnus, author of the treatise *De Secretis Mulierum,* cautioned men against having sex with women:

> The more women have sexual intercourse, the stronger they become, because they are made hot from the motion that the man makes during coitus. Further, male sperm is hot because it is of the same nature as air and when it is received by the woman it warms her entire body, so women are strengthened by this heat. (Lemay 127)

It is through this misunderstanding of sexually transmitted diseases and a fear of the dark, unknowable uterine reproductive system that led, in part, to the pervasive fear of sexuality in women. The Morrígan, whose body not only represents a mysterious connection to darkness and disease, also represents sexuality to an audience that would have feared sexual women. Despite not being a mortal woman, her female body forms a critical component of her narrative purpose as a goddess of fear and death.

Finnabair, Fedelm, and the Morrígan, then, have easily understood parallels to women of classical literature, though the Morrígan has more ground in later medieval thought. There is precedent for a woman being used as a pawn in a larger war, a prophetess unbelieved, and a goddess whose powers influence the plot in mystical ways. However, the most prominent female character of the *Taín*, Queen Medb of Connacht, has no foil in the classics. There are tragic queens like Dido of Carthage, the ever-loyal Penelope of Ithaca, and even the influential queen of the gods, Hērē. There is precedent for female warriors in the classics: the young women that followed Artemis in the hunt and Amazonian warriors. However, there is no single woman in classical literature that combines the unique characteristics that Medb displays throughout the *Taín*: "masculinity" in her marriage, agency unparalleled by any mortal woman in the classics or the *Taín*, and a distinct position as a military leader.

QUEEN MEDB OF CONNACHT

Queen Medb is, first and foremost, understood as the ruler of Connacht in the text of the *Táin*. Despite Aillil stating that Medb is his queen, she is quite wealthy without his contributions. She says that when they were wed, "I had fifteen hundred soldiers in my royal pay, all exiles' sons, and the same number of freeborn native men, and for every paid soldier I had ten more men… my father gave me a whole province of Ireland" (Kinsella 53). She was wealthy enough to have her own standing army

before her marriage to Aillil and even seems to indicate that she had agency in the arranging of her marriage: "I asked a harder wedding gift than any woman ever asked before from a man in Ireland—the absence of meanness and jealousy and fear" (53). She clearly asserts her arbitration and says that Aillil is a "kept man" (54). In the comparison between Medb and Aillil's riches, Medb matches him in every category, penny for penny and sheep for sheep, until the cows are counted. Even then, Finnbennach, the other bull in the narrative, had belonged to Medb, but "refusing to be led by a woman, had gone over to the king's herd" (55). This creates the motivation for the cattle raid: to obtain a new bull. But what this scene also establishes is that Medb's wealth independent of her husband marks her as a distinctive and powerful individual even without her marriage.

Kinsella remarks himself upon how much the *Táin* is changed by Medb, as well as other women: "Probably the greatest achievement of the *Táin* and the Ulster cycle is the series of women, some in full scale and some in miniature, on whose strong and diverse personalities the action continually turns: Medb, Deirdriu, Macha, Nes, Aife" (Kinsella xiv-xv).[13] Medb's power affects nearly every aspect and every action of the *Táin.* Erica Sessle, author of "Misogyny and Medb," ensures a distinction between Medb's fictional power and the power of real-life women at the time: "It is unlikely that Medb's power accurately reflects the reality of early Irish society… nonetheless, the high status of women in Celtic mythology is continually emphasized" (135). Real women in Irish society were subservient to their husbands, as Lisa Bitel

points out in *Land of Women*: "One way or another, most women, free or semiservile, expected to find a man and produce babies. This was the culmination of their vocational training and the goal of their kinfolk" (8). Bitel's commentary on the legal marriages women entered, as well as the many laws pressuring them into marriages, speaks for the place of women under Irish law, but one thing is established: women had very little legal autonomy. Surviving records from early Ireland consist very largely of legal documents—Irish law was extensive and carefully preserved. Marriage laws are preserved in multiple documents: the *Hibernesis* (Irish Canons), *Cáin Adomnán, Cáin Lánamna,* and more.[14] In contextualizing Medb's marriage within the law at the time, the 'Pillow Talk' scene at the beginning of the *Táin* crystallizes with new meaning. *Cáin Lánamna,* the 'Law of Couples,' outlines three types of marriage recognized by Irish law: union of common contribution, union on a man's contribution, and union on a woman's contribution (Ó Corráin 22-26). Medb and Aillil's argument over property can be understood as Aillil attempting to challenge the status of their marriage as a union of a woman's contribution, since Aillil is technically subservient to her according to the law: "He is a husband who is paid honour-price in accordance with his wife's status if she holds all the property, unless he has higher property qualifications [in his own right]" (25). Medb reaffirms that this is their current status by referring to the dowry she paid him:

> I brought you the best wedding gift a bride can bring: apparel enough for a dozen men, a chariot worth thrice seven bondmaids, the width of your

[13] The other women here play much larger roles in the *remscéla,* or the contextual tales that Kinsella also translates before the story of the *Táin.*

[14] Ó Corráin cites several other documents, including the *Senchas Már, Díre, Irisches Recht,* and *Bretha Crólige.*

face of red gold and the weight of your left arm of light gold. So, if anyone causes you shame or upset or trouble, the right to compensation is mine. (Kinsella 53)

Medb reminds Aillil of his status as a "kept man" by bringing up her father, the king of Tara, and emphasizing her extravagant wedding gift. Ó Corráin points out how the legality of their marriage forms a critical component of this opening scene: "Legal terminology is used to deepen and sharpen what may be one of the main points of the episode, that upset of the patriarchal order of society leads to conflict, even calamity" (Ó Corráin 38). Medb is so starkly irritated by her herd's lack of an equal to Finnbennach because it threatens to undermine her position in their marriage. She retains her power, however, by *Cáin Lánamna;* a marriage under a man's contribution allows the husband to make contracts without the wife's consent (24), and Medb reverses the role when she sends for Donn Cúailnge: "Ask Dáire to lend me Donn Cúailnge for a year. At the end of the year he can have fifty yearling heifers in payment for the loan […]. [...] if Dáire himself comes with the bull I'll give him a portion of the fine Plain of Ai equal to his own lands, and a chariot worth thrice seven bondmaids, and my own friendly thighs on top of that" (Kinsella 55). Medb demonstrates her authority and her traditionally masculine role in her marriage through this negotiation—she takes initiative to draw this contract with Dáire mac Fiachna for Donn Cúailnge, something not specifically outlined under *Cáin Lánamna* but understood as the right of the husband in a male-dominated marriage. She also promises very similar repayment as Aillil's dowry with a chariot worth the same as the one of Aillil's honor-price. Medb promising sexual favors would also not have been considered cheating, given Medb's authority

to carry out contracts without her husband. Men under *Cáin Lánamna* were allowed multiple partners, so long as each partner was subservient to the primary wife (Ó Corráin 24-25). Medb does not indicate a desire for Dáire as a partner, but offers sexual favors as an incentive in the contract for the Donn Cúailnge. Medb's masculine role, her initiative, and her remarkable control over Aillil and others in the story demonstrate much more agency than other female characters in the *Táin*. She is uniquely gifted with agency among most female characters in both classical and medieval literature.

AGENCY AND SEXUALITY

Medb's agency makes her a powerful ruler and a unique character amongst the cast of the *Táin*. Her choices drive much of the narrative: her desire for the Donn Cúailnge sparks the titular cattle raid, and her drive to obtain the bull is continually emphasized throughout the text. She, unlike all the other women in the text, has the power of choice; she chooses to pursue the Donn Cúailnge, she chooses to sleep with Fergus mac Roich in order to secure his alliance, and she makes pivotal decisions that hinge on her power.

It is Medb's choice to pursue the Donn Cúailnge: "Medb had the messenger Mac Roth called, and she told him to see where the match of the bull might be found, in any province in Ireland" (Kinsella 55). Aillil is noticeably absent from the choice, despite his claim that he "came and took the kingship here, in succession to [his] mother" (54). The negotiation of the Donn Cúailnge happens almost entirely between Medb and Dáire mac Fiachna. When the negotiations go poorly, she is the one that declares the cattle raid: "It was well known it would be taken by force if it wasn't given freely. And

taken it will be" (58). It is by her declaration of war that the allies and armies are gathered, and the cattle raid begins.

Medb is also the one that uses Finnabair as a pawn for her war; she tells Naddcranntail that he "can have Finnabair… if you go against [Cú Chulainn]" (122). She promises Finnabair next to Ferbaeth after Naddcranntail falls: "He was told that he was to have [Finnabair], and that she had picked him to fight Cúchulainn" (129). After Ferbaeth, Medb targeted Láréne mac Nois with this same bargain and, finally, Ferdiad. While promising Finnabair in marriage, Medb herself is unafraid to sleep with someone to secure an alliance: in exchange for the Donn Cúailnge, Medb offers "[her] own friendly thighs," first to Dáire mac Fiachna, then to Ferdiad, in addition to Finnabair's marriage in order to sway him (55). Medb's behavior as a character with agency and demonstrating her power in her marriage has the effect of seeming to seize and manipulate her gender for her own gains. She fulfills a traditionally masculine role—a contract-maker and a war-leader—while also being critically female at certain points in the text.

Medb's encounter with Cú Chulainn at the end of the text is a pivotal one: Medb and Cú Chulainn are the two most significant characters of the text, and yet their first time meeting face-to-face is at the end of the text. Kinsella translates the buildup to the action, as the Connachtmen begin to retreat from the climactic battle, Donn Cúailnge in tow:

> Medb had set up a shelter of shields to guard the rear of the men to Ireland. She had sent off the Brown Bull of Cúailnge to Cruachan by a roundabout road, with fifty of his heifers and eight messengers, so that, whoever escaped, the Brown Bull of

Cúailnge would be got safely away, as she had sworn. Then Medb got her gush of blood. (Kinsella 250)

Medb is shown here strategizing her exit from the battle that she is losing, protecting her assets and attempting to escape with the bull she has pursued for the entire text. Her strategy is then interrupted by her biology, and she must menstruate in an immediate and prodigious fashion. Cú Chulainn comes upon Medb as she 'relieves herself': "Cúchulainn found her like this, but he held his hand. He wouldn't strike her from behind […]. […] He spared her, not being a killer of women. He watched them all the way westward until they passed Ath Luain, and there he stopped" (250-251). Kinsella's translation does not capture the intimacies or critical context of this exchange: O'Rahilly's *Táin Bó Cualnge from the Book of Leinster* provides slightly more detail: Medb asks Cú Chulainn for a favor when he comes upon her, and when he grants it, she asks for his protection as they retreat. Cú Chulainn, with no choice but to obey, complies:

> Cú Chulainn came around the men of Ireland and covered the retreat on one side of them to protect them. The triads of the men of Ireland came on the other side, and Medb came into her own position and covered their retreat in the rear. In that fashion they took the men of Ireland westwards past Áth Mór. (O'Rahilly 270)

Medb's petition for Cú Chulainn's protection casts a different light on the encounter, one that almost implies it was a purposeful step in Medb's retreat. Ann Dooley argues that Medb weaponizes her femaleness in this scene intentionally:

For a brief moment here Medb reclaims the bogus difference of misogyny by re-inventing the embarrassment of pissing as a stratagem to force Cú Chulainn to observe restraint: in his refraining from injuring her in her moment of vulnerability the armies are enabled to cross the Shannon under protection; like a cunning female animal who resorts to body decoy stratagems, Medb has turned both sexual and gender difference back on men. (Dooley 133)

A critical component of this argument, however, is the notion that Medb somehow intentionally controlled her menstruation in this way—a biological factor that does not depend upon will to happen. This argument would seem to fall apart under such scrutiny. However, Dooley notes the one-fluid theory of the body at the time, supported by the *Trotula*. The prevailing theory surrounding bodily fluids at the time was that women's excess humors drained from them in the form of menstruation, and urination and menstruation are frequently interchangeable. Dooley retells a myth of Derbhforgaill, a woman whose sexual prowess was tested through the strength of her urination, and provides analysis by Bowen: "Just as the phallic myth depends on the notion that a man's potency is reflected in actual genital size, the corresponding female myth, as we see it here, measures a woman's sexual power by the capacity of her inner space, with the bladder undoubtedly serving as an analogue for the vagina and uterus" (qtd. in Dooley 132). The idea of Medb manipulating her bodily functions becomes less incredulous once menstruation and urination are accepted as having the same function in the narrative. Medb's tactical retreat for her armies can be understood for the clever strategy that it is, and her singular

face-to-face encounter with Cú Chulainn becomes a calculated, bold move in order to secure protection for her armies' flanks. There is, in fact, no reason to assume that her obscenity isn't purposeful—she, too, was present when Fergus told the Connacht armies of the Ulster women baring their breasts to Cú Chúlainn in an attempt to garner his pity (Kinsella 92).

Medb's agency shown in her strategy and her masculine role in the text serves as a contrast to the other major character of the *Táin,* Cú Chulainn. Medb takes much of the lead for the Connacht side of the plot throughout the narrative, and Cú Chulainn leads the Ulster side while the rest of the Ulstermen are suffering the pangs of childbirth in a time of crisis, a curse placed upon them by Macha. Medb makes the decision to wage war in the first place, and she is the one to decide Cú Chulainn must be killed. She sends her own foster-sons, personal soldiers, and offers Finnabair to willing soldiers multiple times before she decides to take action herself: "She was greatly troubled by the number being killed in her army. She decided to ask [Cú Chulainn] to meet her and talk with her at a certain place, and then set a great number of keen and spirited men on him" (137-138). After the men Medb set against Cú Chulainn fail, he slays "six paid soldiers of royal blood in Medb's army" (137). Medb attempts to trap Cú Chulainn and kill him through trickery at Focherd, which Cú Chulainn cries out against:

On whole hosts I wage war
to crush their chief hero
and Medb and Aillil also
who stir up wrong, red hatred
and black woman-wailing
who march in cruel treachery. (139)

Cú Chulainn describes Medb's leadership as 'woman-wailing' and treacherous after she attempts to kill him through deception. Medb and Cú Chulainn are often paired in the framing of the narrative as well: it is said that "Cúchulainn turned again toward Murtheimne Plain to defend his home," and the next paragraph begins with "Medb turned back again from the north after spending a fortnight harassing the province" (126). The similar framing of their actions sets them up as narrative rivals and ultimately foils.

THE SOVEREIGNTY GODDESS

Medb's agency and her masculinity in her marriage already place her in a unique position amongst classical and other Irish queens. Her singular femaleness among characters with comparable amounts of agency, contrasted with how unwomanly she behaves in her marriage and as a ruler, places her in a category all of her own. Medb's power as a queen is incomparable to that of classical queens—tragic Dido never participated in warfare, and Helen of Troy was fought over, but ultimately helpless to her own fate. This is not the case with Medb; Miranda Green, author of *Celtic Goddesses,* describes Medb as a warrior-queen: "She fought on the battlefield, controlled an army, and she brought her own troops with her when she married Aillil. Medb rode her chariot around the field of battle […]. […] she gloried in war, bloodshed and destruction for their own sake: she was the essence of death" (40). Green strongly links Medb to her presence in the warfare of the *Táin.* The destruction Medb unleashes in the final battle seems worthy of the association: "Medb took up her weapons and hurried into battle. Three times she drove all before her until she was turned back by a wall of javelins" (Kinsella 247). Medb's onslaught catches the attention

of Conchobor, who turns his attention north to Fergus mac Roich.

Medb's competence as a warrior is never questioned, though her ability to rule is satirized at points. She makes the questionable call to have the Galeóin, her allies that far outshine her own soldiers, slaughtered for the mere crime of overcompetence. When she inspects them, she admits that they are better than her own men and declares that they can't accompany the army to Ulster:

> They are fine soldiers. While the others were making a space for their camp they had roofed theirs and were making their meal. While the others were eating they had finished their meal and had their harpers playing. So it would be foolish to take them… they would get all the credit for our army's triumph. (66)

Fergus and Aillil both balk at the decision to have them killed; Aillil tells her, "That is a woman's thinking and no mistake! [...] A wicked thing to say" (66). Though the inhumanity of mass slaughter might perhaps be the first aspect of this decision to criticize; instead, Ailli says that Medb's morals are degraded because she is a woman. Medb's ability as a warrior is never downplayed by her femaleness, but her choices are constantly criticized with respect to her nature. After Medb's retreat with Donn Cúalinge, she bemoans their losses to Fergus, to which he responds "We followed the rump of a misguiding woman [...]. It is the usual thing for a herd led by a mare to be strayed and destroyed" (251). Fergus' comment reflects the upset of the 'natural' balance of power, which is that men lead and women are subservient to their men. Medb's power as a queen is unusual and often met first with criticism of her biology

and only then followed by the question of her actual ability to rule. Her position, then, as a competent warrior, a woman who holds the power in her marriage, and as someone who tactically utilizes her menstruation—her 'femaleness'—to her advantage, becomes rather inexplicable unless we turn to the myth of the sovereignty goddess.

Miranda Green delves into the idea of the sovereignty goddess, explaining the Irish tradition:

> The idea of sovereignty personified as a divine female is an extremely persistent tradition in early Irish myth. She was the goddess of the land, the spirit or essence of Ireland itself, and on her depended the fortunes, fertility, and prosperity of her territory. The myth of female sovereignty is particularly fascinating because of its dynamics and its complexity. The myth was not static but mutable; and the nature of the goddess embraced not only guardianship of the land, but also promiscuous sexuality, fertility, physical force and death, none of which is mutually exclusive. (70)

The sovereignty goddess is an Irish tradition best understood as a goddess, representative of the land of Ireland or individual provinces, who holds the ultimate power over her claim. She holds control over the fertility of the land as well as the prosperity of the people living upon the land, and the well-being of her enemies. When personified in myth, typically she is an anthropomorphization of a piece of land or a kingdom, and she is married to the king to symbolize his claim to the throne. This can be best understood through the myth called "The Adventures of the Sons of Eochaid

Mugmedon"; in this story, the king of Erin's five sons are tested by the sovereignty goddess of Erin in disguise. She takes the form of an old, hideous woman guarding a well, the only water to be found while the brothers are out on a hunt. She asks each of them for a kiss in exchange for water, and each of them refuses, except for the youngest, Niall. When he kisses the goddess, she becomes a beautiful young woman, and she tells him:

> Go now to thy brothers… and take water with thee, and the kingship and the domination will for ever abide with thee and thy children… and as thou hast seen me loathsome, bestial, horrible at first and beautiful at last, so is the sovereignty; for seldom it is gained without battles and conflicts; but at last to anyone it is beautiful and goodly. (Jones)

Though the brothers' merit for kingship is tested by their mother and by others, the ultimate judgment is passed by the sovereignty goddess of Erin. This myth provides context for the power of the sovereignty goddess, as well as the notion that women with this level of control and agency are fictional. Green cautions against using the sovereignty goddess to make conclusions about real Irish women, as well as contextualizing Medb within this tradition:

> It has to be remembered that we are dealing with myth; in early historical Ireland, the rulers were generally kings, not queens. It seems clear that the mythic female ruler Medb of Connacht… was a humanised goddess, endowed with a spurious historicity by hostile Christian redactors, who could thereby point

with horror at her promiscuity.
(Miranda Green 70)

Green's belief about Christian morals imposed upon Medb aside,[15] she makes two important claims here: the first being that Medb is an allegory for the sovereignty goddess, despite not fitting into the mythic standard exactly, and the second being that her promiscuity plays an important role in this interpretation of her character. Each of these claims can be supported by the narrative of the *Táin* itself.

Each of the elements of the sovereignty goddess, when broken down, apply to Medb on their own. Medb is closely associated with power, especially over Connacht and in her marriage. She starts the titular cattle raid in order to regain her equality within her marriage. She inherited the kingdom of Connacht from her father and assumed a traditionally masculine role in her marriage, paying Aillil a dowry for his marriage to her. Medb also is the singular most sexual character in the *Táin,* offering sexual favors to multiple men throughout the narrative in order to secure alliances or manipulate them into doing as she asks. Medb's sexuality in the *Táin* serves a purpose beyond simple promiscuity—she is noted to urinate at least twice in the text, something absent in the descriptions of other characters. The significance of her urination/menstruation at the end of the text already discussed, the earlier scene takes place just before Ferdiad goes to fight Cú Chulainn at Medb's behest; he orders his chariots to pass by Medb and

Aillil's tent so that he can bid them farewell before he leaves: "The charioteer turned the horses and chariot round three times and faced the men of Ireland. He passed close to Medb as she was making water on the floor of the tent" (Kinsella 177). The purpose of this scene can be interpreted as one of irony—that Ferdiad has not yet realized he marches into a battle that will kill him, while Medb pisses on the floor as part of her casual morning routine. It also carries a theme, when combined with her later menstruation scene, that links her character to water, femininity, and fertility: Dooley reports that Bowen "was in no doubt that there was a significant cluster of such motifs in Irish tradition which lend their weight to his conclusion that, for this incident in LL, one should look to the mythology of the sovereignty goddess for a satisfactory explanation" (131). The mythos of the sovereignty goddess links her to fertility in both the land and in sexuality. A good land is fertile for crops, so a good goddess must be fertile for children. Miranda Green also posits that the apparent paradoxical connection of both death and fertility (life) in the figure of the sovereignty goddess makes more sense than it initially seems: "There is a sense in which warfare and bloodshed may be perceived as promoting fertility, just as the divine hunt reinforced the link between life, death, and rebirth. Blood and carnage on the battlefield fertilised and replenished the earth" (Miranda Green 72). Medb is both symbolized by her status as a war-leader, someone who slaughters men on the battlefield, and by her menstruation and urination that link her to her fertility and sexuality.

MISOGYNY OF THE *TÁIN* AND MEDB

Medb's character dovetails with this interpretation of the sovereignty goddess,

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[15] Green seems to be claiming here that Medb's sexuality is a later insertion by Christians attempting to demonize native Irish tradition and/or women. She offers no evidence for this claim, and given the sexuality of the Morrígan serving a similar purpose with respect to her character, I would safely dismiss it.

but scholars are still mystified by a central question: is the depiction of Medb in the *Táin* misogynistic? Ultimately, the intentions of the original authors, scribes, and audiences of the *Táin* can never be known fully, but this does not prevent us from holding up modern lenses through which to examine her.

Medb is a woman with a unique amount of power in her marriage, and her femaleness is underlined throughout the text. She is constantly criticized for her femaleness in ways that the male characters obviously cannot be. Her extreme wealth, power, and agency seem to place her in the category of a strong female character whose womanhood does not hinder her strength—but she is also deeply flawed and, at times, morally depraved. Medb is constantly under attack, even at the beginning of the text by her own husband when Aillil tells her his wealth is more than hers: "It is well for the wife of a wealthy man" (Kinsella 52). At times she is implied to be no more than a lustful woman; Aillil does not blame Fergus when Medb sleeps with him to secure his alliance, but instead refers to women as a whole as lustful:

> I lay first fault
> straight at women's
> own sweet swellings
> and loving lust. (105)

Medb seems to garner much more criticism than other characters for her actions, yet to be fair, many of her choices are genuinely reprehensible. She makes the decision to slaughter the Galeóin for the sake of her own ego in order to make her army look better. She chooses to wage a war on Ulster for the simple sake of acquiring a cow so that her herd might match her husband's, and hundreds of men die in the process. Medb's unique power amongst her male peers, her ability to drive the narrative in the first place, also places the blood of every man that died in her war on her hands.

Medb's criticism, then, seems warranted. She is portrayed as a terrible leader lacking in morals and driven only by ambition and selfishness. Yet the men of the *Táin* do not escape scrutiny unscathed: Conchobor is infamous for his poor leadership. In the *remscéla,* Conchobor chooses to raise a girl named Derdriu, cursed to be followed by evil, to be his concubine (8-20). He raises her from infancy in his care to be a maiden for his satisfaction, and, rather than be subject to this, Derdriu kills herself. Conchobor acquired kingship of Ulster after tricking Fergus into giving it up and then exiled Fergus and his followers for protecting Derdriu from him. His character is just as deceitful and manipulative as Medb's, with added trickery and sexual depravity.

Aillil has no real authority in his marriage—he succumbs to every demand of Medb's. He acquiesces to her declaration of war on Ulster and supports her as she sends her armies to their deaths, content to let people die to satisfy Medb. He is relegated to the role of a trophy husband, and his passiveness evokes ideas of wifely submission to depraved husbands. While his worst crime is complicity, he lacks the chutzpah that the other main characters display.

Cú Chulainn, possibly the most comparable to Medb, does not escape with the reputation of an untarnished hero. He harries Medb's armies the entire way to Ulster, and though he posits himself as a heroic defender of his home, he, too, is guilty of arrogance and perhaps a self-centered mindset. In the *remscéla,* Cú Chulainn begets a son whom he names Connla and leaves him with his

mother, Aife. Connla, a young boy, performs supernatural feats like his father, and Conchobor declares him a threat to Ulster; Cú Chulainn, against the pleading of his wife, Emer, kills his son. When Emer pleads for his life, Cú Chulainn tells her:

> Be quiet, wife.
> It isn't a woman
> that I need now
> to hold me back
> in the face of these feats
> and shining triumph
> I want no woman's
> help with my work. (43)

Cú Chulainn dismisses Emer's reasoning on the basis that she is a woman and cannot understand why he must kill his son. He kills his son, not yet five years old, out of a sense of duty to his country; is there a reason good enough to kill such a young child? If reason is such a womanly quality worthy of derision, is masculinity supposed to be irreproachable?

Fergus alone seems to carry few unsavory qualities, being a noble former king who refuses to harm the nation he has left. And yet, he is not entirely without flaw—he sleeps with Medb, knowing she has a husband, and does not argue with Aillil when he degrades her for it. Cú Chulainn regards Fergus as a friend, and Fergus him, and so often serves as the intermediary between Cú Chulainn and Medb. He cannot fully ally with Medb or else harm the Ulstermen he considers his brothers, but, exiled, he cannot ally with the Ulstermen either. He contents himself to be wholly neutral in the final battle of the *Táin,* ceding to Cú Chulainn and cutting a final remark at Medb for her leadership qualities as a woman. Yet he himself is a disgraced king with no kingdom and no loyalty; can his

judgment of leadership quality be trusted when he has no ground to stand on?

Though Medb's portrayal is undoubtedly misogynistic, given the criticisms leveled against her–some of them founded–the male characters can hardly be interpreted as better. Conchobor is a lazy trickster; Aillil is a spineless pushover; and Cú Chulainn thrills in violence, even when it comes to his own family. Even the least offensive Fergus has no loyalties. Medb's ambition for power slots right in with these characters' flaws, not any worse than the worst of them. Her morality is questionable, but neither are any of the characters shown to be perfect. Instead, against such a collection of morally grey characters, she stands out as a woman cast exactly in the same light as her male counterparts. If she is shocking, the very fact of her femaleness throws into relief the reprehensible qualities of the male characters. An audience may be quick to blame her, but upon closer inspection, she behaves in ways not unlike the other major, male players in the text. Why should she be critiqued and not them? Moreover, her character development demonstrates nuance, complexity, and capacity for sympathy in some respect.

Medb is driven by desire for equality, and she stands a lot to lose if she cannot have it: she is a female ruler in a time when such a thing was unheard of. Aillil says he married her for her kingdom: "I never heard, in all of Ireland, of a province run by a woman except this one, which is why I came and took the kingship here" (54). Medb, if she loses her holding over Aillil, loses her authority over her kingdom, her birthright given to her by her father. She loses her legal recourse in her marriage that allows her to negotiate contracts on her own behalf, and she loses much of her own wealth. In a desperate light, her desire for the Donn

Cúailnge can be justified by its stakes. Her cold calculation in warfare becomes a human plight to protect herself—selfish though her decisions are. Her alternative is to submit to the life of a woman in medieval Ireland, with hardly more rights than the cow she pursues.

In this way, perhaps she can be understood in a similar way to Helen of Troy, who, too, only sought to protect her own desires. Yet Medb has far more control over her situation than Helen ever did—Medb commands armies, and Helen is helpless to the wants of the men controlling her fate. She sees her fate as spelled out by Fedelm and marches towards it without hesitation or fear, asserting her agency in a way that Kassandrē could not. She is promiscuous without promiscuity defining her, distinct from Aphrodītē's limitation. Her cunning is not incomparable to that of Odysseus, her strategy and wiliness allowing her to escape with the Donn Cúailnge in tow. Even still, she renders this comparison pale through her menstruation to accomplish that feat, seizing the means of inferiority that she was born with and turning it into a strength.

Medb's ability to grasp her own fate sets her apart from any woman, queen, and goddess of classical myth. Her character drives the narrative of the *Táin,* and she contains facets of Gaelic Irish thinking that would have been entirely alien to a classical audience. Medb not only embodies the Celtic sovereignty goddess, but a radical presence of native Gaelic culture in literature. Her presence demands that the *Táin* be considered as Irish literature in its own right, distinct and defined outside of classical tradition.

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A Hope for the Future: Overcoming the Distorted Past and Present in the Works of Faulkner
By
John Walker

In 1942, William Faulkner brought an end to the peak of his writing career when he published the short story cycle *Go Down, Moses*. His peak began thirteen years earlier in 1928 when he began writing *The Sound and the Fury*, the novel which earned him a place among the top writers of the time. Renowned Faulkner critic André Bleikasten would go on to claim that "nineteen twenty-eight marks the start of the most prolific and inventive period of [Faulkner's] career" (136). Between the publication of these two works, he penned numerous other novels, short stories, and screenplays, marking himself as a prolific writer and a staple of mid-20th century literature. Among all these other works, what makes *Go Down, Moses* and *The Sound and the Fury* stand out? They are, of course, the bookends to over a decade of stellar writing, but they are even more so two ends of a thematic web woven by Faulkner.

The first of the two works to be written, *The Sound and the Fury*, is a departure from the early attempts at novels by Faulkner. It is told non-linearly, with the past and the present wrapping themselves together throughout. As Cleanth Brooks writes in *First Encounters*, "the reader may well believe that Faulkner is ordering his sequences in the worst possible way" (45). This reader would unfortunately be missing the broader picture that Faulkner is trying to convey; that picture being the conflict the characters experience between the present they are living in and the view of the past they have developed. His characters in this novel live in a twisting and trying mental state that imposes a constant tension between what has happened, what is happening, and what will happen. Faulkner's later work, *Go Down Moses*, does much of the same in terms of structure. In fact, there is a natural apprehension to even call the text a novel. Most often, it is referred to as either a short story cycle or a composite novel, alluding to the fact that the text seems to be composed of various different but interrelated short stories. According to Michelle Pacht, however, "in interviews, Faulkner insisted on calling the book a novel," which she writes is "a fact that points to the text's unity" (73). Seeing that the text is clearly unified to a large degree and that Faulkner himself referred to it as a novel, it will be referred to in this essay as such, for the sake of simplicity. Understanding that it is a novel is almost tangential to the main point, though. Most importantly, *Go Down, Moses* plays with the concept of the non-linear passage of time similarly to *The Sound and the Fury*. To the characters and the reader, time is not a line on which to place events neatly. Rather, it is a ball, with past, present, and future all rolled up together, each always impacting the others in some way. It is in this structure that the characters of *Go Down, Moses* find themselves, the tension of all events that have happened or will happen creating the conflict that each character is burdened with.

After recognizing that such a conflict exists, it is imperative to understand the three ways that characters can approach their situation in the conflict of past and present. The first group of characters can be identified as the nihilists. The nihilists have a negative view of both the past and the present. Cleanth

Brooks' definition of nihilism is "the discovery that life has no meaning" (qtd. in Hagopian 46). These characters ascribe to the idea that nothing was ever actually good and nothing will ever be good. Defining traits of these characters are often greed, pride, and drunkenness, along with the intellectual rationalization of these traits. In embracing such traits as well as the negative worldview, these characters are happy to let the world around them fall into ruin and disarray. Negligence of this caliber is to be expected from a group so set on apathy toward the wellbeing of their world.

Second, there are the idealists; the idealists are characters who long for an idealized past. Joseph Blotner uses the following definition of idealism when writing about Faulkner in his essay "Continuity and Change": "behavior or thought based on a conception of things as they should be or as one would wish them to be" (17). The characters' view of history is distorted and does not quite fit into the real understanding of past events. These characters desire to make their present and future look more like an idealization of the past that they have never experienced, and it destroys their lives, leaving them with little or no hope for the future. Another way that idealism shows through the characters is in the search for purity. They often wish to purify their world in favor of the idealized view they have imagined.

The final collection of characters is the realists. A realist is described as one who accepts both the past and the present as they come, and does not get lost in grand views of the past, whether they be positive or negative. Rather, the realist is typically able to distinguish the good from the bad, and lacks any obsessive or compulsive tendencies. Of course, no person is perfect, and neither are the characters in Faulkner's

works. The realist desires to provide hope and stability amid the turmoil caused by the tension between the idealists and the nihilists. In this way, the realists not only calm the conflict of past and present, but they also calm the conflicts that arise from being overcome with grand views of the past and the present.

In both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*, the three groups identified as idealists, nihilists, and realists are present. The idealists and nihilists are a source of much of the conflict in each novel, which is attempted to be resolved by the realists. Through these attempts, the realists establish themselves as the heroes of the novels, and they provide the audience with a hope for the future.

Past and Present in Yoknapatawpha

To understand what is truly happening in the conflict of past and present, the reader must understand the world as it exists in the fictional Yoknapatawpha County, the setting of both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*, along with nearly all other works by Faulkner. Yoknapatawpha is situated in the hill country of northern Mississippi, with the county seat being Jefferson. All of the history of Mississippi is displayed through the events that transpire in the county, from the time of the Chickasaw through European colonization and the Civil War. It is this history that creates so much of the conflict in the characters, thus making it important for the reader to know.

The Compsons, who serve as the main characters for *The Sound and the Fury*, trace their heritage back from Mississippi to the Scottish highlands. It is said that Quentin MacLachan Compson "fled to Carolina from Culloden Moor with a claymore and the tartan he wore by day and slept under by

night, and little else" (Faulkner, *Sound* 326). The implication here is that he had lost his battle against the British and left everything behind in coming to North America. Further on in the appendix to *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner writes:

> At eighty, having fought once against an English king and lost, he would not make that mistake twice and so fled again one night in 1779, with his infant grandson and the tartan (the claymore had vanished, along with his son, the grandson's father, from one of Tarleton's regiments on a Georgia battlefield about a year ago) into Kentucky, where a neighbor named Boon or Boone had already established a settlement. (326)

This background gives a sense of the historical context in which the Compson family came to be. They were not quite established as warriors or conquerors, but as failures, having run away from the problems they could not solve. Furthering this idea is the fact that the aforementioned son was not killed in battle in Georgia, but rather survived and eventually left Kentucky, too, having "fled by night … running true to family tradition, with his son and the old claymore and tartan" (Faulkner, *Sound* 327). Therefore, the Compsons came to Mississippi because they were running away from the present and the problems it creates. The Compson tradition is failure, and it is this tradition that constitutes the past which must be reconciled with.[16]

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[16] Although, it should be noted that Faulkner writes of Governor Quentin MacLachan Compson II, "[he] was the last Compson who would not fail at everything he touched" (329). He then states that his son Confederate Brigadier General Jason Compson II was, again, a failure (Faulkner 329).

Not only do the Compsons have a past in Yoknapatawpha, but so do the McCaslins. Featuring as the main characters of *Go Down, Moses*, the McCaslins have as nearly a trying past as the Compsons. It is not stated in the text where the McCaslins originally came from before reaching the New World, as it is for the Compsons.[17] However, the novel does present the reader with the origin of the family's progenitor, Old Carothers McCaslin. The family records as read by Isaac McCaslin state, "*Father dide Lucuis Quintus Carothers McCaslin. Callina 1772 Missippy 1837. Dide and burid 27 June 1837*" (Faulkner, *Moses* 252). It can be inferred from this record that the McCaslins were living in Mississippi in the early 19th century, arriving at approximately the same time as the Compsons. Like the Compsons, though, the McCaslins have a difficult past to reconcile with. In reading the family records, Isaac — Uncle Ike — finds that Old Carothers fathered a child with a slave woman, and then fathered another child with the woman born of that relationship (who herself remained enslaved) (Faulkner, *Moses* 254-55). These acts by Old Carothers lead to the death of the original woman, who "*Drownd in crick Cristmas Day 1832*" (Faulkner, *Moses* 253). Uncle Ike is horrified by this and refers to his own grandfather, Old Carothers, as an "evil and unregenerate old man" (Faulkner, *Moses* 280). It is this evil incestuous relationship and the sins that have spawned from it that form the past for the McCaslins. It is with this family secret that they must reconcile.

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[17] Interestingly, minimal research on the name McCaslin shows it might be a Gaelic form of Absalom, perhaps an allusion to Faulkner's 1936 novel *Absalom, Absalom!* and a play on the Biblical character.

Of course, the past of Yoknapatawpha cannot be fully understood without addressing the Chickasaw, the original proprietors of the land. The arguably most notable Chickasaw tribesman in the history of the county is Ikkemotubbe, "a dispossessed American king" (Faulkner, *Sound* 325). The life story of Ikkemotubbe, or Doom, is given as follows:

> Ikkemotubbe, old Issetibbeha's sister's son, had run away to New Orleans in his youth and returned seven years later with a French companion calling himself the Chevalier Soeur-Blonde de Vitry … who was already addressing Ikkemotubbe as *Du Homme* … and [a] quadroon slave woman … And how they returned … and Moketubbe abdicated and Doom became in fact The Man which his French friend already called him. And how on the day after that, during the ceremony of accession, Doom pronounced a marriage between the pregnant quadroon and one of the slave men which he had just inherited … and two years later sold the man and woman and the child who was his own son to his white neighbor, Carothers McCaslin. (Faulkner, *Moses* 157-58).

He was not a great man, having forced his own cousin off the throne which he rightly inherited, and having sold his son and the mother of his son into slavery, after forcing her to marry another man. He was not a great man, but he was the king. It is here, in the focus on worldly things that the Chickasaw can find their troubled past. Eventually, Faulkner writes, Ikkemotubbe was given the "right to proceed in peace, by whatever means he and his people saw fit, afoot or ahorse provided they were

Chickasaw horses, to the wild western land presently to be called Oklahoma: not knowing then about the oil" (*Sound* 325). The Chickasaw left behind in Mississippi must try to reconcile themselves with a past in which they were kings and masters of slaves, having lost it all and become the slaves themselves.

The present in Yoknapatawpha for the characters in both novels is typically either in the aftermath of the American Civil War, during the height of the Great Depression, or on the eve of the Second World War. Each of these time periods was rather bleak and certainly not an ideal time and place to be living in. The plantation system of the Old South was collapsing if it had not yet fully collapsed, money was hard to come by, and there was a general sense of apprehension about the future. These times of uncertainty are where the reader finds the characters of *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses* as they struggle with the conflict of past and present in each of their lives.

The Nihilists

The nihilists constitute the first group of characters. These characters have a lax moral code and a rather negative outlook on life. They have a negative view of both the past and the present, and they espouse the idea that nothing was ever good and nothing ever will be good. Significant traits of the characters are often greed and pride, and they can exhibit nihilism either intellectually or through their deeds. Some characters exemplify all three, whereas others may only exemplify one of these traits. Nihilists tend to let the world around them collapse due to their lack of interest in its wellbeing. The three main nihilists coming from both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses* are Roth Edmonds, Jason Compson III, and Jason Compson IV.

Jason III and the Clicking of Time

Jason Compson III is never really introduced in *The Sound and the Fury*. He is just always there, in the same way that a child is never introduced to his father. Even in Faulkner's appendix to the novel, he is not introduced, but instead he is talked about as if the reader already knows him. Faulkner writes, "Jason III … sat all day long with a decanter of whiskey and a litter of dogeared Horaces and Livys and Catalines, composing … caustic and satiric eulogies on both his dead and his living fellowtownsmen" (*Sound* 330). As apt a description as can be found of Jason III in the entire novel, it portrays him surrounded by two things: liquor and death. He has no cares in life and no desires other than pleasure and the eventual end to his existence, as he believes, which will come through death. It is this nihilistic view of life that infects his son Quentin in the second section of the novel.

The reader first hears Quentin recount his father's many words and teachings to him early on in his monologue. His most notable first memory is of his father talking about time and watches. He remembers Jason III saying "Christ was not crucified: he was worn away by a minute clicking of little wheels" (Faulkner, *Sound* 77). To a Christian this sounds like pure blasphemy — and maybe it is. Looking deeper, however, the reader can see that Jason III has taken a heroic figure, the crucified Christ who died for others' sins, and turned him into a weak man who was brought down by the steady onslaught of time. There is perhaps no better way to exemplify Jason III's nihilistic tendencies than to show his view that an act of sacrifice for others is meaningless against the passing of time. He has no hope for the future. In fact, he seems to have disdain for the future. He just wants time to stop, as he

tells Quentin about his gift watch, "I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment" (Faulkner, *Sound* 76). Jason III's negativity about the future and his resentment toward time's continual passing not only leads him to drown himself in alcohol, but it also infects Quentin's mind and causes him to go down his own path toward stopping the future from coming.

Furthering the idea of Jason III's generally negative outlook toward all things, he gives additional advice to Quentin, saying "a man is the sum of his misfortunes. One day you'd think misfortune would get tired, but then time is your misfortune" (Faulkner *Sound*, 104). The only way for Jason III to see the world is through a negative lens. Because he cannot see himself as being affected in any way by his fortunes, he is consumed by his misfortunes. As Cleanth Brooks writes of Jason III, "he is now a beaten man, worn down, and all too ready to take refuge in his decanter of bourbon" (57). Like so many of the characters that have already been addressed, Jason III is looking to escape his present moment. He cannot endure it on his own or look toward the future hopefully. Instead, time continues on and all he can do is hope to retreat from it until he is no longer beholden to it.

Brooks, although pointing out the broken state of Jason III, attempts to defend his philosophy to some extent. "What Mr. Compson believes," writes Brooks, "and what he has tried to instill in Quentin is a version of stoicism" (57). The unfortunate reality is that Jason III's desire to remain unaffected by things outside of his control leads him to become careless about things within his control. His carelessness and drunkenness lead to familial disarray at his hands. By seemingly giving up on his duties as a father, he plants the nihilistic seeds in

the mind of Quentin, which will inevitably lead him toward suicide. Jason III strips away the hope of those around him, including the reader, due to his nihilism. He unquestionably has an effect on his children and their perspectives.

Jason IV and the Safe

The third nihilist is Jason Compson IV, brother to Quentin and son of Jason III. Unlike his father, he is not a beaten-down, worn-out man seeking refuge in bourbon. Rather, he is a greedy man who seeks pleasures for their own sake. Brooks writes, "the third brother, Jason, has repudiated the past," and, "he yearns to make money and become a rich man" (60). The unity of the Compson family, the maintenance of the land, and the ideas of principles and virtues do not appeal to Jason IV. He has no interest in these things. He simply wants to gain wealth and influence. It is for this reason that Faulkner describes him as "the first sane Compson since before Culloden and (a childless bachelor) hence the last" (*Sound* 338). There is no idealization in his mind. He is concerned about the practical and the pragmatic.

His practicality and pragmatism come at a cost, though. After the deaths of Quentin and Jason III, Jason IV not only begins running the household, but he also becomes the guardian of Caddy's daughter, also named Quentin. In this role, Brooks refers to him as "the cruel and even sadistic uncle Jason" who is entrusted with the care of Caddy's daughter (62-63). It is his cruelty and greed that come together to create the climactic scene of his section, when his safe is emptied and his priorities are clearly presented.

To best understand the love of money Jason IV has, the reader must look to the scene in

his section when Miss Quentin runs away, having stolen his savings. Brooks summarizes the scene as follows:

> [Jason] hurries to investigate the closet in his own room and finds that someone has forced the metal box that he had hidden beneath the closet floor, broken the lock, and taken out the cash. His hidden savings, most of it the money that he has, over the years, stolen from the sums that Caddy had sent for her daughter's expenses — all is gone. Jason at once calls the sheriff. (72)

There is no second thought for him. The money has clearly been stolen, and his belongings have been violated. Instead of checking on the safety of his family members, he immediately rushes to alert the authorities in a desperate attempt to regain the money that he believes he rightfully stole for himself. His greed and lack of morals presented here come from the fact that he has no care for the past or the present. He has no care for past or present, but he "is fixated on an illusory future" (Brooks 60). It is this illusory future that is the cause for his unfaltering greed. He is imprisoned by his need to profit at all costs, even to the detriment of his family members. If he were to accept the current state of affairs in the Compson household and in his life, he would not need this obsession with money. Jason IV has a hopeless future because it is centered on chasing down something that cannot be.

Roth and the Payment

Greed does not only affect Jason IV, but also Roth Edmonds. The story of Roth that most fully paints his portrait as a nihilist is recounted in "Delta Autumn." Here, Roth is an unmarried man reaching middle age, his

uncle Isaac McCaslin is entering old age, and war is raging in Europe between Hitler and the Allied Powers. Roth is now the proprietor of the old McCaslin lands, as the land is passed down through his line due to Uncle Ike's childlessness. While taking place in the middle of the twentieth century, this episode of the novel does not differ very much from the earlier events that so disturbed Uncle Ike.

After Roth, Uncle Ike, and a number of other men head into the ever-dwindling wilderness to set up a camp for hunting, Roth throws Uncle Ike an envelope and gives him a command. He says, "there will be a message here some time this morning, looking for me. Maybe it wont come. If it does, give the messenger this and tell h— say I said No" (Faulkner, *Moses* 338). There is no clear statement of a woman and child existing, but Uncle Ike already understands and is willing to obey the orders he has been given. When the woman arrives, Uncle Ike is there to hand off the envelope of cash; however, as Brooks writes, "what he is not prepared for … is the young woman's saying, 'You're Uncle Isaac'" (155). Brooks continues, "it turns out that she is the granddaughter of Tennie's Jim, and thus the great-granddaughter of Tomey's Turl" (155). The realization of this is shocking to Uncle Ike. Not only does Roth have a child out of wedlock, but the mother and child are both partially black and distant relations to Roth and Ike.

Immediately, this fact conjures up memories of Old Carothers' misdeeds. Not only does Roth abandon his child, but he attempts to make up for it with money. Concerning this materialism, Weldon Thornton writes, "Roth's leaving the girl an envelope of money is another example of the same sin which old McCaslin committed in leaving the $1,000 to Tomey's Turl" (108). Roth has

inherited in some way the nihilism and sins of his ancestor, and it leads to his "disregard for those who follow him" (Thornton 108-09). Brooks concurs with Thornton on this point as he writes, "Old Carothers's sin which had caused Ike to repudiate his inheritance appears once more" (155). The family is haunted by lust and greed, which find their ends in nihilism.

Roth's actions show that he is too prideful to admit his wrongs and handle them responsibly. Instead, he tries to avoid his problems through a cash payment, which shows his materialistic, greedy worldview. He believes that his presence as a father and husband is only equivalent to a specific monetary value. Responsibilities and relationships have become things to be bought and sold. This nihilistic worldview will inevitably lead to his rejection of the future as represented by his infant son, as Thornton points out, because he has no care for the wellbeing of others and the betterment of the world. He would rather let everything around him collapse, and for this reason he is not a hopeful character.

The Idealists

Following the nihilists are the idealists. As stated in the introduction, the idealists have a view of the past that is unrealistic in that they believe it to be a purer, better world than their own. Because of this, they want to purify their world from the stains of the present and return it to this idealized version they have constructed in their minds. The main idealists in *Go Down, Moses* are Sam Fathers and Uncle Ike McCaslin. Both Sam and Uncle Ike long for the ancient world of the Chickasaw and the paradise they imagine it was. The main idealist from *The Sound and the Fury* is Quentin Compson. Quentin does not long for the ancient world of the Chickasaw, but rather an Old South in

which men are chivalrous and women are ladies. All three characters reject the present and wish to turn it into the pure and ideal past, which causes them to let their lives turn to ruin, leaving them with little or no hope for the future.

Sam Fathers and the Old People

Sam Fathers is introduced in the story titled "The Old People." He is depicted as hunting with a young Uncle Ike, "standing just behind the boy as he had been standing when the boy shot his first running rabbit with his first gun" (Faulkner, *Moses* 155). It is clear from this introduction that not only is Sam a mentor to young Uncle Ike, but he is also a dedicated sportsman and a man who is comfortable in the wilderness. Not apparent from this brief introduction, however, is that Sam is the son of the Chickasaw king Ikkemotubbe. As stated earlier, Ikkemotubbe has a son with a quadroon woman whom he promptly marries off to another man and sells into slavery. This son is Sam Fathers, his name being an English form "which in Chickasaw had been Had-Two-Fathers" because of his conflicted paternal relationships (Faulkner, *Moses* 158).

On the same page, there is a description of Sam as a sixty-year-old man, somewhat short and chubby-looking, with long dark hair, "whose only visible trace of negro blood was a slight dullness of the hair and the fingernails, and something else which you did notice about the eyes, which you noticed because it was not always there" (Faulkner, *Moses* 158). But what is it that one might notice about the eyes? Uncle Ike's cousin and father figure, Cass Edmonds, seems to have an understanding about this:

> The boy's cousin McCaslin told him what that was: not the heritage of

Ham, not the mark of servitude but of bondage; the knowledge that for a while that part of his blood had been the blood of slaves. "Like an old lion or a bear in a cage," McCaslin said. "He was born in the cage and had been in it all his life; he knows nothing else. Then he smells something. It might be anything, any breeze blowing past anything and then into his nostrils … But that's not what he smells then. It was the cage he smelled. He hadn't smelled the cage until that minute. Then the hot sand or the brake blew into his nostrils and blew away, and all he could smell was the cage. That's what makes his eyes look like that. (Faulkner, *Moses* 159)

Sam is haunted by the slavery that he has endured, even if it was not for a long time and had not made up a substantial portion of his heritage; it still haunts him. He cannot overcome the fact that he, the son of a king, was a slave for a time. In his mind, he is not meant for such a lowly position, but for the world that should have been reserved for him. He should be king. The caged bear or lion imagery perfectly encapsulates Sam as a man. Were he to live in the idealized past of the Chickasaw — ignoring that they, too, had enslaved people — he would be a force of nature with power above most men. However, he is in a cage: at first the literal bonds of slavery, but now the mental bonds of idealism. The past haunts him, and instead of trying to make the best of the world he lives in, he tries to resurrect a past before the fall of the Chickasaw and the shackles of servitude, a past which likely was never a reality.

In trying to resurrect this idealized Chickasaw Eden[18], Sam has gotten himself caught up so much in the past that he has forgotten the present. To this point, Faulkner describes Sam as a man "whose grandfathers had owned the land long before the white men ever saw it and who had vanished from it now, … what of blood they left behind them running in another race and for a while even in bondage and now drawing toward the end of its alien and irrevocable course, barren, since [he] had no children" (*Moses*, 157). Sam is childless and will never have children. His focus is centered on the past, recouping the past, resurrecting the past, idealizing the past. A past-centered life cannot leave room for any focus on the future, which would be required if he were to have progeny of his own. The lack of fertility or passing down of blood is representative of a lack of hope in the future. He despairs over the loss of the paradise that Mississippi once was, and he sees no way forward and nothing on the horizon but total desolation. For this reason he lives as a bachelor and tries to avoid his reality. In the words of Cass Edmonds, Sam is "his own battleground, the scene of his own vanquishment and the mausoleum of his defeat" (Faulkner, *Moses* 160). The despair and desolation he feels is evident in his very self. He himself is a place of death, a graveyard, a body-strewn battlefield. Everything about him revolves around the loss of his place as king, and the loss of the people and place he spent his entire life idealizing.

Sam believes that the wilderness is a part of him, just as he is a part of the wilderness, and this is how his story concludes. While hunting in "The Old People," Sam and Uncle Ike come across a massive buck, and

Sam raises his hand to it, saying, "Oleh, Chief … Grandfather" (Faulkner, *Moses* 175). He greets the buck as if it were a relation to him because he sees it as so. His attitude toward the buck and the way he addresses it shows that he has a reverence for and connection with a culture he has never known, one which possibly never existed in the way he imagines. Then later on, in "The Bear," a group of men go hunting a bear named Old Ben, which results in the death of the bear, a hunting dog, and Sam Fathers (Faulkner, *Moses* 229 and 235). Both Old Ben and Sam, representing nature and the idyllic world the Chickasaw once inhabited, pass away leaving no trace behind them. Hope is again struck out, as the ideal past can never be realized, especially now that two of the last figures of the past are gone.

Uncle Ike and the Wilderness

Much like Sam, Uncle Ike is an idealist in the fact that he, too, wishes his modern world looked more like that of the ancient Chickasaw. A descendant of the infamous Old Carothers McCaslin, the man who committed the heinous acts of rape and incest with enslaved women, Uncle Ike wishes to have no connection with this heritage. Instead, he longs for the idealized heritage of the Chickasaw as told to him by his mentor Sam Fathers. When Uncle Ike is first introduced in *Go Down, Moses*, he is described as "a widower now and uncle to half a county and father to no one" (Faulkner 5). From the very beginning, it can be seen that he has followed in Sam's footsteps and decided to reject the future and focus on the past by not having children. In addition to rejecting a chance at fatherhood, he also rejects the land that he rightfully inherits from the McCaslin line, once again renouncing the present because of an obsession with the past (Faulkner, *Moses*

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[18] Phrase used by Dr. O'Gorman in reference to the land of the Chickasaw prior to European colonization.

241-243). His decision to remain childless was the cost of dismissing his inheritance, as he was married and lived apart from his wife until her death due to her frustration at his choices (Faulkner, *Moses* 6).

The origin of his obsession with the ancient Chickasaw must surely derive from his relationship with Sam Fathers. When they are hunting together in "The Old People," as Cleanth Brooks writes, "Ike, at the age of twelve, killed his first buck, and … Sam Fathers, as a kind of priest of the wilderness, marked Ike's face with the hot blood of the deer. The story is thus really the account of an initiation" (137). From the age of twelve onward, Uncle Ike is as much of a Chickasaw as he can be, having been initiated by the son of the last Chickasaw king. It is because of this identity that he longs for the Chickasaw Eden as much as Sam. He sees his present as the world of Old Carothers, of sin, evil, and materialism, whereas the past is the world of the Chickasaw, of the wilderness, and of purity. It is no wonder, then, that he clings to this imagination and rejects the world he is brought up in. His idealized view of the world he has been shown by Sam is greater than anything that can be obtained in his reality. Thus, he obsesses over the past just as Sam does.

Sam is not the only influence in Uncle Ike's idealized view of the Chickasaw. During "The Old People," it is revealed that there had once been another man of Chickasaw ancestry who lived in Yoknapatawpha:

> Until three years ago there had been two of them, the other a full-blood Chickasaw, in a sense even more incredibly lost than Sam Fathers. He called himself Jobaker, as if it were one word. Nobody knew his history at all. He was a hermit, living in a foul little shack at the forks of the creek five miles from the plantation and about that far from any other habitation … and he consorted with nobody, black or white; no negro would even cross his path and no man dared approach his hut except Sam. And perhaps once a month the boy would find them in Sam's shop — two old men squatting on their heels on the dirt floor, talking in a mixture of negroid English and flat hill dialect and now and then a phrase of that old tongue which as time went on and the boy squatted there too listening, he began to learn. Then Jobaker died. (Faulkner, *Moses* 163)

Young Uncle Ike was able to experience what could be seen as the true Chickasaw culture by watching Jobaker and Sam talk, eventually picking up some of the language that would have been spoken before the Europeans colonized Mississippi. In this way he is more connected to the culture than just exoticizing it. He was brought up by people with a claim to the culture. However, it is his idealization of the culture, of the Chickasaw in general, that becomes his downfall. Rather than trying to carry on what Sam had taught him and what he had gathered through Jobaker, Uncle Ike idolizes the past world of the Chickasaw. The old ways that Sam and Jobaker share through their united heritage become an ideal of perfection and purity to Uncle Ike. He abandons his present and future to dwell on a past that he had never and will never get to experience. It eventually leads him to his end as an old man with no descendants and no land and nothing remarkable about him except his status as the man that gave up the McCaslin property.

Toward the end of the novel, in "Delta Autumn," the reader finds Uncle Ike as an old man, traveling with his cousin's grandson to the wilderness to go hunting, "the territory in which game still existed drawing yearly inward as his life was drawing inward" (Faulkner, *Moses* 319). Like Sam Fathers' death coinciding with the death of Old Ben, a staple of Yoknapatawpha wilderness, Uncle Ike's life is coming to an end alongside the end of true Mississippi wilderness. He and Sam both end up being an image of the "Indian without a culture, as a 'child of Nature'" (D'Alessandro 7). Their lives coincide with the decline of nature, as they desired to draw near to nature like the Chickasaw of centuries past. Uncle Ike, instead of preserving and carrying on such a tradition, allows it to die because of his longing for the past. His idealization of the old ways of the Chickasaw prevents him from addressing his reality with hope and anticipation for the future, and he ultimately allows himself to wallow in despair at the collapse of a civilization he never really knew.

Quentin and the Old South

Quentin Compson, other than being presented in *The Sound and the Fury* instead of *Go Down, Moses*, is quite a different character than Sam and Uncle Ike. The Chickasaw, the wilderness, and hunting are not things that weigh heavy on his mind. Instead he has clung to the principles of chivalry and honor that he associates with the Old South, but that probably go back to before his ancestor Quentin MacLachan Compson fled Scotland. Antonia Spencer writes, "the Compsons in general appear to embody the Celtic traits of alcoholism, degeneracy, and obsession with familial honor" (363). It is clear that Quentin's main fault is familial honor, regardless of whether

Spencer's assertion is true of Celtic people in general.

Familial honor for Quentin has been tarnished due to the actions of his sister Caddy. She has gotten pregnant out of wedlock and is marrying a man to hide this fact. When pondering this he remembers that his father once told him, "in the South you are ashamed of being a virgin. Boys. Men. They lie about it," (Faulkner, *Sound* 78). Here is the first time the reader is shown this obsession with purity and impurity in the novel. It sets the stage for Quentin to then ask his father, "why couldn't it have been me and not her who is unvirgin" (Faulkner, *Sound* 78). He is ensnared in these ideas of virginity and purity as principles that must be followed. To him, a man must be full of conquests and carnal knowledge, while a woman must be untouched by impurities. He becomes obsessed with the rules and distinctions of this line of thought and it begins to derail his sanity. As Brooks writes, Quentin is beset with "concern for virginity — for his own, but far more importantly, for Caddy's loss of her virginity and her pregnancy and hurried marriage to provide a name for her expected child" (50). All of this derives from his idealized view of the past when women were paragons of virtue and purity, and men were conquerors. His obsession with purity and the past is unable to be reconciled with the present in which he is surrounded by what he sees as a lack of purity. It is this internal conflict that leads him to kill himself at the end of his section in the novel.

The internal conflict that leads to his suicide is further examined by John F. Desmond, who writes, "Quentin tries to wrest permanent meaning from this situation by positing a code of stoical family honor, but he fails miserably" (50). Because of his idealization of ancient virtue and dedication

to the preservation of the good Compson name, he tries to salvage the situation. By trying to assert himself as the chivalrous brother, he longs to resurrect the past. Desmond notes that Quentin "fails miserably" and "his failure eventuates in … suicide" (50). When the code he attempts to resurrect does not come to fruition, there is nowhere for him to turn. He is ostracized from his own reality and cannot find a way for himself to fit back into it. His self-ostracization results in the fact that "he associates almost all present events with episodes of the past, or sees the present itself as inevitably becoming the past" (Hagopian 53). In this view, his only escape is through death.

The cause of his suicide is rather controversial, however. It is again a good idea to look to what Cleanth Brooks has written on the subject to get a fine grasp of the situation. Regarding the suicide, he writes, "it is not enough … to find Quentin's motive in the fact that he is disconsolate because the Compson family, a family of aristocratic pretensions, has gone to seed, and that his native land is a defeated, poverty-stricken part of the country" (Brooks 52). This is perfectly true. Of course Quentin is a "complex character," as he says (Brooks 52). Therefore, it is not just a sadness about the state of the family that leads Quentin to his death by suicide. The reason is similar to that which led Sam and Uncle Ike to their deaths: despair. He despaired over his inability to reconcile the idealized society of virtues and principles with the modern South he was living in, and instead of accepting his reality and trying to move past it, he became obsessed. His obsession was his demise, and the only way he could reconcile the past with his present was by ending his own life.

The Realists

Finding themselves stuck between the nihilists and the idealists are the characters that fall into the final category: the realists. Unlike the previous two categories, the realists do not find themselves clinging to encompassing views of the past. Instead, they see both the good and bad that have happened throughout history and are able to distinguish them. The obsessions and compulsions that plague both the nihilists and idealists are not often found among the realists; if they are, it is to a much lesser extent. The four realists that will be examined from the two novels are Caddy Compson, Cass Edmonds, Molly Beauchamp, and Dilsey Gibson. Each of these characters desires to create stability amidst the tension that is formed by the nihilists and idealists, and in doing so gives hope for the future.

Caddy and Motherhood

Caddy Compson is one of the most important and interesting characters out of either of the two novels being analyzed. Although she is the focal point of *The Sound and the Fury*, her perspective is never given. The reader never sees her life through her own eyes as he or she does through the eyes of Jason IV and Quentin. Her presentation in the novel is natural, though, because she is an image of hope — she is something to look toward. The reader would not observe this effect as strongly were she the main voice of the novel, or even one of the voices of the novel. Other than her mere presentation, she is a character who meets the troubles of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and divorce and continues on without giving into the negative worldviews espoused by the rest of her family.

Antonia Spencer sees Caddy as a character doomed to a terrible fate from the very

beginning. She refers to "the intense and tragic personalit[y] of … Caddy" (Spencer 363). Like many of the other realists, Caddy is born into a bad situation. However, she does not succumb to the idealism and nihilism of her family. Her handling of her mistakes and responsibilities is honorable and depicts the true sense of realistic personality Faulkner establishes. She accepts things as they are and does her best to overcome them. The realism of Caddy stands directly opposed to the idealism of Caddy.

Faulkner's pitting Caddy against Quentin was noticed by François Pitavy in his essay "Idiocy and Idealism." He notes that "the idealism of Quentin … is indeed a desperate, degraded, even perverse form of idealism, since in [his] inability to make Caddy — that is, reality — coincide with the ideal image which [he] [has] formed of her … [he] attempt[s] to destroy [his] sister" (Pitavy 103). Pitavy asserts that Caddy is clearly the realist here, and she represents reality to some extent. She avoids the idealism that Quentin attempts to project onto her, and stands by her own realism. In doing so, she is able to fight for her unborn child and her brother Benjy. Ultimately, however, her battle for her daughter and her brother will be met with trouble from the idealists and nihilists in her own family. Caddy's care for her disabled brother Benjy and her unborn child is most apparent during Quentin's section of *The Sound and the Fury*. In the following quote, Quentin remembers an interaction with Caddy before she marries a man to retain her honor:

> *Caddy*
> *Don't touch me just promise*
> *If you're sick you cant*
> *Yes I can after that it'll be all right it*
> *wont matter dont let them send him*

> *to Jackson promise.* (Faulkner, *Sound* 112)

Caddy is pregnant and it is causing her sickness and discomfort, but she knows for the sake of her brother and child she must go through with the marriage. Jackson refers to the state mental asylum, which Benjy is often threatened with if he does not behave in the way his family wants him to. In taking on the responsibility of caring for her child, protecting her brother, and generally doing her duty, Caddy pushes through the troubles that have arisen around her. She can still see the goodness of her unborn child and her brother amidst the evils of the world. It is this recognition of the good that brings her to push through her tribulations in a way that her brothers and father could not. Because she endures, she solidifies her position as an image of hope surrounded by hopelessness.

Cass and Fatherhood

Cass Edmonds is a lingering character in *Go Down, Moses* in quite a similar fashion as Caddy. He is nearly always around, but never brought to the forefront. Living as Ike McCaslin's surrogate father for much of the novel, he, too, is a character that is looked up to without much of his own perspective being drawn upon. In accepting his responsibilities and the realities of his life, he avoids much of the struggles that the nihilists and idealists grapple with. He also becomes an image of hope for the reader. His relationship with Ike is brought into tension when Ike refuses the land that he has inherited, and which has been being overseen by Cass. Because of the misdeeds of Old Carothers McCaslin and the unfortunate way the land fell out of the hands of the Chickasaw, Ike believes that he cannot in good conscience accept the land that the law recognizes as his. He claims that it is not his to own any more than it was his

grandfather's. Thornton writes of this interaction:

> To this McCaslin replies that nevertheless their grandfather "'did own it. And not the first. Not alone and not the first since, as your Authority states, man was dispossessed of Eden.'"

What Cass is trying to show Isaac, and what the whole novel suggests, is that Isaac's sentiments, while high-sounding, are unacceptable, since the only world we shall ever have a chance to live in is this post-Edenic, fallen one. (102)
Thornton briefly touches on, but does not expand upon, the fact that in this interaction Ike's idealism is drawing a wedge between himself and Cass. Because he thinks the actions of the McCaslin family have forever tainted what was once perfect, he cannot allow himself to take part in the further destruction of it. Cass, being a realist, sees that this is an absurd reason for rejecting his inheritance. As Thornton asserts, Cass correctly shows that Ike is not viewing the world as it really is, but instead he is projecting his idealistic tendencies onto history. Cass would have no issue dealing with the land because he understands that there were good and bad owners of it, whether they were Chickasaw, European, or anything else. He understands that for life to move forward, one must not long only for a world of grand ideals. Rather he must accept the responsibilities that have been given to him.

Ike must accept his responsibilities just like Cass has throughout his life. A fact that is addressed in Faulkner's later novel *The Reivers* is that "McCaslin Edmonds was already raising Ike as if he was his father and now and without breaking stride took over Boon too as though he had been Boon's father also, though at that time McCaslin Edmonds himself was only thirty" (21). The importance of this quote is not in its relation to the character of Boon Hogganbeck[19], nor is it because of the plot of *The Reivers*. It is important because it shows that Cass became the surrogate father to two boys who needed his support when he himself was only a young man. He is incredibly aware of what it can mean to take on a responsibility that is not necessarily wanted. In being a character who does accept the tasks that have fallen to him, he is a sign of hope and a shining beacon for the reader, whereas Ike falls short of providing hope.

Molly and the Burial

Molly Beauchamp, the fourth realist, certainly shares similarities with Cass and Caddy, but she is ultimately her own person. In the eponymous final chapter of *Go Down, Moses*, Samuel Worsham Beauchamp faces execution in Chicago for the murder of a policeman. His grandmother, Molly, senses that he is in trouble and seeks out assistance from an attorney to bring him home. When asked by the attorney how she knows Samuel is in trouble when she does not even know where he is, she tells him, "I dont know whar he is. I just knows Pharaoh got him. And you the Law. I wants to find my boy" (Faulkner, *Moses* 353). Her requesting help to find where her grandson has gone leads to the attorney and a newspaper editor researching Samuel's whereabouts, resulting in the attorney discovering that "he is to be executed tonight" (Faulkner, *Moses* 357). At first this information is kept from Molly, but the attorney and editor do not realize how far she is willing to go for her family.

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[19] Boon is a main character in *The Reivers*, and occasionally appears in *Go Down, Moses*. However, he is not important to the content of this essay.

Originally, they plan to tell Molly that Samuel "had died and been buried up North," omitting his execution in order to save her the pain of that knowledge (Brooks 158). Against their best efforts, the attorney and editor cannot make this plan work. Molly does not accept a burial up North for Samuel, and she "wants his body brought back home and given proper burial in his native soil," his native soil being the plantation owned by Roth (Brooks 158). The attorney and the newspaper editor relent to Molly's wishes and raise two hundred dollars to have Samuel's body sent from Illinois to Mississippi (Faulkner, *Moses* 359). With this final act, the events of "Go Down, Moses" the story conclude, as do those of *Go Down, Moses* the novel.

In an editor's note in *The Portable Faulkner*, Malcolm Cowley writes that "Faulkner's favorite characters are the Negro cooks and matriarchs who hold a white family together," among whom he lists Molly (389). One would think that her most important actions would be in her dedication to the McCaslin or Edmonds families. While she does her best to maintain life on the plantation, this is not her greatest act. It is not even in preserving the continuity of the Beauchamp family by bringing her grandson home to be buried. Rather, the most important thing she does is to keep Yoknapatawpha County grounded as much as she can. Through her workings with the McCaslins, the Edmonds, her own Beauchamp family, and various other characters, she provides a light of goodness in the novel. While others drag their world down, her actions help to keep it afloat.

The obvious point that can be drawn from the events of this chapter is that Molly Worsham Beauchamp is a prime example of a realist in Faulkner's works. Her concerns with the evils of the past or the struggles of the future do not weigh her down. She takes up her responsibilities to her family. Namely, burying her grandson who she knows has died. Rather than avoiding this responsibility as an idealist or nihilist would, she readily takes it upon herself, even fighting to be able to carry out the burial as she desires. In fighting to do the right thing and accept her reality as it has been given to her, she provides a ray of hope amidst death. She is setting the example of a way forward toward a better future.

Dilsey and the Church

Dilsey, like the other realists, never gets her own section in *The Sound and the Fury*, nor does she even get to display her inner thoughts on the page. Her existence in the novel is only through the perspective of other characters. However, the final section of the novel is told from the third person perspective and features her largely, which allows the reader slightly more insight into her life than can be said for Cass and Caddy. As a servant and cook for the Compson family, Dilsey is societally in a lower strata than them. Regardless of her station, she is in many ways the moral leader of the family.

The last section of *The Sound and the Fury* features a scene in which Dilsey and her family, the family responsible for serving the Compsons, attend an Easter Sunday service at their church. A visiting preacher has come from St. Louis and it has caused excitement among the congregation. The Gibsons bring Benjy to the service to keep him out of the house and away from Mrs. Compson and Jason IV, who are both irritated with him for crying and yelling. Being the only white attendee and a severely disabled man, he attracts attention (Faulkner, *Sound* 290-92). In bringing Benjy to church, she not only shows a level of care for him that his own family does not show, but she is

also taking up her responsibilities like Cass and Caddy. It is her role to care for Benjy when he needs it, and she carries out this role without complaints. She cares for him and brings him to church which is in itself a way of preparing and hoping for the future. Looking to Christ for eternal salvation and reprieve from tribulations in the next life is an inherent form of hope. Therefore, it is evident that Dilsey hopes for a better future through Jesus Christ, causing her to faithfully carry out her responsibilities, which in turn causes the reader to see her as a symbol of hope.

Dilsey being in some ways the face of the future is addressed by Cowley in another editor's note. Referring to a selection from *The Sound and the Fury*, he writes, "after the Compson family has gone to pieces, … it is Dilsey the cook who is left behind to mourn" (Cowley 390). Not only is she left behind to mourn, but she is also left behind to pick up the pieces of the family. Their rampant idealism and nihilism destroys the Compsons, and only a realist such as Dilsey could remain to take what is left toward the future. She could not keep the family from destroying itself, yet she is there to provide stability in the wake of their collapse.

Hagopian attempts to paint Dilsey as a failed character, having lost her battle against the nihilism of Jason III. He writes, "it is therefore Mr. Compson, and not Dilsey, whose values finally prevail" (Hagopian 55). He is incorrectly asserting that because numerous characters fall victim to the nihilism perpetrated by the Compsons, it is this nihilism that becomes the central philosophy of the novel. Clearly his argument is false, in part because Dilsey is an obvious heroine who outlasts her adversaries and remains a strong character into the future, but also because of Faulkner's own words on the subject.

Faulkner's appendix to *The Sound and the Fury* is perhaps the best example of Dilsey being a character that successfully symbolizes hope, which he himself recognizes as her creator and lifegiver. Of Dilsey, he writes, "they endured" (Faulkner, *Sound* 343). Other characters have long descriptions and stories about their lives to provide context and further add to the mythos of Yoknapatawpha County and its inhabitants. Dilsey does not. Her description is a mere two words, one of which is a pronoun that does not grammatically match her. Thus, it can be understood that she, of course, is a hopeful character who symbolizes the need to continue through, to endure, life's struggles, but even more so she is one of many people who have chosen to do this rather than give up as do the idealists and nihilists. She is not just one hopeful character. She is the representation of all people who choose to hope and pursue a better future instead of giving in to the trials of life.

Conclusion

Dilsey and the other realists are the clear purveyors of hope within the two novels that have been examined. They prevent Yoknapatawpha County from falling into total disarray and wickedness. For this reason, they were analyzed after the nihilists and idealists. The first group to be analyzed were the nihilists, and this is for two reasons. First, nihilists mostly come from *The Sound and the Fury* which is the earlier novel. The second reason is that the nihilists are furthest away from hope because of their negative worldview. In between the nihilists and realists were the idealists. The idealists are mostly drawn from *Go Down, Moses* and represent an ideology closer to that of the realists but still insufficient. Therefore, they were presented after the nihilists.

The first of the two novels, *The Sound and the Fury*, addresses the theme of nihilism closely throughout. In fact, Hagopian went as far to say that the final chapter works to "reveal nihilism as the meaning of the whole" (46). While the statement is inaccurate, as shown by the presence of Dilsey, it shows how nihilism pervades throughout the entirety of the novel. Jason Compson III becomes almost the voice of nihilism in the work, spreading his ideology to his family through drunkenness and apathy. His focus on the never-ending click of time and its inescapability exhibits the lack of hope that can be brought forth from nihilism. His son, Jason Compson IV, also suffers from nihilism, albeit in a slightly different way. He is not a totally careless man. While he does not care much for his family or property, he does care deeply about material things. It is the greed of Jason IV that is the result of his nihilism. Because of his greed, he is trapped trying to continually obtain more money, and he is unwilling to create or embrace the hopefulness that would lead him toward a better future. The final nihilist, Roth Edmonds, is greedy in a similar way to Jason IV. Roth, however, literally abandons his own future by paying off the mother of his son so he does not have to see him. His hopelessness comes in rejecting his own descendants, much like Old Carothers McCaslin.

Idealism is the one of the main points of interest in *Go Down, Moses*, with multiple characters embracing it as a faulty way of avoiding their current situation. They try to hope for something greater, but they still disregard their responsibilities and fall into despair. Sam Fathers idealizes the world of the Chickasaw that has long been gone. Because of his fixation on that world, he never had any children of his own, meaning

that his idealism obstructed him from creating a more hopeful future. The same can be said about Ike McCaslin for the most part. His rejection of his family and their sins leads him to idealize the Chickasaw in the same way as Sam, his mentor. Ike also remains childless like Sam. Again, the idealism that has overtaken him results in a lack of any hopeful future. The third idealist, Quentin Compson, concludes his story in despair and suicide, taking the problems of Sam and Ike one step further. Quentin idealizes the manners and ways of the Old South, and to a lesser extent the chivalry that originated in Europe. When the differences between the idealized world he longs for and the current world become too great, he despairs and drowns himself in a river. Each of these nihilists and idealists destroyed their future or their children's future in such a way to cut off hope and maintain a status quo of despair. The one group of characters that do not do this are the realists.

The realists are present equally throughout both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*. The reason for their representation is because they take the role of the heroes and are meant to be seen as the best Yoknapatawpha has to offer. The realists are the ones that not only inspire hope in the novels, but also in the readers. Caddy Compson is one of the most iconic realists in the works of Faulkner. She carries out her responsibilities to her brothers and daughter and she suffers greatly for it, but she never despairs. Cass Edmonds is a less visible character than Caddy, but he, too, handles the responsibilities he has been given with dignity. By caring for his family and land, he provides much needed hope for a possible future in *Go Down, Moses*. Molly Beauchamp is another character that does not get much attention within her novel. She always works to make her family's situations better, and she never gives into

despair, no matter how easy or warranted it would be to do so. The final realist is, of course, Dilsey who is described as having endured, and in doing so represents an image of hope that Faulkner wants his readers to hold onto.

Faulkner constructed multiple groups of characters that can be seen in both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*.

His nihilists are greedy and apathetic. His idealists are misguided and puritanical. His realists are dignified and hopeful. The nihilists and the idealists create many of the conflicts and problems in the novels, which are then left to the realists to resolve and restore to order. In doing so, the realists not only provide hope for the other characters in the novel, but they also do so for the readers.

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Disability, Deformity, and Discontent:
An Analysis of the Making and Understanding of Shakespeare's Greatest Villain, Richard III
By
Morgan Lanzo

Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man. [...] He mutilates [...] He turns everything upside down; he disfigures everything; he loves deformity, monsters. He wants nothing as nature made it, not even man.
– Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*[20]

Introduction

"Now is the winter of our discontent" begins one of Shakespeare's most famous soliloquies delivered by one of his most notorious villains. Perhaps one of the most dazzling aspects of the speech is Richard's crescendo from the happiness within the House of York into a declaration of his own discontent because of his "own deformity" (*Richard III* 1.1.27). This soliloquy has a special draw that pulls the audience into the rest of the play. Upon first reading, I theorized that this soliloquy pertained to the whole work; it acts as a key through which one can access the whole of the work. Perhaps it is the way that Richard begins with the language *discontent* rather than the "glorious summer" (1.1.1-2). Perhaps the draw begins or intensifies when Richard declares, "But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks" and purposefully draws attention to his deformed body (1.1.14). Richard himself first utilizes the words

deformed and deformity before any other character (1.1.20-27). Another poignant moment occurs when Richard either reveals or jests that he is "so lamely and unfashionable / That dogs bark at [him] as [he halts] by them" (1.1.22-23). Perhaps the linchpin of the entire soliloquy happens when he declares his resolve "to prove a villain" (1.1.30). In this soliloquy, Richard draws the audience into his lived experience through an appeal to *pathos* and provides his reasons for what he does. From the outset, Richard sets himself as the central voice in his own story.

Methodology

My working interpretive theory, therefore, is that Shakespeare's first scenes or prologues usually, but not always, serve as a lens through which to interpret the entire play. Another example would be *Romeo & Juliet* since the prologue sets the tone for the whole work. Shakespeare clues the audience into much of the plot from the very beginning while concealing certain details. These details then fulfill the outline in the prologue as the story unfolds. Just the same, Richard's opening soliloquy hints at what characters say about him and his deformity through his detailed list of complaints, as well as foreshadowing the carnage about to ensue. I will examine deformity as a theme in the text particularly because Shakespeare places this at the forefront of the text from Richard's opening soliloquy. This essay

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[20] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Emile*, translated by Allan Bloom, Basic Books, Inc., 1979, p. 37.

explores *Richard III* as a literary work under the umbrella of disability studies, an emerging field of scholarship, with deformity as a subcategory of disability, as well as exploring cross-references to theatrical studies. Critics debate Shakespeare's choice to present Richard's physical deformity in tandem with his evil nature. One common theory asserts that Shakespeare inclined towards the common opinion of his time that Richard was a tyrant, an opinion crafted and set into motion by the House of Tudor.[21] However, critics still debate the level of Tudor influence on Shakespeare's *Richard III*. This thesis considers these matters by interrogating specific language Shakespeare uses to describe Richard's deformity and its cultural connotations, particularly in the play's dialogue between Richard and other characters. I examine potential historical biases by comparing Shakespeare's work with St. Thomas More's account of Richard III, *Mirror for Magistrates*, *The Holinshed Chronicles*; and as well, the political tension of portraying the Plantagenet Kings under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. This will shed light on Shakespeare's intentions in his portrayal of King Richard III and his physical deformity. The body of this essay will closely examine key moments of the text that feature deformity to better analyze Shakespeare's intentions with the work, ultimately culminating in a review of critical scholarly work on this matter and passing final determinations on how literary scholars, audiences, and creatives should interpret, understand, and portray Richard's deformity today.

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[21] A biography on Richard III utilized in preparation for the writing of this thesis is Ross, Charles. *Richard III.* Yale University Press, 2011. *EBSCOhost,* search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1445440&site=ehost-live.

Conclusion of Introduction and Thesis Statement

This thesis maintains that *Richard III* is not entirely ableist in its creation. However, the play may contain a degree of ableist influence and can be misconstrued as ableist in its interpretation and dramatic presentation. Richard is ultimately responsible for his actions, as his disability does not excuse them, yet his discontent in life is in large part a product of his circumstances: his disability and the way other characters treat him. Differing textual interpretations and performances can impact the reception of Richard's character and disability by readers and audience members. Some interpretations mock disability while others remove it completely, attempting be sensitive; however, in doing so, they remove one of the most major thematic elements of the play. In terms of staging, I resolve that the portrayal of Richard by a disabled actor is incredibly effective and should be advised, but if this is not possible, there should be casting and staging decisions that honor both Shakespeare's intention with the work and disabled communities. *Richard III* today raises the issue of ableism in both the media and in everyday life; the play opens a route for further discussion about our understanding of both physical and psychological disabilities by how the bard portrays them and draws attention to them. *Richard III* can ultimately serve as an important example of how certain interpretations and portrayals of the text of the play can help people with disabilities and their surrounding communities to understand them, accept one another, and view those people as human and more than their disabilities.

Terms Defined & Historical Context

The definitions of deformity and disability today contain differences from the definitions of Shakespeare's time. The early modern English utilized words related to deformity more than disability. Jeffrey Wilson found in his broader research that the terms *deformity* and *deformed* appeared with greater frequency than *deformed* during Shakespeare's lifespan (Wilson). In Cotgrave's French and English dictionary from 1611, English and French cognates *deformation* and *deformé* present the common usage of these words in both European countries. Cotgrave defines *deformation*, "deforming, disfiguring, defacing; disgracing," and he defines *deformé*, "[deformed] defaced, disfigured, made ouglie [*sic*]; disgraced" (Cotgrave 277). Both cognates have an especially negative connotation. In contrast, the term *disability* does not appear in Cotgrave's dictionary. Only the modern French equivalent, *infirmité* and similar terms, appear. *Infirmité* during the early modern period translates to "[infirmitie], weakenesse, feeblenesse; crazinesse; also; maladie, sicknesse [*sic*]" (Cotgrave 550). *Infirmité* translated differently in 1611 than it does today because now the English use different terms to describe the same concept, and early modern usage of the term *deformity* grew over time. Historical accounts of Richard III illumine the reputation of Richard III at the time of the Tudor regime; some make mention a deformity. Thomas More chooses to detail rumors of Richard's deformity and his appearance upon birth. More writes on Richard's physical shape that he was "little of stature, ill featured of limbs, crooked-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favored in appearance" (More 5.3-4). *The Mirror for Magistrates* also details the supposedly monstrous appearance of Richard when he was born. Unlike More's account, this set of poems examines the life of rulers 'through their eyes' after their deaths so others can learn from their mistakes. Richard describes the brutal way in which he killed those around him in his pursuit of power in his ghost's poem. *The Holinshed Chronicles* also depicts Richard as a tyrant and a monster.

Another layer that helps one to understand the context of Shakespeare's time is the level of truth versus propaganda in circulation about Richard. Richard III died in 1485; Shakespeare wrote his play *Richard III* just over a century later (Greenblatt, et al.). He had to learn the story of Richard from other sources, which included both literary works and the circulation of information about the stories contained within those works. Prominent among these were *Holinshed's Chronicles*, Thomas More's *The History of King Richard the Thirde*, and *A Mirror for Magistrates*. In *Holinshed's Chronicles*, the author uses the word *deformed* to describe Richard (Holinshed). Holinshed presumably understands the term to have a similar definition to Cotsgrave's from the time period as aforementioned, "[deformed] defaced, disfigured, made ouglie; disgraced [*sic*]" (Cotgrave 277). He describes Richard as little, "one shoulder higher than the other," and his "countenance cruell;" he follows this with an account of his "cruell bodie['s]" animalistic actions, biting and "chaw[ing] his nether lip" [*sic*] (Holinshed). Upon reflection, human beings oftentimes possess bad habits such as biting one's lip; however, Holinshed's presentation of the words themselves results in the negative connotation. The author also claims that if Richard were a "good and naturall child [*sic*]," he would not have slandered his own mother (Holinshed). The author refers to the fact that Richard denounced his two young sons as illegitimate to take the throne, either

an indication that their mother or Richard's own mother was unfaithful. Immediately, Holinshed implies that there was something unnatural about Richard. The work carries this theme throughout, notably so when Holinshed writes, "Alas, my hart sobbeth, to remember this bloudie butcher, and cruell monster [*sic*]" as well as, "For thus I dare saie, if anie forren prince or potentate, yea the Turke himselfe would take vpon him the regiment here, and the crowne, the commons would rather admit and obeie him, than to liue vnder such a bloudsucker and child-killer" (Holinshed). On a technical note, Holinshed selects words such as *bloudsucker* and combines words, like "bloudie butcher [*sic*]" and "cruell monster [*sic*]" that sound harsh to the ears but also inflect a disdain for Richard's deeds that invokes a sense of *pathos* within the audience, the strongest of rhetorical claims (Holinshed). The author also incorporates religious elements throughout, such as his description of Richard's "being mooued with that gnawing and couetous serpent desire to reigne" (Holinshed). Holinshed ties together Richard's monstrous behavior and the indication that Richard is prompted by the devil himself to do whatever bloody deeds it takes to attain power.

Thomas More and Holinshed's details mirror one another especially in their descriptions of Richard. More details rumors of Richard's deformity and his appearance upon birth. More writes on Richard's physical shape that he was "little of stature, ill featured of limbs, crooked-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favored in appearance" (More 5.3-4). However, More uses the word *perverse* to describe Richard's disposition from before his birth, whereas Holinshed does not seem to use this term in his account. Words related to perverse in both French and English in Cotgrave's relate to depravity and corruption

(Cotgrave 716). More implies that the 'corruption' of Richard's physical body due to nature resulted in the depravity of his character. Interestingly enough, More does not use the words *deformity* or *deformed* to label Richard's body. Instead, he describes Richard's form and uses other negative adjectives to describe the vices of his character, such as "malicious, wrathful, envious" (More 5.5). More also claims that Richard was born with teeth; Holinshed and More both share a fascination with the imagery of the teeth as an indicator of Richard's supposed bestial or monstrous properties. More also mentions the "gnawing" of the lip, in addition to the "frothing" at the mouth (More 40.27). As the work progresses, More escalates these qualities in intensity to highlight the connection between Richard's monstrous nature and actions. More depicts Richard as a predator on the prowl for prey with the metaphor, "the lamb was given to the wolf to keep," and he also describes Richard's thirst for his plans to be brought to completion, which invokes bloodthirsting imagery (20.15-25). However, none of his language takes away from Richard's keen intelligence. More also charts Richard's plots and thought processes into the strategic moves he makes.[22] Still, More and Holinshed use language that sets Richard apart as abnormal and marked or disfigured by evil in this highly evident way.

A Mirror for Magistrates takes a unique approach in its narration of the story from Richard's perspective. However, the author presents Richard as even more of a monster when one looks at the word choice and intention. He begins, "Horror purfues the homicides fad foule, / Feare hunts his confcience with an hue and crie, / That drinkes the blood of men in murders bowle

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[22] See p. 20, ll. 25-30; p. 40 for examples. On p. 40, Richard even overplays his deformity as a part of his scheme.

[*sic*]" (*A Mirror for Magistrates*). Though both Holinshed and More reference bloodthirsting, both implement the term as more of a metaphor rather than a genuine desire of Richard's. *A Mirror for Magistrates* also describes Richard as a "man-like monfter [*sic*]" from his birth and mentions that Richard was "toothed" upon his birth and warns, "How fiercely he fhall bite another day, / That in his mothers wombe well toothed lay [*sic*]" (*A Mirror for Magistrates*). Though *A Mirror for Magistrates* has at least one primary purpose, to educate current and future rulers in how not to act, the author still finds it necessary to paint the monstrosity and inhuman nature of Richard. The author describes Richard's physical disability with similar language to Holinshed and More with the uneven shoulders, but he also chooses to use the word *crooked* (*A Mirror for Magistrates*). Though Cotgrave does not appear to define this English term, *crooked* has a clear double connotation: crooked to the eyes, and crooked in the heart. OED confirms the prevalence of both usages at the time ("crooked, adj.").

There needs to be some clarity as to the terms that will be employed in this essay versus Shakespeare's text. The words disability and deformity are not interchangeable in this thesis. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, disability means a "[l]ack of ability […] inability, incapacity; weakness" ("disability, n."). Richard's disability has more to do with the inward anatomy and physiology of his body that presents outward effects. The Duchess of York describes how Richard's difficult birth and physical impairment caused him discomfort and discontent as an infant (*Richard III* 4.3.160-161). Richard's disability also causes an incapacity or inability to relate to other characters, perhaps because they believe his physical

disability also causes psychological effects. Disability studies scholar Jeffrey Wilson indicates, however, that early modern English speakers utilized the term deformity exceedingly more often that the term disability at this time, and a dictionary from Shakespeare's time corroborates this evidence (Cotgrave 615). The definition of deformity is, "The quality or condition of being marred or disfigured in appearance; disfigurement; unsightliness, ugliness" ("deformity, n."). Deformity deals more with the external appearance and aesthetics of a person due to their anatomic makeup. A dictionary definition from the era supports this since the lexicographer defines an earlier version of the word spelled "deformé" as "deformed, defaced, disfigured, made ouglie [*sic*]," but also lends itself to understanding deformity as something evil or "disgraced" (Cotgrave 277). A second modern definition, however, suggests deformity to be the "quality or condition of being deformed or misshapen; *esp.* bodily misshapenness or malformation; abnormal formation of the body or of some bodily member," which in turn suggests that a physical deformity does have internal consequences that can incapacitate or indicate a lack of ability in a person, but it does not always mean so (ibid.). The clarification and reconciliation of these two terms with one another pertains greatly to disability studies and ableism, "Discrimination in favour [*sic*] of able-bodied people; prejudice against or disregard of the needs of disabled people" ("ableism, n."). This essay will be exploring *Richard III* as a literary work under the umbrella of disability studies, an emerging field of scholarship, with deformity as a subcategory of disability, as well as exploring cross-references to theatrical studies.

Textual Analysis Through Presentation of
Major Themes:
Shape, Form, and Bodily Imagery

Shakespeare utilizes varied word choice to portray the differences in how Richard and other characters think about his body and form. Some Shakespeare scholars analyze his word choice related to deformity and claim that his work should be received as a clear reflection of his intention that Shakespeare villainizes Richard through his bodily deformity. This seems to be the approach utilized by Akhtar, et al., who assert that "deformity reflects Richard's inward nature full of evil and vices" (Akhtar, et al. 94). This section aims at deconstructing the various word choices Shakespeare makes to describe Richard's bodily form in hopes of grasping his true intention. Richard is the first character to mention shape as aforementioned in the 'winter of our discontent' monologue (*Richard III* 1.1). He begins the rebuttal to the 'merry' nature of the time with a statement that he is not "shaped for sportive tricks / Nor made to court an amorous looking glass" (1.1.14-15). In this speech, he touts his inability to prove a lover with a larger emphasis on his undesirability. However, the various themes of the play continue to interrogate Richard's intentions by highlighting this point. For example, Lady Anne specifically humiliates his bodily form in Act 1 Scene 2 when she says, "Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity!" along with other language that denotes other themes to claim Richard as repulsive (1.2.55). Lady Anne implements the same language that Richard implements earlier in his soliloquy, "Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time / Into this breathing world scarce half made up" (1.1.20-21). Both this and the pathos appeal of Richard's speech, which he uses to get the audience on his side, give credence to the interpretation that

he merely echoes the sentiments thrown at him by others.

In Act 2 Scene 2, Shakespeare reveals that the Duchess of York does not regard Richard very highly, even though the Duke of Gloucester is her son. The Duke of Gloucester clearly attempts to manipulate the children of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, in the wake of his death. The Duchess attempts to make this known to the children by her response to her grandson, "Oh that deceit should steal such gentle shapes" (2.2.26). The Duchess contrasts the gentle appearances of the children's youth against the deceitful image of her son. Shakespeare seems to select the word 'shapes' here intentionally to highlight that the children's gentle faces reflect their innocent nature, whereas the Duke of Gloucester's deformity is a stamp of his sinister sentiments. In Act 2 Scene 4, The Duchess of York again perceives the danger that two of her grandsons face, the children of Edward IV. Shakespeare portrays the Duchess of York in this scene as untrusting of Richard's words on any matter when she states, "Good faith, good faith, the saying did not hold / In him that did object the same to thee. He was the wretched'st thing when he was young, / So long a-growing and so leisurely / That, if this were a true rule, he should be gracious" (2.4.16-20). The Duchess reveals to her grandson the hypocrisy of his uncle's words because of the incongruity between Richard's stature and his graciousness, both of which she believes Gloucester to lack. The Duchess treats Richard differently than her other children because of his physical deformity and resents his "wretched" nature (2.4.18). This plot point provides credibility to the claim that Shakespeare could see more than one side of Richard's story and understood the multifaceted situation that drove Richard to his evil ends.

The young Duke exhibits a sense of wariness about his uncle because of rumors he overheard about Gloucester's childhood. The Duke of York states, "Marry, they say my uncle grew so fast / That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old. / 'Twas full two years ere I could get a tooth" (2.4.27-29). Shakespeare references the myth referenced by More, *A Mirror for Magistrates*, and alluded to by Holinshed in which Richard was born with teeth. Shakespeare does not present Richard uncharitably here or purport the truth because he references the few histories of Richard that he knows. Also, by placing these words into the mouth of a child, Shakespeare removes their credibility and reveals the childishness of such rumors that have no grounding in the truth. He emphasizes this when Richard's mother replies to the young Duke, "I pray thee, pretty York, who told thee so? […] His nurse? Why she was dead ere thou wert born" (2.4.31-33). Shakespeare does not have the Duchess affirm these claims about Richard; instead, Shakespeare chooses to highlight the lunacy from which they were propagated. However, Shakespeare also does not have the Duchess outright deny these claims. There could be a few reasons for this choice. Perhaps the most likely is that Shakespeare could not overstep the bounds set for him by the Tudor monarchy of his time under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In this same vein, Shakespeare had no grounds for opposing the commonly accepted history of the time.

In Act 4 Scene 1, after the princes are in custody in the Tower of London, the family realizes what is happening and that they are too late to save the princes from their captivity and ultimate fate. The conversation occurs between the princes' mother, the former Queen Elizabeth; their grandmother, the Duchess of York; Lady Anne; and Dorset, son of Elizabeth and half-brother to the princes. The conversation between the three women especially shows that they are entirely convinced that Richard's deformity is at least a bad omen of the evils he will commit, if not a factor that contributes to his inclination to his butcheries. The Duchess of York cries in anguish, "O ill-dispersing wind of misery! / O my accursèd womb, the bed of death, / A cockatrice hast thou hatched to the world, / Whose unavoided eye is murderous" (4.1.47-50). The Duchess of York makes a clear connection between Richard's deformity from birth and the calamities that he causes within the house of York. In Act 4 Scene 2, Richard ascends the throne as the King of England. Just scenes later, Elizabeth and the Duchess of York learn of the young princes' deaths and express their grief, only to have Queen Margaret, Elizabeth's predecessor, rub the fact that she told them this would happen in their faces. Margaret also slanders Richard with her words and makes mention of the rumor that he "had his teeth before his eyes" (4.4.46). Queen Margaret's embellished description of Richard as a miserable infant and comments that he defaces "God's handiwork" reveals how other characters view Richard as inhuman because of his physical deformity (4.4.48).

Animalistic Language

Lady Anne interrogates Richard's bodily form with animalistic imagery and language. As she follows the hearse of Henry VI, she wishes upon Richard in her suspicions of him, "More direful hap betide that hated wretch / That makes us wretched by the death of thee / Than can wish to adders, spiders, toads, / Or any creeping venomed thing that lives" for killing her father-in-law whose coffin is onstage (*Richard III* 1.2.16-19). Lady Anne portrays imagery that captivates the Duke of Gloucester's

misshapen form when bringing up these images, since all these creatures appear ominous or peculiar. She describes Richard with this language to draw attention to his physical form through the lens of her opinion, that his abnormal bodily shape makes him appear different and thus unlike other humans. Continuing her tirade, Anne chastises Richard, "but dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee" (1.2.88). The imagery of the slave, while it holds other connotations, suggests Richard's hunchback form is an outward show of his subjection to something or someone.

Anne continues with metaphors to verbally abuse Richard for his physical form when she later quips, "Dost grant me, hedgehog?" (1.2.100). Shakespeare seems to utilize three primary definitions of *hedgehog* in the context of this sentence. The first definition refers to someone who does not consider the feelings of others ("hedgehog, n."). The second and perhaps the most obvious definition refers to the shape of a hedgehog, thus Lady Anne intends it as a dig at Richard's hunched back and small stature. Anne's word choice is vicious because Richard's royal badge features the boar as its symbol (Greenblatt, et al. 573). The third meaning utilizes a play on words, *boar* and *hog*, relaying that Richard is merely a hedgehog, not the more powerful boar or hog. She insults him by suggesting that his physical deformity puts him at a disadvantage in this debate and that she does not respect his authority. When Lady Anne spits on Richard when he suggests that he killed her husband so that he could marry her, she cries, "Never hung poison on a fouler toad. / Out of my sight! Thou dost infect my eyes" (*Richard III* 1.2.143-146). Shakespeare utilizes the word toad in other plays, notably *As You Like It*, referring to their lack of aesthetic appeal and the belief that they were venomous (Greenblatt, et al.

574). Lady Anne outright insults Richard for looking like a toad. Here, Shakespeare manages to encapsulate society's general reaction to Richard's deformity in one line to provide support for Richard's claims in his 'discontent' soliloquy.

Later, when Queen Elizabeth learns of the imprisonment of her kinsmen and the kidnapping of Edward V, she laments, "Ay me! I see the downfall of our house. / The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind. / Insulting tyranny begins to jet / Upon the innocent and aweless throne" (*Richard III* 2.4.52-55). Elizabeth characterizes Richard as a tyrannous tiger finished with his predatory prowl, and finally, he pounces upon his prey. The word *tiger* as a noun also possesses a more figurative meaning; it signifies one who is "fierce, cruel, rapacious, or blood-thirsty [in] disposition" ("tiger, n."). Queen Elizabeth seems to harp upon the carnivorous aspects of the tiger as they characterize Richard's apparent thirst for blood especially well. The scene where Queen Margaret tells Queen Elizabeth and the Duchess of York 'I told you so' also bears animalistic language when Margaret describes Richard. Along with the teeth as an infant myth, Margaret decries him a "dog […] / To worry lambs and lap their gentle blood, / […] this carnal cur / Preys on the issue of his mother's body" (*Richard III* 4.4.46-63). Margaret refers to Richard as a dog twice; the second time, she intensifies her language and selects the word *cur*. Though *cur* also signifies dog, there exists some evidence that this word already had a cruel connotation in Shakespeare's time. English translations of French words by Cotsgrave associate *cur* or "curre" language with the adverbs "filthily," "rudely," and "cruelly" (Cotsgrave 615).[23] A brief survey

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[23] Original association found through "cur, n." OED, Oxford University Press, 2021. Web. 25 October 2022,

of Shakespeare's usage of the word *cur* in his text reveals that thirty-one of Shakepeare's plays contain the term *cur*, and overwhelmingly, with negative connotations (Crystal & Crystal). Together, the words *tiger* and *cur* serve to express the brutality and animalistic nature of Richard and his actions; eventually these terms transform Richard into a rhetorical monster.

Monstrous Imagery

As previously mentioned, the Duchess of York refers to her son as a "cockatrice […] / Whose unavoided eye is murderous" when she learns of the captivity of the young princes in the Tower of London (*Richard III* 4.1.49-50). A cockatrice, otherwise known as a basilisk, is a mythical creature that resembles a giant serpent and whose gaze or breath will kill ("cockatrice, n."). Shakespeare again embraces animal word choice to describe Richard as a serpent. This choice follows two aforementioned tactics; like other characters, the Duchess laments Richard's deformed shape and dehumanizes him. However, this word choice serves more purposes than this. The murderous capacities of the cockatrice also mirror Richard's capabilities as a murderous mastermind. A cockatrice can kill many people with a single sweeping gaze; Richard has the power to engender many deaths within the House of York in one sweeping blow. The use of serpents as a descriptive metaphor often suggests a cunning character. This stems from the Christian tradition of the Garden of Eden, where Genesis 3 begins, "Now the snake [serpent] was the most cunning" of all the animals that God created (Genesis 3.1 NABRE). The ability of serpents to creep and lurk stealthily displays that many of the characteristics of mystical monsters come

https://www-oed-com.proxy015.nclive.org/view/Entry/45943?r45943?redirectedFrom=cur#eid.

from those of the real creatures that terrify humanity the most. The relationship between the cockatrice and the serpent also indicates that characters such as Richard's mother perceive him as devilish or hellish through a religious interpretive framework, as well. The characters that surround Richard paint him as a murderous animal akin to the Biblical serpent.

Manipulation and Obtaining Agency

Characters tend to exhibit a weariness about Richard because of his physical deformity, yet they still underrate and belittle him as less than human; not all of them fully consider the consequences of their own words, their treatment of Richard, and the cruelties that he is capable of. Richard manages to masterfully manipulate and obtain a great amount of agency because of this. Scholars point to Richard's expert manipulation as evidence that Richard's disability bears less significance in the play and that his mind should be the focus in interpretation (Oestreich-Hart). One scholar highlights Richard's success in tactfully wooing Lady Anne as evidence that Shakespeare's depiction of "Richard as a hunchbacked villain" based on the false histories about him has no bearing on "how he succeeds in this scene" (Oestreich-Hart 244). Though all of Richard's manipulation stems from his incredible mental acuity, Richard does at times utilize his deformity to his advantage because it allows him to generate a pathos appeal in support of his cause and to manipulate those who are caught unawares by his deformity. Literary scholar Katherine Schaap Williams suggests that Richard employs the supposed "impotence" of his body as a ruse "to obscure his shrewd political maneuvers" to disguise and excuse his actions (Williams). One of these examples is Richard's "Now is the winter of our discontent soliloquy," as

aforementioned. The other example requires further exploration: Act 3 Scene 4, where Richard condemns Lord Hastings to death. Richard begins to suspect that Hastings will not support his cause to ascend the throne while the young princes are still alive. Richard and the Duke of Buckingham trick Hastings into believing that Richard harbors no ill will toward Hastings and that Hastings is in his good graces. Hastings expresses his perceived notions about Richard's character that the audience knows to be false by his lines, "I think there is never a man in Christendom / That can lesser hide his love or hate than he, / For by his face straight shall you know his heart" (*Richard III* 3.4.56-58). Shakespeare displays through his word choice Hastings' false belief that Richard wears his heart upon his sleeve. Richard leads Hastings to believe that he can speak his mind frankly around Richard without suffering consequences, which ultimately leads to Hastings' downfall. When Richard reenters the room, he accuses Queen Elizabeth, "that monstrous witch," of "[consorting] with that harlot, strumpet Shore" to cause his arm to be withered (3.4.75-76). Before Richard does this, Hastings assures Richard that he will "doom the offenders, whosoe'er they be" (3.4.70). Richard knows that Hastings has an affair with Mistress Shore, so Richard uses this claim about her to his advantage to cause Hastings to falter. Richard also utilizes his physical deformity for political gain in this scene. Literary scholar J.S. Jahangir notes that Richard's "complex relation between his distinctive body and power" with his withered arm and crippled form help him in "his pursuit of power," as can be seen in this moment between Richard and Hastings (Jahangir 39). Richard knows that this outrageous claim that his arm is "bewitched" and "like a blasted sapling withered up" will cause Hastings to misstep and express doubt in Richard (*Richard III* 3.4.73-74). With one

line, Hastings falls prey to Richard's trap and seals his fate when he responds, "If they have done this thing, my gracious lord—" (3.4.78). Richard immediately whirls on Hastings for his "If" and sentences Hastings to beheading (3.4.80-81). Though Shakespeare's portrays Richard's identity as a person with a physical deformity negatively in this scene, Shakespeare shows that Richard does not overcome his deformity by minimizing it or pushing it aside. Rather, Shakespeare emphasizes that Richard utilizes his deformity to his benefit; Richard maximizes the utility of his deformity through the cleverness of his mind.

Richard's Self-Perception and Identifying with Deformity

To conclude this textual analysis portion, I will explore Richard's perception of self through a comparison of Richard's first soliloquy on 'discontent' to his last soliloquy in Act 5 Scene 3. The scholarship of Jahangir caught my attention on this theme. Richard does indicate that he recognizes deformity as an aspect of his formed identity at certain points throughout the play (Jahangir). Jahangir affirms that Richard does not define his entire persona with his disability. Rather, he figures that Richard's disability indirectly affects certain aspects of his identity since Richard recognizes that his disability contributes to his "lack of personal relations and interconnectedness" (Jahangir 38). In his first soliloquy, Richard provides reasons for why he decides to "prove a villain;" included among them are this interconnectedness and social isolation partially due to other character's responses to his bodily deformity (*Richard III* 1.1.30). However, he does this through a *pathos* appeal that draws attention to his personal causes for discontent. Shakespeare seems to

do this intentionally to hint at Richard's points of insecurity and isolation. Richard covers this up with his mental acumen, skillful manipulation, sense of charm, and honeyed words; however, both through his formed disguise, manipulation, and his deformity, he finds himself at the end of the play completely alone.

In Act 5 Scene 3, the ghosts of those whose deaths he orchestrated haunt him in his sleep. He awakes with a fright and begins to question himself, "What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by. / Richard loves Richard; that is I and I. / Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am. / Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why?" (5.3.180-183). The series of hard stops in sequence, made up of periods and interrogation points, indicates Richard's sudden indecision and unease. Richard does not display indecision of this magnitude until after this dream. Richard famously says after this dream, "Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls: / Conscience is but a word that cowards use" (5.3.306-307). Shakespeare's word choice 'babbling dreams' clearly connects to this earlier soliloquy in the same scene to indicate that Richard says this in part to reassure himself against the 'babbling' of the ghosts that speak for his conscience in his dreams and as a final refutation of his conscience. Evidence to support this lies in these lines from his last soliloquy: "Have mercy, Jesu. –Soft, I did but dream. / O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me" (5.3.176-177). Thus, it is all the more heartbreaking for the audience when Richard laments, "I shall despair. There is no creature loves me, / And if I die, no soul will pity me. And wherefore should they, since that I myself / Find in myself no pity to myself?" (5.3.198-201). Richard's poor reception by others in society due to his deformity begins his social ostracization, but Richard's choice to "prove a villain" and go

against the tide of his conscience ultimately solidifies his permanent discontent and despair (1.1.30).

Conclusion: Implications for Literary Interpretation and Staging

Given Shakespeare's limitations of historical knowledge at the time and textual analysis as well as the performance history of Shakespeare, this essay maintains the interpretation that *Richard III* may have ableist influences but is not itself an ableist text. From beginning to end, Shakespeare draws characters into the mind of Richard so that they can come to empathize with him. Despite the butcheries that Richard commits, Shakespeare never loses sight of the lonely man who is "not … made to court an amorous looking glass" (1.1.14-15). The character who proclaims his physical difference as his reason for choosing to be a villain is the same character in the lead up to his demise who "no creature loves" and "no soul will pity" (5.3.198-199). Shakespeare portrays Richard's loneliness resulting from both his disability and the masks he dons to manipulate others both as root causes of his ultimate downfall.

Performance Interpretation

Performances of *Richard III* in this century reveal that the debate over whether to depict Richard's deformity is ongoing. For example, *The Hollow Crown* is a television series starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Richard III. Cumberbatch portrays Richard with a hunchback through artificial means even though Cumberbatch does not seem to display an outwardly visible physical deformity of his own. Cumberbatch is a distant blood relation to Richard III (Puente). However, moral concerns still arise for some when an abled actor portrays a disabled character. Recent productions

show that there are disabled actors with the talent to play Shakespeare's Richard III. The Royal Shakespeare Company recently produced a version with Arthur Hughes in the role of Richard (Sinclair). Hughes "was born with radial dysplasia, which affects his right arm" and shows how this opportunity to represent disability in the way that he sees fit empowers the disabled community and inspires audiences because of Hughes' unique circumstance (Sinclair). In centuries past, abled actors could don ensembles to depict disability and not face any societal repercussions due to its cultural permissibility (Sinclair). Hughes, however, comments on the disparity in casting for disabled actors that formed from a long history of casting abled actors in disabled roles and suggests the benefits that come with greater representation in theatre for disabled actors as well as the depth and richness of meaning a disabled actor can bring to this kind of role (Sinclair).

Concluding Remarks

To conclude, I will provide thoughts on the suggestions of others in literary scholarship, disability studies, and the dramatic arts about how Richard should be portrayed upon a stage, namely, the decision on whether to cast a disabled actor in the role. Directors should follow the suggestion to cast a disabled actor in the role of Richard to the degree possible. Casting a disabled actor skilled enough to pull off the role on stage may be difficult in certain regions of the world such as small-town localities. This should not prevent the communities in these areas from partaking in the lessons to be learned by watching *Richard III*. In areas and settings where this is possible, such as

major metropolitan areas and in major motion pictures and television series, this role should be reserved for a disabled actor. Even though the historical Richard did not have as severe physical deformities as his fictional representation, Shakespeare makes Richard's disability the crux of the text. That is to say, the story would not make as much sense nor have the same meaning as Shakespeare's text without Richard having physical deformities. Major scenes and plot points of *Richard III* focus on disability. Since the text requires Richard to have a disability for the sake of the story and the decision that honors the unique situation that those with disabilities face would be to cast a disabled actor, every effort should be made to provide disabled actors with the opportunity to portray this role if they so wish to provide them with adequate representation in the dramatic arts. This essay does not assert that disabled actors should only be allowed to play the roles of characters with disabilities. On the contrary, just as minority character roles should be reserved for those of minority populations who relate to the unique circumstances of the character, disabled actors should be provided with the opportunity to represent themselves through disabled characters that honors their unique experience.

The undertaking of this thesis began with my concern for Richard's "discontent" in his first soliloquy due to his loneliness stemming from a number of factors all rooted in his disability. My hope is that this work honors the character of Richard, the real Richard, and disabled communities, and that the bard himself would find contentment in his classic work's redemption.

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"Rather Say I Play the Man I Am":
Understanding the Character of Coriolanus Through the Lenses of Honor, Pride, and Nobility
By
Helen Behe

Who is Marcius? Introducing the Primary Themes of *Coriolanus*

Of Shakespeare's Roman plays, *Coriolanus* contains his most enigmatic character. As Harold Bloom writes, "He is so oddly original a character that description of him is very difficult" (582). Though Caius Marcius makes his entrance in the tragedy by decrying the plebians as "dissentious rogues" undeserving of corn or aid, his character, some would argue, is still a sympathetic one (1.1.174). Catalyst for both Marcius' frustrations and successes, the plebians of Rome introduce a primary struggle for the reader of *Coriolanus*: whether or not the people are to be believed in their assessment of Marcius' character. Their main accusation leveled against Marcius, which plagues him throughout the tragedy, is that his pride disposes him to be "a very dog to the / commonality," and it manifests itself in loathing the Roman plebians (1.28-29). Especially at the tragedy's outset, there is evidence to support the plebians' accusations: Marcius' obstinate pride transforms his bid for the consulship, which should have been a simple thing, into a battle of wills between him and the plebians. The peoples' erratic sentiments match poorly with Marcius' arrogance, and it is this tension that causes Marcius' banishment. There are, however, various incongruencies in Marcius' character that reflect an inner turmoil that cannot be ascribed simply to his pride. How he is perceived by the people, and even by

himself, rarely makes sense at first glance. Though Marcius adamantly resists asking the people for the consulship, he does not necessarily do so out of pride. Rather, he insists to Volumnia that begging the people for their voices of support would in some aspect run contrary to his character: "Would you have me false to me nature? Rather say, I play / the man I am" (3.2.15-16). But who is the true Marcius?

The unfolding of *Coriolanus* only further muddles and conceals his genuine motivations for the reader, as the influence of Volumnia and the plebians make themselves apparent in Marcius. The public realm of life seems of little interest to Marcius, yet he goes among the people of Rome, at the behest of Volumnia, to ask their support in being appointed as consul. However, motivated by revenge, Marcius later determines to march on Rome with the Volscian army and destroy it, ruining his family's city and honor. In his obstinate battle with the plebians, Marcius' adherence to honesty is illuminated. It becomes clear that Marcius is striving for nobility but has not yet overcome his pride. Tension between the two sentiments propels the tragedy and is at the heart of Marcius' gradual change of character. The Marcius that denies corn to the plebians in Act 1 is a vastly different character from the man who, in Act 5, chooses the safety of Rome over his own life. Due to his assiduous commitment to honesty coupled with his ultimate decision to sacrifice himself for the wellbeing of

Rome and his family, Caius Marcius changes from an equivocal figure haunted by inner conflict and ruled by pride to a noble character. Marcius' transformation is one of pride to nobility, and it is necessary to examine his actions and sentiments through the lenses of pride, honor, and nobility to better understand his motivations throughout the tragedy.

Overview of Terms: Honor, Pride, and Nobility

Difficult as Marcius is to decipher, my thesis considers his character through the three major themes developed and defined in *Coriolanus*, namely those concerning honor, pride, and nobility, by using the Roman definitions of these terms as a foundation. Pride is the least complex of the terms, as its use throughout the play is the most consistent. Though Shakespeare would have been familiar with the Latin term *dignitas,* a traditional Roman concept that compounds personal pride with "worthiness and merit" and causes a respect for the social station held by an individual, pride is not used positively by his characters in *Coriolanus* (Perseus Digital Library). Rather, it is usage correlates more with *superbia*, a traditional Roman concept synonymous with "haughtiness, pride, arrogance" (Perseus Digital Library). When the plebians or nobles of Rome complain of Marcius' pride, which they consider to be his greatest flaw, they emphasize his arrogant refusal to humble himself before the plebians and comply with custom. The characters never speak of Marcius' pride favorably. Shakespeare's use of pride's negative root is essential to understanding Marcius and the peoples' perception of him, since this type of pride is inherently inward facing and must be overcome for Marcius to act in accord with his self-sacrificial, noble self.

In contrast to his solely *superbia*-based definition of pride, Shakespeare's usage of the term 'honor' draws from several different Latin definitions. While I define honor more thoroughly below, it is important to note initially that honor necessarily contains a public aspect, as it is bestowed upon an individual by those around them, and can become attached to such things as name, worth, duty, and public office. A key element of the Roman definition of honor, as well as its most external component, stemmed from the social esteem a person earned by holding public office (Britannica). This public aspect of honor is central to Marcius' identity and pride in *Coriolanus*, as he desires the position of consul without its customs and signs of office. Volumnia touches on the nature of honor in Scene 1 of Act 2, when Marcius has returned from capturing the city of Corioles and consequently earned the title of 'Coriolanus': "My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and / By deed-achieving honor newly named— / What is it?—Coriolanus must I call thee?" (2.1.178-180). The attachment of honor to name, as well as its being earned by public action, are indicated in her words to him.

The Roman understanding of honor, *honos,* was inherently attached to the Roman concept of *virtus,* an attribute comprised of all typically masculine virtues, as the Roman gods Honos and *Virtus* were connected deities. This connection manifests itself in Shakespeare's writing, as Marcius exhibits characteristics typically associated with *virtus*, such as "manliness, strength, bravery" and military excellence, and it is these qualities that earn him honor (The Latin Dictionary). Though *virtus* is not as prominent a theme as are pride, honor, or nobility, it nonetheless ties strongly into Marcius' and the peoples' perceptions of honor. *Virtus'* connection with honor is also

found in Sir Thomas North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, which was the translation read by Shakespeare: "Honour doth naturally accompany virtue, as the shadow doth the body" (*Plutarch's Lives* 11). This knowledge, along with textual analysis, makes it reasonable to conclude that Shakespeare draws on Plutarch's concepts and uses them as a foundation for his definition of honor in *Coriolanus*. Marcius' engagement with *virtus* is fundamentally connected to honor, but Phyllis Rackin argues that it also closes him off to any other aspects of virtue, since in Shakespeare's Roman society then *virtus* is celebrated the more it emphasizes destructive masculinity and diminishes femininity and its characteristics. "As the plebeians recognize from the first, Coriolanus is no more capable of loving his country than he is of loving them, for the ideal of *virtus* that animates him does not include love or loyalty to anything beyond itself" (9). Rackn's understanding of *virtus* is largely negative, with it existing at the expense of tempering virtues such as compassion and control. Though Rackin does not explicitly state in her article, there is the implication that *virtus* is a core piece of Marcius' pride. The plebians diagnose early in the tragedy how Marcius believes himself to be deserving of honor without obligation, and his *virtus* appears to strongly motivate this proud mindset. Marcius' approach to honor is complicated, and he often splits from the other character's more public, *honos*-based perception of honor to focus on honesty, wishing that the consulship would go to a man who felt kindly towards the plebeians and did not have to play it false. Acts 1 through 3 highlight the tension between Marcius' pride and his perception of honor, which more closely resembles Shakespeare's definition of nobility in *Coriolanus* than it does *honos*. Of the characters in the tragedy, it is Marcius who most appreciates the role

that *virtus* plays in honor, and his focus on *virtus* without the social elements of honor causes further friction between him and the plebians.

These definitions and Roman conceptions will provide the basis for my interrogation of these terms and their importance to understanding the character of Marcius. A close reading of the texts, however, complicates this, as Shakespeare has a different view than the Latin notions of nobility. While Shakespeare's usage of the terms "honor" and "pride" are similar to their Latin or Plutarchan roots, the usage of the term nobility in *Coriolanus* branches out significantly from its Latin root. In *Coriolanus*, it encompasses namely three qualities: leadership, honesty, and self-sacrifice, while also referring to the station held by Romans of noble descent—similar to an oligarchy (Oxford Reference). As an adjective ascribed to characters, "nobility" refers to solely internal qualities. The Latin term *nobilitas* only loosely incorporates the leadership aspect of Shakespeare's usage of nobility, as it refers exclusively to the external elements of "fame, renown" (Perseus Digital Library). Shakespeare chooses to break from it when speaking of Marcius.

"Nobility" is frequently used to describe Marcius not only in terms of his military success, but also in conjunction with his staying constant with his character. When Marcius is brought before the Senate to have his victory over Corioli recounted, and the consulship offered to him, his battling for Rome is repeatedly referred to by the Senators as noble action: "Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear / What you have nobly done" (2.2.68-69). Likewise, he is praised by his friend Menenius for what he has done for Rome: "To gratify his noble service that / Hath stood for his country" (2.2.41-42). Leadership is inseparable from nobility and

manifests mainly as a public sentiment, and Marcius fulfills his role as leader as a member of the Roman army and an influential public figure. Leadership's connection to nobility is demonstrated most obviously in Marcius' service in the army but is also shown by other characters. Both Aufidius and Volumnia have nobility ascribed to them, and though it is only Aufidius who holds a position in the military, the two characters act as leaders to those around them. However, Marcius differs from these characters considerably in his commitment to honesty. John Bligh discusses the similarities of Aufidius and Volumnia while also emphasizing the ways in which they are different from Marcius: "Paradoxically, he turns out to be the sort of warrior that Volumnia would like her son to be. It is he, not Marcius, who professes to prefer the excitements of war to the joys of love (IV.17-22), and when he cannot prevail by force, he is willing to gain his ends by deception" (8). Their leadership places Volumnia and Aufidius within the realm of nobility, but they never choose to strive for it as Marcius does. While Aufidius and Volumnia both express an interest in engaging with deception or acting falsely during the tragedy, Marcius refuses to do so. He understands his own person, and his dedication to acting honestly sets him apart from Shakespeare's other characters.

Lastly, and most important to the aspect of nobility that Marcius most possesses, is self-sacrifice. Marcius' pride is constantly in tension with the crucial self-sacrificial component of nobility, and the two can only be reconciled when Marcius determines to place the good of his city and family above his prideful pursuits. Benjamin Spencer, in his article "Shakespeare and the Hazards of Nobility" which traces nobility throughout Shakespeare's plays, highlights how Marcius' pride is destructive towards his pursuit of nobility: "Both Coriolanus and Hotspur were, indeed, men attuned to honor rather than nobility, for honor in Shakespeare may generally be construed as the erosion of nobility through an abrasive pride and ambition" (11). Marcius, at first unable to act self-sacrificially and determined to pursue honor through nobility, instead renders himself unable to achieve either. Throughout the tragedy, Marcius' main motivation can at times seem contradictory. Determining whether his motivations changed, or if the nature of Marcius' motivations was initially misunderstood, heightens in difficulty as the tragedy progresses. However, Marcius' seemingly erratic choices are undoubtedly guided by either his pride or the striving for his vision of nobility; he cares little for peoples' opinions of him, particularly the plebians, and willingly sacrifices his relationship with everyone inside Rome because his banishment affronted an aspect of his character dear to him. In order to better understand whether Marcius is a man characterized by pride or nobility, I examine his character as it develops throughout the tragedy.

Volumnia's and the Roman Citizens' Definitions of Honor

Honor, both as a concept and a term, dominates *Coriolanus*. The word "honor" is used the most throughout the tragedy in Acts 2 and 3, where it appears eighteen and fourteen times, respectively. These two acts contain Marcius' return from the war against Corioli and his subsequent banishment from Rome. The Roman plebians' perception of honor is referenced most frequently in Act 2, where it appears in almost constant connection with the favors given to Marcius by the plebians and patricians for his military successes. Marcius speaks of thanking the patricians for raising him to a

more honorable public station: "The good patricians must be visited / From whom I have received not only greetings, / But with them change of honors" (2.1.202-204). Though Marcius fights in a manner deserving of honor, the action itself is not automatically honorable. Rather, Marcius' fighting is a courageous and patriotic action that the Roman plebians deem worthy of repaying by placing honors upon him. The patricians' decision to honor Marcius for his military conquest is an obvious instance of honor's connection to *virtus*, and it is reflective of the larger Roman perception of honor. In a conversation between two Officers who are discussing the plebians' appraisal of Marcius' character, Shakespeare delineates between *virtus* and the public stations that garner honor: "He hath so planted his honors in their eyes and his actions in their hearts" (2.2.30-31). Though action is a key component of honor for the Roman people, it is not necessarily equated with honor. *Virtus* works as a pathway to gaining honor, but it requires a public element.

While the patricians only require *virtus* to honor an individual, the plebians' treatment of honor is more transactional, as they require *virtus* and public ministering to the people before they place honors upon a citizen. When Marcius fulfills for the plebians the duties of a courageous soldier and admirable public figure, they willingly reward him with honor. If Marcius' honorable actions cease, so also do the plebians cease to honor him. The tribune Brutus and Menenius, a friend of Marcius, comment on the plebians' transactional use of honor regarding Marcius. The moment Marcius refuses to adhere to custom and willingly ask the people for their voices and show them his battle wounds, they withdraw their respect for him:

BRUTUS: When he did love his country, it honored him.
MENENIUS: The service of the foot
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what before it was (3.1.303-306).

The plebians' understanding of honor is the closest to *honos*, since it is a combination of *virtus*, the fulfillment of public office, and a respect for the Roman people. However, the plebians also place a disproportionate emphasis on the latter, and it takes little for them to turn on Marcius when he acts disrespectfully towards them. Marcius is honored while his sacrifices for Rome persist, but these are forgotten once he spurns the plebians. Though Marcius' *virtus*-based action holds much of the ability to earn him honor or dishonor, it is easily lost by declining to participate in public action and by scornful treatment of the plebians.

Aside from Marcius, the tragedy's significant outlier to the definition of honor is Volumnia, who associates honor solely with action. Though the plebians err in how much importance they place on respect of the people in their perception of honor, Volumnia forgoes respect for the people and public office entirely. Marcius' central conflict with the plebians, which concerns honor, causes the first of two instances where his mother advises him in public action. Volumnia hears news of Marcius' return from the war and focuses on the external signs of his successes, which assuredly will bring him honor. Contrasting heavily with the concerns of Virgilia, Marcius' wife, Volumnia celebrates Marcius' return with Menenius, rejoicing in her son's wounds that will garner honor from the Roman plebians: "O, he is wounded; I thank the gods for't" (2.1.125). For Volumnia, *honos* is reduced mainly to

the one pillar of *virtus*, unaffiliated with intent or respect for public office, and it is therefore completely externalized. Her first words to Marcius, even after he has been engaged in warfare, are to acknowledge the public aspect of honor: "Nay, my good soldier, up; / My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and / By deed-achieving honor newly-named" (2.1.178-180). Notably, Volumnia addresses her son as a solider before using his given name, Marcius.

Though Marcius is beloved by Volumnia, it is clear that she has an insatiable taste for honor—her relationship with Marcius reads, in a certain respect, as her means to acquire honor through Marcius both vicariously and in association with him. Charles Hofling touches on Volumnia's ulterior motives in "An Interpretation of Shakespeare's Coriolanus": "Volumnia gives much lip-service to 'honor', but this attitude proves to be in part hypocritical. During the political crisis of Acts II and III, she urges her son to adopt craft and dissembling until he has won power. In other words, this woman is much more concerned about appearances than about honor or truth as things in themselves" (10). Hofling calls much attention to the influence that Volumnia has had on Marcius, but does not give enough acknowledgement to how Marcius has fundamentally split from his mother in his perception of honor and public life. Volumnia's conception of honor serves to strikingly contrast with Marcius' concept of it. It is in comparing Volumnia's and Marcius' differing visions of honor that the delineation between honor and nobility is later drawn, because Marcius believes that honor must contain honesty.

Marcius' Unification of Honesty and Honor

Marcius' perception of honor includes the component of honesty, which requires a

unification of action with intent. The role of honesty in Marcius' archetype of honor becomes evident in Act 2, when he returns to Rome and is encouraged to go among the plebians and ask them to approve his appointment to the consulship. Though Marcius was not troubled by the suggestion of becoming consul and readily takes up his sword for Rome, friction arises between the nature of his character and the part he must play as a person of public office, and therefore servant to the people. When he goes among the people to humbly ask their support, he feels a disconnect between the office he holds and his intent, and he is discomforted: "Why in this woolvish togue should I stand here / To beg of Hob and Dick that does appear / Their needles vouches?" (2.3.120-122). Playing the part of the wolf in sheep's clothing, deceiving the plebians, is not honorable action to Marcius. Marcius understands that the action of beseeching the plebians for votes runs contrary to his intent and is therefore not honorable. Rather, he wishes that the consulship might go to a man who was sincere in his actions with the plebians, and not, like himself, hiding his hatred of them: "Rather than fool it so / Let the high office and the honor go / To one that would do thus" (2.3.126-128). Though Marcius partially earns honor with his *virtus*, he is merely acting the part of consul for the people; he is too proud to serve the people genuinely. Aware of his disaffection for the plebians, Marcius is perturbed by being given honor while perpetuating a false public image of himself.

Concerning the honorable, Marcius places a high emphasis on intent over action, which in part causes him to attempt a divorcing of honor from the public sphere. In stark contrast to Volumnia's enthusiastic welcoming of public honors, Marcius often appears disinterested or irritated by them.

The people praise Marcius when returns to Rome after conquering Corioli, but it disquiets him: "No more of this, it does offend my heart; / Pray now, no more" (2.1.172-173). Marcius feels that a component of the honor he is receiving is somehow incompatible with his person, and therefore it is unwanted. This is further demonstrated in Act 2, when Marcius appears before the Senate to be nominated for the consulship. The Roman general Cominius recounts Marcius' brave actions, but Marcius twice implores him to cease: "Your Honors, pardon: / I had rather have my wounds to heal again / Than hear say how I got them" (2.2.69-71). It is reasonable to question whether Marcius only utters these lines to appear genuine and humble to the Senate, though they seem more concerned with his deeds than his humility (2.2.101-138). When Cominius gives reasons for Marcius to be made consul, he emphasizes his deeds in battle and reminds all present that, "valor is the chiefest virtue," suggesting that he and the Senators find *virtus* more than sentiment to be connected to honor. (2.2.100). However, it is not that Marcius scorns honor itself, but only the public duties and acknowledgements to which it is attached. When he captures the city of Corioli, Marcius accepts the title of 'Coriolanus' that Cominius confers upon him with honor, yet he grows indignant when the Senate and plebians praise him.

It is evidently not the love of the plebians that motivates Marcius to desire honor, as he is too proud to value their sentiments towards him. After the plebians and tribunes accuse Marcius of treating them with arrogance, Marcius grows furious. Volumnia beseeches Marcius to go humbly and peaceably to the people and cause them to believe he respects them. To do so, Volumnia assures him, would be of no detriment to his honor: "Now this no more

dishonors you at all / Then to take in a town with gentle words" (3.2.58-59). Volumnia reduces honor to its external elements; if a seeming respect for the people and public office is present, and Marcius has the appearance of honest intent, then he is deserving of honor. Of all the characters in the tragedy, Volumnia most obviously represents the relationship between stage acting and public life. As observed by D'Amico, the perception of public life as acting is a connection Shakespeare intentionally made: "In North's translation of Plutarch (*The Parallel Lives*) and in Livy's *History*, Shakespeare would have found ample evidence of political life and theater being equated in ancient Rome" (3). Volumnia's approach to honor is explicitly transactional and theatrical in nature, unconcerned with honesty. The advice she gives to Marcius is how to properly play the part of consul, not how to genuinely execute the office with the best interest of the people at heart: "The ensuing debate between Coriolanus and his mother turns on the difference between a truth to self that allows no 'acting,' for whatever political ends, and a use of appearance that serves valor… Volumnia prompts her son like a director, describing the role he should act before the populace, 'with this bonnet in thy hand... Thy knee bussing the stones'" (7). But Marcius, hateful as he is towards the common people, is unwilling to gain the consulship through deception: "Why did you wish me milder—Would you have me / False to my nature? Rather say I play / The man I am" (3.2.13-15). The difficulty that Shakespeare poses to his reader is discovering exactly what Marcius' nature is. Though he is accused by the plebians of being proud, and dubbed by the patricians as honorable, it is not yet clear who Marcius is, or why deception and humility so offend him. While Volumnia and the plebians have an understanding of honor that bears much

likeness to *honos*, Marcius' understanding has a confusing and definite split from *honos*. Shakespeare presents Marcius as an outlier that is clearly striving for something beyond common honors. Marcius is constrained by his own ideals and makes an enigma of himself. He desires the honor of the consulship, but not at the price of his pride or honesty. Most importantly, Marcius considers affairs of the public realm to be cheap and beneath him and endeavors unsuccessfully to transform the innately public nature of honor into a private one.

"A Dog to the Commonality": The Effects of Marcius' Pride

It is undeniable that Marcius acts proudly and his pride influences his actions. Marcius' pride adds a martyr-like dimension to his self-perception, and he cannot believe that the plebians are capable of understanding his character nor the workings of the patrician class: "Hang 'em! They Say! / They'll sit by th' fire and presume to know / What's done i' th' Capitol" (1.1.192-194). Marcius has so distanced himself from the people that he sees himself as the victim of what he perceives to be their baseless assaults on his character. It is this prioritization of the patrician class and his own interests that causes Marcius to disregard the Roman people's effect on his role as a political figure. His detachment from the plebians causes Marcius to develop a dichotomous relationship with honor, wherein he desires the consulship without the service to the people that bestowed it upon him. Marcius' pride breeds complications through its divorcing of *virtus* and public commitment. By custom, Marcius is required to go among the plebians and ask their voices in support of him becoming consul. Marcius willingly fights for Rome, but he protests strongly against playing such a humbling role before the plebians: "To brag unto them, 'Thus I

did, and / thus!' / Show them th' unaching scars which I should hide, / As if I had received them for the hire / Of their breath only!" (2.2.148-151). Though Marcius is quick to discount the plebians as a reason for his military service, his hatred of them in part stems from the power they hold over the value of said service. Marcius' service for Rome only earns him honor insofar as the plebians are willing to bestow it upon him, and they are free to deny him that honor when they so choose. The power struggle between Marcius and the plebians fans the flames of their detesting one another, with Marcius attempting to obtain honor without the involvement of the people.

The plebians accuse Marcius of being inordinately proud, and it is evident that Marcius' pride appears most prominently in his dealings with the Roman people, and this tension touches on the nature of the plebians and their understanding of nobility. While honor is understood with many nuances from different characters in *Coriolanus*, pride is defined the same by all characters in the tragedy; there is no alteration from its basis in *superbia*. The plebians publicly decry the patricians for denying them corn during a famine. Though they are incensed against the entire patrician class, it is Marcius specifically that they name as "chief / enemy to the people," and the First Citizen discounts his military service as only a means for him to satisfy his pride and make Volumnia happy: "Though soft- / conscienced men can be content to say it was for his / country, he did it to please his mother and to be / partly proud, which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue" (1.1.7-8, 37-40). Shakespeare uses the First Citizen to posit a possible interpretation of Marcius' actions, though he is not representative of the plebians as a whole. The Second Citizen's response introduces another layer to Marcius' pride, suggesting it as just the

surface-level manifestation of a deeper motivation: "What he cannot help in his nature you account a vice in him" (1.1.42-43). Thus, the reader is immediately given two alternate understandings of Marcius' character and made to consider whether Marcius is intentionally prideful and dismissive of the plebians, while also demonstrating the plebian's resentment against Marcius. Spotswood helps provide a sympathetic understanding of the plebians' dislike of Marcius while also connecting it to tragedy's theme of nobility: "Indeed though plebeians 'have power' in them-selves to 'deny' Coriolanus their 'voices' for consul (2.3.1-4), 'it is a power' that they 'have no power to do' (2.3.5), for their role in the 'ceremony' (2.2.142), … it is not to question or even affirm the validity of Coriolanus's accomplishments, but to show that they are worthy of recognizing his nobility" (5). Nobility is a virtue that Shakespeare tends to attach to the individual rather than the collective people; the plebians' only relation to nobility is their ability to deny it to Marcius. The people can only hope to hold a reflection of truer nobility by recognizing it in Marcius. As Spotswood later explains, there is a division between the multitude and the individual that accents Marcius' role as a noble figure tolerating the fickle whims of the masses: "Plebeians, who according to Menenius "can do very little alone" (2.1.34), stand in sharp opposition to the individuality and tragic heroism displayed by Coriolanus" (12). Such a distinction simultaneously feeds into Marcius' pride and his search for nobility, but Marcius must learn to overcome his disdain of the plebians in order to reach nobility.

Honor as a Means to Nobility

The conflicts caused by Marcius' pride and struggle with honor reveal his attempts to achieve nobility. The second scene of Act 2 provides an objective appraisal of Marcius' character, as the speakers are neither common people nor patricians, but Officers awaiting news of Marcius' appointment to the consulship. It is in this conversation that Shakespeare adds another dimension to Marcius by having nobility posited as the underlying motivator for his behavior. The First Officer speaks of the apparent dichotomy in Marcius, whom he finds a possessor of great pride and great *virtus*: "That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people" (2.2.5). Though the First Officer finds fault in Marcius' dislike of the people, the Second Officer sees it as a sign of his honesty: "Faith, there hath been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore… Therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition, and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't" (2.2.6-14). Most telling in the Second Officer's assessment of Marcius is his use of the phrase "noble carelessness," which touches on the motivations beneath Marcius' repeated dismissal of the common people throughout the tragedy. While consuls in the past did so, Marcius does not care to conceal his true feelings for the Roman citizens. The value of the consulship motivated them to hold pretended affections for the people. But Marcius, with his "noble carelessness," does not care enough for the consulship or the favor of the people to act falsely.

Though the Second Officer refers to Marcius' actions as noble, it is difficult to determine whether Marcius' honest actions are based in pride or a striving for nobility. His contempt for the people appears to stem from a sense of pride, yet his dedication to

honesty and his virtuous approach to honor suggest it is not solely honor or pride that are the ultimate end of his actions. Marcius is at least minimally interested in securing the consulship, or else he would not have come before the Senate. However, his desire for the consulship is evidently secondary to his primary motivator, since he is not willing to compromise either his pride or honesty to gain the favor of the people: "I cannot / Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them, / For my wounds' sake, to give suffrage" (2.2.138-140). His striving for specified constituents of honor, coupled with his emphasis on honesty, indicates that Marcius is seeking an ideal beyond the realm of honor. He willingly accepts his aspects of honor that are detached from the plebians, *virtus* and honest intent, but the crucial public component of honor Marcius despises. In part, this is attributable to his pride. His perception of honor is misguided—he attempts to split honor from its public obligations and make it subservient to his pride. The plebians accuse Marcius of being proud to a fault, but there are complexities to his pride that render it difficult to interpret his character in this one-dimensional manner, especially with regard to his honor. The complications of Marcius' character in this scene are a microcosm of those that appear throughout the tragedy, as he is not only unclear in defining his own motivations, but also eludes the motivations assigned to him by others.

Banishment from the City: The Death of Honor

After Marcius is banished from Rome at the end of Act 3, the theme of honor significantly decreases in the tragedy, and the friction between pride and nobility becomes more central to Marcius' character. The term 'honor' is used just eleven times

throughout the rest of the play, compared to the forty-two times it appears in Acts 1-3, when Marcius is living in the city or fighting in the Roman army. Honor, due to its mainly public nature, ceases to exist for Marcius when he is separated from the plebians. The absence of honor causes Marcius to grasp at other means of satisfying his striving for nobility. Most notably, Marcius prioritizes restoring his injured pride. As a final rejection of the plebians in a display of unwavering, stubborn pride, Marcius turns his back on the people of Rome as he departs the city: "You common cry of curs… Whose loves I prize / As the dead carcasses of unburied men / That do corrupt my air, I banish you" (3.3.119-123). His banishment causes a crucial development in Marcius' character and is a pivotal moment in *Coriolanus*.

Previously, Marcius attempted to divorce honor from its public elements, motivated by his pride and a striving for nobility. But the absence of honor, caused by his banishment, removes the tangible means for Marcius to reach at nobility. With his honor removed, Marcius turns away from all that is public and attempts to become noble while concerned explicitly with himself, detached from his friends, family, and former city. As Unhae Langis notes, Marcius' attempt to achieve nobility necessarily pits him against the people of Rome and transforms his honesty into arrogance: "While noble in the boundlessness of intrapersonal striving, Coriolanus's humility becomes an improper pride within civic intercourse" (8). Through it all, Marcius expects the people to regret their decision, as he reassures his family before leaving Rome that "I shall be loved when I am lacked" (4.1.15). The statement is purely factual, and it is not surprising that Marcius recognizes his own abilities and greatness. However, Marcius' loss of honor causes him to focus inward and entirely

remove himself from the public sphere. Without access to either public office or commitment to the people, the only aspect of honor still within Marcius' control is *virtus*, and he allows that to guide him to Aufidius.

Post-banishment it is made more difficult to distinguish what Marcius finds noble, since it is distorted by the prioritization of his pride, but it is evident that Marcius has momentarily despaired in reconciling his pride with the public components of his life. Tellingly, Marcius allows his pride to heavily influence his choices after leaving Rome. He journeys to the city of Antium to join the Volscian general Aufidius, the chief enemy of Rome, and declares the name of Coriolanus to be all that is left of his Roman identity: "The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood / Shed for my thankless country, are requited / But with that surname" (4.5.72-74). Marcius' pride, and therefore his character, is deeply wounded by his banishment. With his separation from Rome, Marcius only possesses motivation to better his own position. In a definitive commitment to his own great pride, Marcius implores Aufidius to allow him to fight against and capture Rome:

> Not out of hope
> (Mistake me not) to save my life; for if
> I had feared death, of all the men i' th' world
> I would have 'voided thee; but in mere spite,
> To be full quit of those my banishers,
> I stand before thee. (4.5.83-88)

Marcius' intentions in the tragedy are rarely made so lucid, and the magnitude of his pride is impressive. However, his pride has clearly been mixed with a deep hatred that causes him to be constantly concerning himself with the public sphere.

It is likely that Marcius acts so vehemently because his banishment affronted a fundamental aspect of his character: that of his quest for nobility. Hofling notes how Marcius's pride is atypical; it is based entirely in Marcius' own opinion of himself, rather than how others perceive him: "The pride of Coriolanus has a very specific quality, relating to the satisfying of inner standards and having little to do with praise or signs of recognition from others, even from those whom Coriolanus clearly respects" (Hofling 413). Marcius understands his own worth regardless of what the Roman people may think of him and refuses to compromise his pride for the sake of the plebians. Having attempted to grasp at nobility while a Roman and having been scorned for it, Marcius now attempts to reach for it as an outcast, without honor or the presence of obligations outside of himself. By the conclusion of Act 4, Marcius has harmed his striving for nobility with the mistaken prioritization of his pride.

What is Nobility? "His Nature is too Noble for this World"

Nobility is introduced as a more nebulous concept than pride or honor are, and before Marcius' grapples with it more directly later in the tragedy, the reader must construct a rough definition from its use as a descriptor. As opposed to the frequency of pride and honor, though, the term "noble" appears early in *Coriolanus* and is not extensively referenced or developed. Because of its difficulty to define, Shakespeare requires the reader to home in on Marcius' character to understand it. Menenius, Marcius' patrician friend and paternal figure, provides a crucial touchpoint for the reader as to why characters in *Coriolanus* might perceive

Marcius as being noble. It is important to be critical when Menenius speaks publicly about nobility, because often his speeches are given to persuade the plebians or patricians that Marcius is an admirable figure. However, Menenius ascribes the quality of nobility to Marcius even when speaking of him in private. Notably, Menenius' most vindictive declaration of Marcius as noble follows Marcius' conflict with the plebians and tribunes and subsequent banishment from Rome: "His nature is too noble for this world: / He would not flatter Neptune for his trident…His heart's his / mouth" (3.1.254-257). Menenius identifies the nobility of his friend's nature while drawing a correlation between Marcius' nobility and his dogged insistence to be truthful to his own character, even though he loses the consulship as a result. Benjamin Spencer draws the reader's attention to this passage as an example of Marcius' honesty, a core component of noble characters in Shakespeare's plays: "'Indeed, in this uninhibited plain speaking from the heart there is that integrity and forth rightness which consistently characterize Shakespeare's noble heroes" (9). The honesty of Marcius' character is once again made a point of emphasis. Menenius previously spoke of Marcius as noble, but it was largely in a public context, used as a rhetorical tool or in reference only to his military or civic service (2.2.30). However, Menenius' declaration of Marcius' noble nature occurs only when Marcius chooses honesty, and perhaps another, higher good, over deception for the sake of honor and the power of consulship. To Menenius, Marcius is too noble for "this world" specifically, implying that what concerns the nature of Marcius transcends the typical human pursuit of honor. Honesty is both ascribed to Marcius and demonstrated by him consistently throughout the tragedy, and it

appears to play a significant role in both Menenius' and Marcius' perceptions of nobility. However, it is necessary to examine Marcius' own fluctuating perception of nobility before determining whether he is consciously choosing to pursue it.

In the first half of *Coriolanus*, Marcius' perception of nobility is most tangibly tied to his relationship with Aufidius, hinting at its basis in a self-sacrificial ideal that Marcius has not yet realized. Aufidius stands as the great military rival to Marcius and the only other male figure in the tragedy who demands vast respect from him. Marcius holds a type of jealous admiration for Aufidius that seems to stem from his desire to be noble, since he believes Aufidius to be a noble character: "I sin in envying his nobility: / And were I anything but what I am, / I would wish me only he" (1.1.231-233). Marcius explicitly calls Aufidius noble and so regards the Volscian general that he thinks his person worth being or imitating. Aufidius likewise finds Marcius to be noble, addressing him as "All noble Marcius" and describing him as such repeatedly after the two men unite in Act 4 (4.5.110). Aufidius' accolades resemble Marcius' in a myriad of ways, and it is difficult to understand what it is in his person that Marcius finds noble and desires to obtain.

The two men already possess the basic components of *nobilitas*, having fame, station, and renown, and Shakespeare is clearly indicating a deeper perception of nobility that Marcius is striving for. However, Aufidius also holds the love of his people, which Marcius severely lacks. Marcius does not desire the plebians' love for its own sake, and his pride and his commitment to honesty make it impossible for him to truly will the good of both his city and himself. He does not want to act falsely

and pretend to love the plebians, yet he believes himself to be above them. Aufidius does not grapple with this inner conflict as Marcius does, this obstacle preventing Marcius from being at peace and achieving nobility. After Marcius' banishment, then Sicinius, one of the tribunes of Rome, touches on the incompatibility of Marcius' pride with his vision of nobility: "I would he had continued to his country / As he began, and not unknit himself / The noble knot he made" (4.2. 30-32). Sicinius implies that, had Marcius chosen to part with his pride and accept the plebians along with Rome, to fight for the people as well as his family, country, and himself, his actions would have been noble. But Marcius, unable to reconcile the tension between his pride and his vision of nobility, feels wronged by the Roman people and unites with Aufidius. Though Marcius does not yet recognize it, the nobility he strives for is inherently self-sacrificial, as it requires him to overcome his pride for the good of himself and his city.

Friendship, Family, and the City

By temporarily severing his private relationships and Roman identity, Marcius makes nobility impossible to obtain. The climax of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* begins to unfold when Marcius is set against his friends and family, forcing him to choose between satisfying his pride or pursuing his noble ideal. Marcius is determined to attack Rome with Aufidius at his side, so Menenius journeys to the military camp of the Volscians to persuade Marcius not to exercise his plan. The Roman general Cominius had previously attempted to dissuade Marcius, but he was unsuccessful. Marcius' character appeared changed: "Coriolanus / He would not answer to; forbad all names; He was a kind of nothing, titheless, / Til he had forged himself a name

o' th' fire / Of burning Rome" (5.1.11-15). Cominius' words emphasize how Marcius declines to answer to the name Coriolanus and seeks an identity independent of his status as a Roman. By divorcing himself from his Roman identity, and therefore his commitment to Rome, Marcius separates himself from nobility. He no longer has a higher good than his own self-interest for which to strive.

Menenius' conversation with Marcius further cements how pride has become the primary motivator of Marcius' actions. When Menenius speaks to Marcius in the Volscian camp, he appeals to Marcius by reminding him of his personal connections to Rome: "O my son, my son! Thou are preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it" (5.2.72-73). Marcius, though he scorned the plebians, always showed great devotion to his private relationships, even at the price of his pride. It was only Volumnia, his mother, who was able to persuade Marcius to swallow his pride and appear before the people and ask for their support. Even though he was conflicted, Marcius approached the people out of love for his mother; he was striving to fulfill a good outside of his own good. Marcius' response to Menenius demonstrates how he has permitted his pride to dominate all his other cares, even those in the private realm: "Wife, mother, child, I know not… Mine ears against your suits are stronger than / Your gates against my force" (5.2.89-96). The rejection of Menenius is heart-wrenchingly devoid of human affection, as if Marcius' denouncing of his Roman citizenship was also an attempted renouncing of his humanity. But Menenius' words to Marcius clearly have an effect. Though Marcius presents himself harshly to Menenius when the two men converse, he reveals sadness for having done so after Menenius departs: "This last old man /

Whom with a cracked heart I have sent to Rome, / Loved me above the measure of a father" (5.3.8-9). It appears that the need to be pretendedly disaffected by Menenius' pleas wears on Marcius' sense of honesty, because he once again offers to Rome lenient terms of surrender (5.3.14). However, without his private loves or his public obligation to the city, Marcius is left with nothing to strive for outside of himself, and his vision of nobility is turned inwards on itself. Without this essential self-sacrificial component of nobility, it is totally compromised. The emotional turbulence of Marcius, Spencer argues, prevents him from exercising much-needed contemplation: "Coriolanus was a constant victim of his own raw emotions and egoism, without the sympathetic imagination or critical self-examination or ethical perspective which distinguish Shakespeare's most mature noble men" (11). For Marcius to recognize the selflessness that he is lacking, Virgilia must come to him.

Most crucial to Marcius' journey to nobility is his relationship with his wife Virgilia, who offers to the reader a perspective of Marcius' character that is hidden, and which inclines him towards nobility. Matthew Proser considers Virgilia's devotion to her husband's and all peoples' humanity to be at the heart of her good intentions: "Her affirmation suggests that across the gulf which might seem to separate two such different people as Coriolanus and Virgilia, there is a bridge, and that this bridge also connects Coriolanus with the plebs whether he chooses to see it or not" (509). But Virgilia's knowledge of Marcius goes deeper than feelings of positive sentiment; she alone is able to remind him of his desire for nobility and the goodness of which he is capable. Directly after Marcius refuses to assent to Menenius' imploring for peace, Volumnia and Virgilia, with Marcius'

son, come before him to beg his mercy for Rome. Virgilia speaks twenty-six times in *Coriolanus*, with only four of those lines spoken to Marcius.

Though their dynamic is rarely on display, the interactions between Virgilia and Marcius are highly instrumental in further revealing the noble striving of Marcius' character. In scene 3 of Act 5, after having not spoken to Marcius since his banishment in Act 4, she breaks her silence and speaks. Virgilia speaks to Marcius before even Volumnia does, though Volumnia as a character is far more present in Marcius' story throughout the tragedy. Virgilia addresses Marcius as "My lord and husband," an acknowledgement of his roles as a soldier and citizen; while Marcius often attempted to divorce his private and public sentiments, these words from Virgilia emphasize the ability for him to hold both simultaneously (5.3.38). Marcius counters his wife's greeting with a discouraging statement about his identity: "These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome" (5.3.36). Though Marcius believes himself a changed person, Virgilia sees deeper: "The sorrow that delivers us thus changed / Makes you think so" (5.3.38-39). The relationship between Marcius and Virgilia is unambiguously private, and it contrasts starkly with the other relationships that Marcius has, which are very public. Virgilia provides a glimpse into the aspect of Marcius that is not on display. Though Marcius is a public figure whose personality is strong and can be bombastic, he chose to marry and love a woman who is inclined towards contemplation, and it is this quality that Marcius both appreciates and needs. When the two characters reunite in Act 2, after Marcius has returned from fighting the Volscians, Marcius' greets Virgilia by acknowledging her contemplative nature: "My gracious silence, hail!" (2.1.182). Virgilia serves as an important bedrock for

Marcius that anchors him to his personal relationships and reminds him to not abandon himself entirely to the life of public honor. She plays a significantly private role in encouraging and supporting his honesty, and once more encourages Marcius to be honest to himself. Now, as Marcius and Virgilia face one another in the Volscian camp, Marcius references how he felt similarly conflicted when asked to appear before the people as a noble consul who cares for the plebians, that he is, in some way, being dishonest to his character: "Like a dull actor now, / I have forgot my part" (5.3.40-41). Marcius is once more in a position where he must play the man he is not and choose between his obstinate pride and that which he loves. Yet in order to choose, Marcius must, with Virgilia's aid, recollect his striving for nobility.

Marcius' Death as a Birth of Nobility

For Marcius to obtain nobility, he must relinquish his grudge against the Roman plebians. After her brief exchange with Marcius, then Virgilia returns to silence, and Volumnia implores her son in two long speeches to spare Rome. Volumnia's first soliloquy aims to stir at Marcius' sense of shame. She describes in detail the harms that Marcius' invasion would bring to Rome and its people and likens herself and Virgilia to the city: "March to assault thy country than to tread / (Trust to't, thou shalt not) on thy mother's womb / That brought thee to this world" (5.3.122-124). Volumnia aims at destroying the dissonance Marcius has created between the city of Rome and the citizens it contains. Marcius' family is as much a part of Rome as the plebians. Marcius still harbors blatant animosity for the people who exiled him, as he instructs Virgilia not to ask him to '"Forgive our Romans"' because he still is embittered against them (5.3.44). Volumnia attempts to overcome Marcius' prideful anger against the plebians by reminding him of his love for family, and Marcius senses his resolve wavering: "Not of a woman's tenderness to be, / Requires nor child nor woman's face to see. / I have sat too long" (5.3.129-131). This critical scene shows the dichotomy between his pride and nobility that Marcius has created for himself. The vengeance that Marcius seeks to exact against Rome cannot coexist with his vision of nobility, since his campaign against Rome is entirely self-serving and is done only for his pride. But Volumnia and Virgilia encourage Marcius to put aside his pride and self-interest to once more seek his vision of nobility.

Though Volumnia uses her second soliloquy to warn Marcius that destroying Rome would cause history to remember him as a terrible figure, and he would lose his ability to be noble, it is in the silence after her speech that Marcius changes his heart. Volumnia describes to Marcius how his reputation would be ruined if he captured Rome:

> The man was noble,
> But with his last attempt he wiped it out,
> Destroyed his country, and his name remains
> To th' ensuing age abhorred.' Speak to me, son…
> Think'st thou it honorable for a noble man
> Still to remember wrongs?
> (5.3.145-155)

Volumnia calls upon Marcius' relationship with honor and nobility to persuade him not to attack Rome. However, her approach to the subject is still painfully different than that of Marcius'. She chooses to emphasize Marcius' legacy and how he will be seen by

others rather than his opinion of himself. Furthermore, she splits honor and nobility in a manner disadvantageous to her argument by asking Marcius to concern himself mainly with honor when he is striving to be a noble person. Though Volumnia appeals to Marcius' sense of nobility at line 145, she continues speaking for another thirty-seven lines without her son audibly changing his mind or interjecting.

Previously in the tragedy, it was Volumnia's spurring of Marcius to go before the people that caused him to adhere strongly to his sense of honesty. Now, in Volumnia's second speech to Marcius, it seems that her incorrect characterization of honesty and nobility cause him disquietude. What Volumnia says doubtlessly has some impact, but it is the silence after her speech that causes Marcius to reflect, and only then does he respond: "I am hushed until our city be a-fire, / And then I'll speak a little" [*Holds her by the hand, silent*] (5.3. 181-182). Shakespeare's original stage directions have Marcius' character hold Volumnia's hand in silence for a moment before he speaks (Folio 1). The silence allows Marcius a moment of introspection independent of what those around him are instructing him to do, completely detached from the Roman women or Aufidius and the Volscian officers, and it emphasizes the importance of silence in allowing Marcius to reflect upon what he truly values most: his pride or the wellbeing of his family and former city. Virgilia consistently loves Marcius regardless of how others see him, and he loves her as well. Though he defects to the Volscians and is parted from his wife's company, Marcius reassures Virgilia that he has not even kissed another woman (2.1, 5.3.46-48). She represents his ability to reconcile his striving for nobility with his public obligations. In the silence, when Marcius holds Volumnia's hand, he accepts

that there are higher goods than his pride. Even if it comes at the cost of his pride, his taking revenge on the Roman people, Marcius refuses to harm his loved ones by destroying the city. Marcius pride becomes secondary to his nobility, and he acts self-sacrificially for the sake of his family and for Rome.

Marcius' achievement of his perception of nobility is actualized by his assiduous commitment to honesty, the acceptance of public commitment as a component of honor, and his decision of self-sacrifice for the good of Rome and his family. He is humbled by the imploring of his family and can no longer hide his distress: "The gods look down, and this unnatural scene / They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O! / You have won a happy victory to Rome" (5.3.184-186). Marcius previously protested against Volumnia's requests to be humble, saying that it would run "contrary to my [his] nature," but now Marcius finds himself in an unnatural situation as a consequence of his pride, wherein his mother pleads with him not to decimate the country of his birth. Marcius has full knowledge that he will be killed for sparing Rome from assault, but he chooses to sacrifice himself rather than act dishonestly or prioritize his revenge towards the Roman people. Volumnia's convincing of Marcius to spare Rome is little more than a death sentence: "But for your son—believe it, O, believe it!— / Most dangerously you have with him prevailed, / If not most mortal to him" (5.3.187-189). The avenue of betraying Aufidius and the Volscians, or capturing Rome through a deceit, are incompatible with Marcius' honest character. Therefore, he declares openly to Aufidius and the Volscian officers that he is persuaded by Volumnia and will not wage further war upon Rome. Marcius' return to Aufidius and the Volscians after making peace with Rome is laden with forced

bravado, as he knows they will not receive him kindly: "Hail, lords! I am returned your soldier; No more infected with my country's love / Than when I parted hence" (5.6.71-73). Aufidius strikes down Marcius' greeting and accuses him of traitorous action. The accusation inflames Marcius, who holds honesty in such high esteem, and an argument erupts between him and Aufidius, ending with Aufidius and his officers murdering Marcius in a fit of rage (5.6.130). However, Aufidius is immediately regretful after killing Marcius: "My rage is gone, / And I am struck with sorrow": (5.6.148-149). Aufidius realizes that Marcius became noble through his self-sacrifice and that his death solidifies his legacy as noble as well. When determining the nobility of a Shakespearean character, Benjamin Spencer finds the self-sacrificial element to be crucial: "The data of the plays would seem to point to some such description as this: the noble man (as distinct from the nobleman) is one who has achieved eminence and veneration through conduct involving a selfless commitment to high ethical principles and the general welfare" (6). Spencer's theory is curious when applied to Marcius, since Marcius is renowned from the beginning of *Coriolanus* but only achieves fame as a result of his nobility in the play's final scene. Rather than a story about a man currently noble, *Coriolanus* follows a character who seeks nobility and only reaches it through his death at the play's conclusion. The concluding lines of the tragedy, spoken by Aufidius, demonstrate the essential component of self-sacrifice that Marcius obtained by choosing the good of his family and the preservation of Rome over his own pride: "Though in this city he / Hath widowed and unchilded many a one, / Which to this hour bewail the injury, / Yet he shall have a noble memory" (5.6.152-155). Despite the controversies surrounding

Marcius' banishment from Rome and his conquering of many peoples, his choice to ultimately be a self-sacrificial character means that he became a noble character.

Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* illustrates the journey of Marcius from a seeker of nobility to a possessor of it. The tragedy's beginning immediately shows the tension between Marcius and the plebians, and how Marcius' pride is its driving factor. Yet, as Acts 1 and 2 unfold, it becomes evident that Marcius' pride is not the sole motivation for his seemingly arrogant behavior. Marcius evidently desires honor without *virtus*, and willingly accepts the consulship while declining to participate in the customs that accompany it. Insisting that to humble himself before the plebians would run contrary to his nature, Marcius refuses to beseech the people for votes and is banished from Rome. Significantly, Marcius' banishment from Rome removes honor as an avenue by which he can strive for nobility, and his choices are dictated solely by pride. Prioritization of his pride is what causes Marcius to join with Aufidius and scorn the pleadings of Menenius to spare the city. However, there is a notable shift in Marcius' character once Virgilia and Volumnia come before him, as he greets them with affection and appears disquieted by their presence. The silence following Volumnia's speeches to him provides Marcius with a moment to reflect, and it is in the silence that he recognizes the crucial self-sacrificial component of nobility. In determining to sacrifice his pride for the good of his Rome and his family, though he understands that it will cost him his life, Marcius demonstrates a selflessness that transforms his character from one of pride to one of nobility.

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A Sick, Spiteful, Unattractive Man: Deconstructing the Nature of the Underground Man in Dostoevsky's Notes from *Underground*
By
Rachel Harr

The Underground Man within Dostoevsky's work *Notes from Underground* is a shockingly cryptic character, who elevates his own consciousness so much that it becomes the labeler of all meaning in the world. He has turned into himself, into his own metaphorical underground, because he ultimately refuses to accept God and embrace what love actually is. This not only results in a life where the consciousness is the labeler of all meaning, but this behavior ultimately turns him into the "sick, spiteful, unattractive" (Dostoevsky 1) man he proclaims himself to be at the very beginning of the novel. The Underground Man, at his core, desires meaning of purpose in his life. At the same time, he is also characterized as the average modern, enlightened man. Being an enlightened man who contemplates his existence and the meaning of life, the Underground Man enters into multitudinous arguments with himself about what is the proper metaphysical ideology to uphold. However, it is not until the end of the novel as he reflects on his relationships, such as with Liza, that he chooses to pursue any meaning outside of the elevation of his consciousness. This meaning outside of his consciousness, of course, is in God. Before this moment, however, the Underground Man suffers in his underground as a result of turning inward on himself and elevating his consciousness, giving it the permission to label and give meaning to everything in his life. This underground is what critics such as Tatiana Kasatkina define as a "casing"

(Kasatkina 83) which, when used to keep out other human beings and God Himself, plunges someone into the deepest and darkest depths of "extreme isolation" (84) and brings oneself only misery. Because he elevates his consciousness so, he ultimately turns inward on himself into what he calls his "underground", instead of seeking meaning outside of himself. Because of this behavior, he is ultimately diseased, because it does not properly fulfill him or nourish him spiritually. This behavior is a result of a lack of faith in God and the Christian faith, from which all love and truth derive their meaning. Therefore, if one were to live in a world without God, they would be living in a world with hate, a world with illness, and a world without beauty. This is exactly what the Underground Man is characterized as. He is quite literally "sick, spiteful, and unattractive" (1). The Underground Man is fearful of seeking meaning outside of himself, though. Because he already lives without God, he does not understand love properly, and because he feels an incessant need for control, he is almost incapable of having faith in things he cannot personally control. What he can control, however, is his consciousness, which for the Underground Man now designates all meaning. The picture that the audience thus receives of the Underground Man in *Notes from Underground* truly is the image of a sick, spiteful, unattractive man, and it is out of this lack of faith and extreme need to control every facet of his life that the audience sees the Underground Man become such a

character. When one believes that the highest power in one's reality is the consciousness, there is no brotherly love amongst others, but only competition and domination. The audience sees the Underground Man exhibit how sick, spiteful and unattractive he is as a result of this worldview. Until he lets go of his control and breaks the confines of his egoistic underground, until he allows himself to have faith in God, and until he can see the beauty and fullness of others out of the combination of those two, the Underground Man will continue to be lost in his own artificial reality. If he stays in the underground, he will build his own metaphorical grave and remain sick, spiteful, and unattractive. However, there is one way outside of the underground, and it is the path to God. It is only in God that he will truly escape. There are instances in which the audience sees there are pathways out of the underground that could bring a rightful fulfillment of the self, however, he ends up perverting these avenues so much as to simply plunge himself even further into the underground. It is only as the Underground Man is writing to the audience in *Notes from Underground*, after gestating in the underground for sixteen years, that he finally begins to question the underground. Before then, the egoistic underground he exists in turns him into the sick, spiteful, and unattractive man that the audience sees in his reminiscences.

There is almost universal agreement that the Underground Man suffers from existential dread, but the main discourse involves the question of how the Underground Man becomes the character the audience sees in the novel. Critics like Kasatkina and Merrill both have similar points on the idea of the Underground Man, however, Merill sees the Underground as having almost no human existence at all out of a lacking faith, whereas Kasatkina believes that the

Underground Man is trapped within the shell of his own ego, separating him from love. These similar arguments reflect that his behavior leads him to a life that is devoid of any meaning, humanity, or freedom. On the other hand, there are other critics such as Jackson, Chapple, Frank, Mehl, and Williams who all argue that the Underground Man's spite and dread come only from an ailment of Rational egoism and lack of love. From their discourse and the novel, it becomes clear that throughout the text the Underground Man suffers from a lack of faith in God. His existential dread is merely a fear of finding the true meaning and purpose of his life; he is terrified to have faith in what is truly his meaning and purpose in life, God Himself. Because he has not yet discovered and understood the meaning and purpose of his life, this feeling of dread consumes him. It leads him to have faith only in his consciousness, the one thing he can control. The audience only receives a glimmer of hope for him by the end, as stated before, where his gestation and kenotic suffering have brought him to the cusp of understanding that he needs to break out of the underground, the shell of his ego, and search for faith in God, where love and all good things come from. He is at the cusp of understanding how to let go of his ego and have faith in God and the brotherly love that comes from Him.

The Underground Man's discourse with himself, where he argues against Rational egoism but incidentally suffers from the elevation of the consciousness, is shown in Part One of *Notes from Underground*, the most philosophical portion of the novel. It will be the basis for the audience's understanding of his metaphysical beliefs. However, it is only in Part Two, *Apropos of Wet Snow*, that the audience can truly see what danger the Underground Man is in. His existential dread forms him into a lost,

spiteful, and hateful person who is only turned inward and focused on the self. The retellings of his interactions with individuals truly depict a sad image of a man who is Godless. Like the others around him, they have a love that he simply does not possess because he refuses to leave his underground and accept God. It is in these instances, particularly when he meets Liza, bonds with her, abuses her, and, at the climax, rejects her, that the audience can see the real nature of what it means to be a Godless, "enlightened man" like the Underground Man, who elevates his consciousness yet does not believe in the philosophy of egoism. Egoism is the philosophy that every action and relationship should be pursued out of self-interest alone. This means that one would have to elevate the importance of their consciousness and relate everything in one's world back to their own ego. Although the Underground Man does elevate his consciousness, it is clear in certain parts of *Notes from Underground* that he is not convinced egoism is the answer to the purpose and meaning of one's life. This discourse is the basis of *Notes from Underground*, and his behavior that stems from this elevation of consciousness truly deems the description of sick, spiteful, and unattractive.

Critics of *Notes from Underground* tend to agree on the overall spiteful nature of the Underground Man however their reasonings as to how his spiteful nature came about vary from essay to essay. Some critics, such as Linda Williams, argue that the Underground Man's nature is entangled in egoism and the elevation of his consciousness that stems from that philosophy, which festers into the isolation he finds himself in. However, there are also some critics, such as Richard Chapple, who take this argument a step further by insisting that it is specifically the unacceptance of

Jesus Christ and Christianity that the Underground Man cannot find any real existential meaning in his life, wherein he eventually becomes the sick, spiteful, unattractive man that we see him as in the novel.

Starting with the former critic, Linda Williams in "The Underground Man: A Question of Meaning" argues that the Underground Man's sick nature comes from his "refusal to attach 'the common man's' meanings to himself and his life due to his exaggerated consciousness and vanity" (Williams 3). In this, Williams is arguing that the Underground Man cannot take the simple philosophies, religions, and worldviews that the common man uses to supplement his worldview because his consciousness is "overly acute" (Dostoevsky 7). Williams states, and rightfully so, that the nature of Dostoevsky's first part of *Notes from Underground* is exploring the "rejection" (Williams 3) of "science and rationality as a foundation, as a 'primary cause' of reason for action" (3), and states that the second half explores the argument as to whether or not the Underground Man can, therefore "create his own foundation" (3), as he would do if he were to accept egoism. The argument that Williams makes is that, no, the Underground Man cannot, after all, make his own foundation of meaning, no matter how much he wishes to do so. As Williams states later in her paper,

> But as Dostoevsky has been trying to establish all along it Part 1, there is more to life than... egoism... Dostoevsky has offered an alternative both to... egoism and to the underground. This alternative requires only one thing: that you think of other people's needs before your own. This, however, seems to be the one requirement the Underground Man cannot meet; his

extreme vanity always places himself first. Thus he realizes he is incapable of loving. (11)

The argument that Williams is trying to make is that the egoism that currently clenches the Underground Man's soul is so deeply entrenched that he feasibly cannot understand how to love, and therefore does not have the capacity to love, yet. As the Underground Man admits in the latter half of *Part 2: Apropos of Wet Snow*, he is someone who "could no longer love, because, I suppose, for me love meant tyrannizing and demonstrating my moral superiority...I've now reached the point that I sometimes think that love consists precisely in a voluntary gift by the beloved person of the right to tyrannize over him" (Dostoevsky 88). While I agree that the Underground Man is incapable of loving because his "extreme vanity always places himself first" (Williams 11), i.e. his egoism, I do not necessarily believe or am convinced by her that the option aside from the underground and the egoism that follows suit is the option of thinking "of other people's needs before your own" (11). That type of argument for Dostoevsky's writing and the Underground Man's character is too shallow, as the philosophy behind that care for the other is never really stated in her criticism. The philosophy behind the idea of caring for the individual is simple, it is Christian, brotherly love founded in a faith in God. Williams seems so close to saying this, and yet it seems like she does not want to say it; however, she only identifies love as something the Underground Man is simply incapable of doing because of his selfishness born out of egoism. And although the Underground Man seemingly despises egoism, he still elevates his consciousness all the same and therefore finds difficulty in understanding love.

Other critics, such as Richard Chapple, speak further on this idea of love being the philosophy that is opposed to the underground, specifically the brotherly love and charity that comes from Jesus Christ and the truths of Christianity. In analyzing the character and mind of the Underground Man, Chapple reflects, stating,

> Characters such as the Underground Man... become dulled to feeling because of debauchery and find themselves beyond redemption because of their inability to feel or to love the concrete individual... they are incapable of true charity. The final physical relationship is illustrative of the inability of love, and finding themselves at the end of a moral road. (Chapple 6)

Chapple explains that the inability to love others, the moral road that ends, and the Underground Man's egoism all have to do with Dostoevsky's "formula of love" (7), a formula "for the concrete individual... and of brotherly love being the first step to Jesus Christ, the ideal..." (7). The "true charity" (6) of Jesus Christ, which Chapple argues is the true opposite of the underground and egoistic philosophies are therefore antithetical to everything the Underground Man will accept and therefore cannot partake in. This inability to find real charity or love for others, then, is what drives the spiteful nature of the Underground Man, which is a result of egoism. As Chapple writes, those like the Underground Man "neither respect nor love either themselves or others to the extent necessary to rise to the level of expiation, forgiveness, and charity" (6). Those who follow the underground, such as the Underground Man himself, do not want to make the necessary choices that involve shirking the position of

sickness, spite, and unattraction, because the very tenants that the Underground Man would need to assume, such as "expiation, forgiveness, and charity" (6), all flow forth from the very philosophy he is too afraid to accept, Christianity, and more specifically, the love and path of Jesus Christ. Because of this, he stays a man who is sick, spiteful, and unattractive out of this incapacity to leave the underground and put faith in God, which would inevitably lead him to the understanding of love.

Critics like Reed Merrill believe that the Underground Man is "representative of the base zero of human existence" (Merrill 2). This, of course, stems from how egoism takes away from his humanity. Merrill argues that this is actually because he places more emphasis on the "ethical sphere" (2) of human life, rather than balancing that out to make an "aesthetic-ethical" (2) sphere that he believes is what healthily encompasses the humanity of a person. In this case, the "ethical" would mean the metaphysical discourse the Underground Man experiences through the novel whereas the "aesthetic" would be the love and emotions experienced through relationships. That being said, Merrill's argument seems to be a slight overstatement. While it is the case that extreme ideologies of any kind can take away one's humanity in some capacity, it is egoism itself that makes the Underground Man exist at a "base zero" (2) in terms of humanity. To Merrill, the Underground Man is even aware of this "base" (2) that he is operating at. The Underground Man "is all too aware of the weakness of his position... his response to ethical imperatives is constant doubt, and fear that he will never find peace" (3). However, as Merrill states later in his paper, the Underground Man "finds it difficult" (4) to pull himself out of his underground and

egoism. Again, this is because he does not have faith in God and cannot let go of his own ego. He can only help himself out of his underground once he has faith, but throughout the novel, the audience sees him consistently struggle. The only hope the audience sees for the Underground Man is the hopeful ending after sixteen years of gestating in the underground, that the pain he has experienced through writing *Notes from Underground* has helped him through the shell of his ego or his underground.

J. A. Jackson agrees with Richard Chapple and the sentiment that the Underground Man is caught within the shell of his own ego. He argues that the Underground Man "fully understands" (Jackson 4) the position that he is in with leaving himself in the underground, and that "even his sad expressions of freedom, his spite, and contradictions, betray his imagined freedom" (4). The Underground Man seeks to have control in his life, he seeks to have relationships where he is the dominant figure, and he seeks to experience a love that he only understands as a subjugation of the other person. However, the reason why the Underground Man keeps himself in his underground is because of some purposeful suffering he wishes to put himself through, such as he explains to the audience when he describes his many ailments and blatantly states that "it's out of spite that I don't wish to be treated" (Dostoevsky 1). At first, it seems like this spiteful suffering has something intrinsic to do with the Underground Man's egoism and need for control, but it is actually a last-ditch effort to feel alive after living at what Reed Merrill describes as a "base zero" (2) level of humanity. Merrill argues that his suffering is just another facet of his life that he can assert control over. However, Jackson makes a similar argument to Chapple, which is that

"Notes... gives us a positive way out, an affirmative model that is simultaneously religious and existential" (Jackson 3). He goes on to say that the actual "crux of the novel stands a response to the apocalyptic structure of... nihilism... and, perhaps, even if only briefly, a kenotic emptying of the ego of the Underground Man himself" (3). Jackson argues that, yes, the Underground Man suffers from egoism and forces himself through suffering, but the character through relationships with others like Liza can experience the sacrificial emptying, or kenosis, that is needed to fully escape the underground entirely. In regards to the Underground Man's suffering and its relationship with his egoism, Jackson argues:

> This suffering, however, shouldn't be understood as purely masochistic. Dostoevsky has developed in his Underground Man... an egoism of suffering, that is, one suffers not on behalf of or for another but so that the other person will suffer even more because of one's suffering...one finds something natural in the Underground Man's desire to suffer... This vulnerability, however, often simply masks an egoism, a desire to remain impenetrable. (4)

The suffering that the Underground Man experiences, as Jackson states, is intrinsically tied with egoism, but according to both Chapple and Jackson, it is a mere mask. The suffering that the Underground Man experiences is from his spiteful way of controlling another facet of his life, but it should also be stated that the Underground Man seems to think that this suffering will make him feel human still. The suffering seems to have an air of "aimlessness" (Dostoevsky 11),

but more than that, there is a sense of breaking free from this slavish world, in which one does not find the kenosis, or virtue of suffering, through faith in God, but through the "consolation" (11) of flagellation, wherein you "finally generate enjoyment that can sometimes reach the highest degree of voluptuousness" (11). The Underground Man's suffering does not only come from his spiteful nature but is also an attempt to escape the underground through vain, perverted actions that make him feel alive in any way.

The majority of the Underground man's philosophy and character can be witnessed within *Part One of Notes from Underground*, which helps the audience understand immediately how much the Underground Man has seeped into his underground, or the shell of the ego. In other words, The Underground Man's discourse with himself will be the basis for the audience's understanding of how his ego collides with God, and therefore love. The discourse also provides glimmers of his personality to the audience. The first thing the audience can see in the Underground Man is that he is incredibly spiteful and prideful. On the very first page of the novel, the Underground Man discloses that his liver is diseased. When he goes on to explain why he states very simply that "it's out of spite that I don't wish to be treated" (Dostoevsky 3) and that it must be a logical conclusion that is "something you probably won't understand" (3) before making it very well known that he does. He goes on throughout Part One about being diseased by being "overly conscious" (5), and even directly states to the audience that he is a "terribly proud" (7) man, who "always considered myself cleverer than everyone around me" (7). The pride that the Underground Man experiences in Notes is ever-encompassing, and is a direct result

of a conscience that suffers from an elevation of the consciousness and ego. The pride is a result of placing so much importance on the conscience and withdrawing oneself into the underground. It influences everything about the way he perceives his outer world, his relationships, platonic and romantic, as well as his recollection of past events. Now that he is the highest power that controls the meaning of life, how can he not become prideful as everything now exists solely for himself? He is the center of all meaning in his world. The Underground Man claims this underground spitefully as his own; he is proud of how disgusting and vile it is. Critics such as Monroe Beardsley argue that the Underground Man resides in is similar to "Plato's metaphor of the Cave" (Monroe 265) and acts as a metaphorical underflooring which the Underground Man can escape from after learning of truth that will set him free from the underflooring. This argument, while true in the sense that the underground is a "hard confinement... and… oppressive spell" (265), does not fully encapsulate what lies beneath and ties the Underground Man there. To Beardsley, the underground is simply a metaphorical cave of misery that the underground man can escape with the discovery of truth. However, Tatiana Kasatkina's argument for what the underground truly represents is far better. Kasatkina argues that the underground is where the ego is a "casing... that is vulnerable... that guarantees that humans meet humans and that humans meet the true God" (Kasatkina 83). The underground is the casing of the ego, and it is only when the casing is made vulnerable and one allows to break free of their ego that they can genuinely form relationships with God and other human beings. Until one allows their casing to be made vulnerable however and breaks free of it, they will be stuck in the shell of their own ego, or consciousness, and

will die there in their own misery. This miserable state is where the audience meets the Underground Man in *Part One*, where he is still gestating within the shell of the underground. His misery has been spitefully turned into a twisted, perverted pleasure, which the audience can see in certain outbursts, such as when he exclaims "good, let it hurt even more!" (3) when he addresses the fact his liver is diseased. However, this is not only indicative of a man who feeds his pride by spiting others and himself, but it is also indicative of a person who will revel in their pain and spite to feel any sense of humanity. The Underground Man, fortifying himself within the shell of his ego, resides at a "base zero" (Merrill 2) of humanity, even though he understands that he cannot even become "an insect" (4). His example of the toothache is another instance of this revelry in pride and spite, wherein a toothache to the Underground Man is nothing but a notion of the "aimlessness of the pain which the consciousness finds so humiliating" (11). To believe that the pain of a toothache is aimless, and therefore "all there's left to do for consolation is flagellate yourself" (11) in the name of the "sufferer's enjoyment" (11) is inherently prideful and spiteful, because it misses the ultimate meaning of pain, which is to cultivate virtue and grow in deep love. Instead, because the Underground Man exists without any proper idea of love, his entire idea of pain is not rooted in kenosis but instead is rooted in prideful, spitefully pleasurable suffering. However, what is also noticeable in *Part One* is that the audience can already witness how the gestation inside the underground has helped him begin to question the ultimate implications of elevating the consciousness. First, it must be stated that the ultimate implication of elevating the consciousness and residing in the underground is egoism. After one has elevated the consciousness as

the labeler of all meaning, all relationships and actions, therefore, are only cultivated or taken based on how well it serves the consciousness, which is the ego. However, the Underground Man knows that egoism is not the answer, even if he does reside in his underground momentarily. When speaking of the pinnacle of rational egoism in the allegory of the crystal palace, the Underground Man is very clear that the entire utopic idea is simply a sham. He understands and writes to the audience that the utopia the crystal palace brings is one that treats human beings like an "organ stop" (18) or a "piano key" (18), simply something to be utilized for a given person and their own self-interest. The treatment of other people as a mere utility in this crystal palace is to serve the self, or the ego, in the name of perfect harmony, rationality, and detachment. Because of these three factors, the crystal palace is seemingly a paradise based on the enlightenment and its celebration of logic and reason alone. However, even the Underground Man, being the epitome of an enlightened man himself, can see the faults that lie beneath the surface of this utopia. He understands that there is something wrong with treating human beings as a tool or utility, yet he does not understand why. Critics such as Scott Mehl argue that the Underground Man sees these flaws but does not understand yet the "counterexample of selfless altruism" (Mehl 2), which is why he can grow to reject rational egoism, "a brand of utilitarianism that was in vogue in certain Russian intellectual circles" (2) and yet still reject "a selfless woman who loves him" (2), which is Liza. However, Mehl's argument is diminished when one considers that Dostoevsky, the author, wrote that *Notes from Underground* argued for the "necessity of faith and Christ" (Dostoevsky 96). It is not secular, selfless altruism that is the answer to the Underground Man's problems,

and it is not why he understands one cannot treat human beings as utilities. The reason, and furthermore, the answer, is clearly love. Love is the foundation of God, and it is meaningful; it is not detached, it is antithetical to pride, and it does not view humanity and its environment solely in the name of self-interest and utility. However, because the Underground Man does not truly understand what love means due to the elevation of his own consciousness, or ego, he can only understand the fault in the crystal palace and the epitome of egoism, but not the solution to it yet. In the meantime, he offers his own interpretation of the palace, which is a mere "chicken coop" (25). In his own words, "if it were a chicken coop instead of a palace, and if it should rain, then perhaps I could crawl into it... but I would still not mistake a chicken coop for a palace out of gratitude, just because it sheltered me from the rain" (25). The Underground Man understands that living in the crystal palace is nothing more than submitting to that "base zero" (Merrill 2) of human existence, which the Underground Man refuses to live by. Even if he does understand this much, though, he has yet to understand elevating his consciousness will lead him to a miserable death within the underground. Critics such as Linda Bell argue that "the underground man continually contradict[s] his own assertions" (Bell 140) when it comes to his rejection of rational egoism, but the issue with this argument is that the audience can see in *Apropos of Wet Snow* that this is false. *Apropos of Wet Snow* is where he begins to reminisce on memories and slowly understand the implications of elevating his consciousness and the behavior that stems from that. In the meantime, the audience can see in reality how the elevation of consciousness reflects in his general behavior and treatment of loved ones and friends.

In *Part Two, Apropos of Wet Snow*, the audience can truly see the Underground Man is in dire danger. He is so lost in his dread, which perpetuates spite, hate, and reclusion into the self. The retellings of his interactions with others in his life truly depict a tragic image of one who is so lost due to being a product elevating the "acute" (Dostoevsky 7) consciousness. The audience knows, though, that all the Underground Man truly needs is faith in God. It is in these instances, particularly when he meets Liza, bonds with her, abuses her, and, at the climax, rejects her, that the audience can see the real nature of what it means to be a cultured, enlightened, acute man like the Underground Man. Part Two shows the audience why his way of living truly deems the description of sick, spiteful, and unattractive. The Underground Man's fear, pride, and spite seep into his relationships and make every encounter with them centered around himself and his consciousness. To him, his relationships are mere instances where consciousnesses battle with other consciousnesses, and those relationships are ultimately unfulfilling because of this approach. The relationship he has with his friends Simonov, Zverkov, Ferfichkin, and Trudolyubov, for instance, is completely tarnished because of his prideful nature and his inability to lovingly connect with them. When the Underground Man inserts himself into Zverkov's congratulatory party, he is immediately offended by those around him, especially Zverkov, by the idea that "without any desire to offend, the notion had crept into his dumb sheep's brain that he really was immeasurably superior to me and that he could only treat me in a patronizing way" (50), even though the only thing that Zverkov had done to receive this treatment was extended his hand to the Underground Man's. The Underground Man cannot view

his friends with love and care, which is why he lashes out during the party and inevitably makes a drunken fool of himself, wanting only to "throw a bottle at the lot of them" (54) afterward. The Underground Man is so angry that he is not regarded with reverence by his friends, that he is not the conscience that ultimately dominates others at the party. The pettiness regarding this notion of who is revered at the party is what the audience can see as the Underground Man's ego flaring out, where his consciousness is inflated and when that pride is damaged he lashes out to become sick and spiteful against even his friends from years ago. One example is when the Underground Man begins insulting Zverkov's speech and dragging out his own speech "three times longer" (51) than Zverkov did, and constantly comparing himself to his friends with glory, crying "oh, if you only knew what thoughts and feelings I'm capable of, and how cultured I really am!" (55). This is what becomes of a man who knows no love, because he does not know God, and instead elevates his consciousness like so.

Another example of the Underground Man's nature being a product of this elevation of consciousness is his relationship with the officer on Nevsky Prospect. In *Apropos of Wet Snow*, the Underground Man shares a story with the audience of his time stalking an officer who had merely moved him aside on the sidewalk to get by the man. The entire incident is so hurtful to his ego that to be pushed aside and have his personage dismissed was worse, to the Underground Man, than taking a beating, which even he "could have forgiven" (Dostoevsky 34). What he could not forgive, however, was the humiliation he could experience "his moving me out of the way and entirely failing to notice me" (34). His consciousness has been so irreverently dominated by this

officer that he borrows money to buy a better fur piece for his coat, stalks the officer to see where he walks on Nevsky Prospect to attempt bumping into him, as to force himself to be noticed and taken respect of. Something so seemingly petty, that when it occurs, the officer does not even look at the Underground Man while he walks on. The Underground Man, though, gleefully states that "the point was that I'd achieved my goal, I'd maintained my dignity, I hadn't yielded one step, and I'd publicly placed myself on an equal social footing with him. I returned feeling completely avenged for everything" (Dostoevsky 39). The ego of the Underground Man has been so inflated that to brush him aside would be preposterous, just as it would be absolute glory if he were to assert himself in such a way as to bump another and prove the worth of his consciousness by the domination of a given situation. One can see here the elevation of consciousness the Underground Man suffers from living in an egoistic underground, which makes him a sick man due to his ravenous pettiness, and a spiteful man due to his ill will of wanting to impose himself on this officer.

One of the other relationships in the Underground Man's life is Liza, the ultimate character in the book that truly unveils how sickly the Underground Man is due to the existentialism that ails him. Upon first meeting Liza, the Underground Man immediately describes her as someone who makes him feel "uneasy" (61) from how she "didn't lower her gaze before mine, nor did she alter her stare" (61). In other words, Liza upsets him for how clearly she sees him. The Underground Man's consciousness cannot dominate Liza, who sees through his nature. While the Underground Man is still residing in the underground, Liza views the Underground Man with love by the end of the novel, meaning that, while the

Underground Man sees situations and people purely in a sense of power struggle over a given conscience, Liza sees situations and people with love by the end. The Underground Man receives this opportunity to also experience love as Liza does. When they are together in the brothel, and the Underground Man moves to give her his address, he experiences at that moment a true kenosis. His kenosis is a product of love, which is why he is so moved to help her with her predicament of working in a brothel. However, later he becomes infuriated when she arrives at his apartment a few days later. His previous encounters a few nights ago with his friends did not help the situation, either. His spitefulness overrides the love that he experiences, which then leads him to take all of these issues out of Liza, stating that he'd "been humiliated and I wanted to humiliate someone else; I'd been treated like a rag and I wanted to exert some power" (85). It is then, when he knows he cannot dominate her consciousness, that he proceeds to dominate her physically and abuse her. However, this is also Liza's kenotic emptying of the self. Liza flung herself to the Underground Man, willing to love him and be charitable towards him despite his hatefulness and spite. It is exactly this that the underground perverts when he abuses her, but Liza has already experienced her kenosis. Along with the experience of showing the Underground Man her love letters, Liza now has discovered a way out of the underground. The way out of the underground, she has discovered, is love. That love, that derives from God, is her one escape. While Liza realizes this amazing truth, the Underground Man can only see the abuse as a mere act of subjugation.

The abuse of Liza distinctly presents to the audience how the Underground Man truly is a sick and spiteful person. As the

Underground Man said himself, it was at that moment that Liza knew he "was incapable of loving her" (88). The abuse of Liza also confirms what the Underground Man has to say about love and how it molds between two individuals, in which he states that two consciences together must have a battle that results in one subjecting the other and dominating over that consciousness. As the Underground Man states, "love meant tyrannizing and demonstrating my moral superiority... sometimes I think that love consists precisely in a voluntary gift by the beloved person of the right to tyrannize over him" (88). The ultimate act of love and intimacy, sex, therefore, is merely diminished to yet another cruel act in which the Underground Man can attempt to impose himself and dominate others with himself. This imposition the Underground Man forces on Liza, and the belief that forcing oneself onto another in his definition of love, is indicative of a soul who has not yet accepted Christ and accepted the true meaning of love, which comes from Him.

Liza is a mirror image of the Underground Man. When the audience first meets Liza, she is just like the Underground Man since she is also in her own underground, searching for any meaning at all in the world. When Liza hands the Underground Man her love letters while they sit together in a brothel room to prove her worth and meaning as a person, it is at that moment that Liza begins to understand a way out of the underground. Unlike the Underground Man, Liza is a person that, by the end of the book, literally and figuratively leaves the underground because she has experienced a kenotic emptying, which therefore pushes her to seek God, who is love. The kenotic love that Liza experiences with the Underground Man gives her a taste of what it is like outside of this underground, and

what life could be like if she found faith in God and found love out of that. Instead of being subjected, then, when the Underground Man tries to pay her for the abuse at the end of the novel, she triumphs. Her kenosis has shown her a way out of the underground, and she is impervious to the dominating and spiteful ways of the underground. Liza is so important in *Notes from Underground* because she quite literally represents a person who is made whole again by love. Ann Astell, a critic of Notes from Underground, states that this is the exact reason why Liza is actually the heroine of the novel. Astell argues that it is the love she finds that helps Liza escape the underground where the Underground Man cannot. In fact, Liza also acts as a character who helps the audience understand just how far removed the Underground Man is from his humanity. Liza represents what life the Underground Man could have if he had faith and escaped the underground, and she represents what he wants in place of this elevation of consciousness he toils within the novel. The Underground Man knows this, too. He has, at the very least, a sense of how Liza triumphed over his subjugation and left the underground. However, he does not seem to understand why, because he cannot understand love as anything else but one's allowance of subjugation by another person's ego to dominate the other. Once again, the Underground Man is suffering from this elevation of consciousness as a result of the enlightenment and fear of seeking God. He is so obsessed with control that he cannot understand anything beyond the power structure of two consciousnesses when thinking of interpersonal relationships. Because he has no faith, and because he does not understand love, he does not allow himself to see the happiness and joy that he could find if he simply left the underground.

What seems to be the difference between these two characters is that Liza is unlike the Underground Man in the sense that she does not suffer from any issues with egoism or elevation of consciousness. Her underground is simply a withdrawal from the world and into the self, and this has a lot to do with the fact that Liza is already outcasted from the world because she is a prostitute. This, and the fact she has no faith, therefore leads her to believe that she cannot love or be loved. This is why her letters are so important. They show her not only that she can love and is loved, but that love is the key out of the underground entirely. Where Liza is lost and outcast by society, and withdrawals into an "underground" because of that, the Underground Man has found pleasure in his despair and regards his spiteful, nauseating underground as a place where he can at least control the aspects of his life and reality. However, Liza learns through her kenosis how important love and faith are. She ultimately finds what the Underground Man constantly deems ineffable to him. The Underground Man may be the novel's protagonist, but Liza is quite literally the heroine, in which she saves herself and shows the Underground Man just how he might be able to save himself from the underground as well. Liza's ability to turn away from her own underground and empty herself through kenosis provides her with a love that the Underground Man has so willingly admitted he "could never even conceive" (88). The Underground Man has experienced his own kenosis, too, but dismisses it as sentimentality instead of accepting that love for what it is: an escape from the underground.

At the beginning of their relationship, there are already instances where the audience can see the true nature of the Underground Man. During their encounter in the brothel, the Underground Man sees the same opportunity in Liza that he saw earlier in his friends to impose himself on her. The idea that he could subjugate her and have yet another facet of control over his reality "caught fire" (65) in the Underground Man "some kind of goal" (65). The entire endeavor gives the Underground Man a goal to hurt Liza to subjugate her and to acquire some kind of control. Even later in their conversation, the Underground Man admits that "for a while I felt that I'd turned her soul inside out and had broken her heart; the more I became convinced of this, the more I strived to reach my goal as quickly and forcefully as possible. It was the sport, the sport that attracted me..." (72). Here, as was said earlier on, the reader can see the lie that the Underground Man is giving here. It is not just a sport for him, it is an absolute pleasure to see Liza in "such despair" (73), but it is ultimately a pleasure that is perverted and moves him more than pleasures him. It is only after seeing Liza in such a desperate and hopeless state that he even gives her his address in the first place and experiences his own kenosis. The Underground Man, as Jackson has stated before, absolutely and fully knows what he is doing to himself, but ultimately cannot seem to stop besides these few, raw moments of humanity. Even before the Underground Man gives Liza his address, he sees her pain and immediately goes to apologize by saying "'Liza, my friend, I shouldn't have... you must forgive me,'" (73). It is only then that the Underground Man moves to give her his address and to therefore comfort her. The sheer humanity of the Underground Man ultimately reveals itself when he gives Liza his address, and he pities her more than anything. It is only after he has been able to collect himself that he brushes the entire encounter off as "sentimentality" (75) and wishes that Liza does not return to him. But

it is clear he is simply afraid of what he has now experienced: brotherly love, real love that came about from an emptying of the self. These feelings the Underground Man possesses all culminate into the ultimate moment that they lie and love together in his apartment, in which the audience can see the Underground Man reject his kenosis and pervert the brotherly love they had. He cannot yet reject the underground, and therefore remains sick instead.

In regards to their later encounter, when the Underground Man abuses her, it should be stated again that this domination the Underground Man exerts over Liza is a mere final effort for control and rejection of his kenosis, born out of his fear of searching for God and therefore fosters this deep necessity for control, even in regards to the very people around him. As Ann Astell writes in *The Writer as Redeemed Prostitute*, in regards to the beginnings of his short relationship with Liza, "having given her his address... he awakens the next morning in his apartment to face the 'filthy truth' of his own bookish 'sentimentality', his inability to love truly, and his cold fear that Liza will actually appear... to challenge his own ability to convert through her resolve to do so" (Astell 5). Because he has no true love, out of a lack of faith in God, he casts everything that is born out of love to the side and labels it as sentimental, even his own kenosis. Everything that he sees as sentimental or romantic in thought he dubs as not only "stupid" (Dostoevsky 32), but for "fools" (32). Therefore, it is baffling to the Underground Man to see Liza, who has berated him, sense "his unhappiness, his self-hatred... his tears and... him call himself names" (Astell 5) and choose to "forget her own humiliation" (5), embrace her humility, and love him regardless. By doing this, Liza already exhibits that she has found a way out of the underground through her

own kenotic emptying. By experiencing love, she finds a way out of the underground and follows it, as well. She commits the very act that the Underground Man has failed to do for decades due to his incessant grappling with this egoistic underground. As Astell states so eloquently,

> Contrary to the Underground Man's expectation that she has come to him for selfish reasons, 'to hear sympathetic words,' Liza acts in a way that prompts his later recognition that she came to his door not in order to be loved, but to love, 'because for a woman love comprises all resurrection, all salvation from whatever sort of ruin, and all regeneration, and cannot be manifested in any other way'. (Astell 5)

In this case, Liza finds her own salvation. She has found faith outside of the underground in God. However, it is this small step she makes in her spiritual journey that helps her flee from the underground. As for the Underground Man, not only was the abuse of Liza a sign that he "was incapable of loving her" (Dostoevsky 88), wherein the abuse was anything but, it was rather a way for the Underground Man to show Liza that his "passion was merely revenge, a new humiliation for her, and that to my former, almost aimless... personal, envious hatred of her" (88). His rejection of Liza through the rubles that he gives her after the abuse was an inexplicable sign of his hatred, so much so that the Underground Man cannot even say the words when he describes the moment:

> Suddenly I ran up to her, grabbed her hand, opened it, put in... and then closed it again. Next I turned away at once and bolted to the other corner,

so that at least I wouldn't be able to see... I was just about to lie- to write that I'd done all this accidentally, without knowing what I was doing, in complete confusion, out of foolishness. But I don't want to lie... I opened her hand and put in... out of spite. (89)

It is in moments like these that the audience can see the actual humanity of the Underground Man hiding beneath the surface of his "acute" (7) conscience. As the Underground Man states, the action of putting the ruble in her hand was done "deliberately" (89), however, "it was not from my heart, but from my stupid head. This cruelty... was so artificial, cerebral, intentionally invented, *bookish*, that I couldn't stand it myself even for one minute" (89). No matter what sparked the action, though, it still does not subjugate Liza. She cannot be dominated by the Underground Man's spite, and it is because she now knows real love. The reflection the Underground Man gives on his actions, however, presents the audience with yet another insight into how his existentialism actually affects his behaviors and mannerisms. Richard Chapple in *A Catalogue of Suffering in the Works of Dostoevsky* has much to say on this subject, wherein he states that:

> Such male characters are often brought into contact with a woman, a concrete individual who could become the catalyst needed for redemption. The Underground Man, for example, encounters Liza, the men must demonstrate brotherly love, but typically all that results is a "last fling" in which a frenetic physical relationship is confused with the road to betterment. The final physical relationship is illustrative of

> the inability to love… finding themselves at the end of a moral road. (Chapple 6)

Liza is, in fact, the catalyst that the Underground Man needed for his own redemption from the underground. Her impact was so great, too, in fact, that he still reminisces on the same memory sixteen years later. These sixteen years act as his biblical desert, his internal gestation. He continues to drive himself mad with reminiscences and forced personal suffering in his little underground. As Chapple states, the egoism that the Underground Man possesses and the pride that stems from that is "inherent in self-punishment and self-debasement" (5), which can be seen in the self-destruction of his relationships, his home, and his health. Chapple continues, though, stating that is it a kind of suffering that "cannot lead to expiation, inasmuch as it is counter to brotherly love and charity" (5). What Chapple omits is that all this specific suffering does instead is dig the Underground Man's own underground a little deeper, one suffering at a time. His suffering keeps him in place in his underground, it keeps him spiteful and egotistical because of the pain that stems from vicious, not virtuous, suffering and a warped sense of pride that he gets from the debasement. Because the Underground Man does not yet know God and therefore does not understand love and kenotic suffering, he will remain in his shell of the underground until he does. While Chapple's argument seems to define the Underground Man too harshly as an egotist, his argument on the roots of where the underground comes from still remains strong. These are the ingredients that make a sick, spiteful, unattractive man, but it is in the redemption of Liza that the Underground Man can see the virtue and joy in finding faith and love

despite one's fears and temptations to rely solely on one's consciousness.

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Research on the Effects of Reading Aloud To Children
By
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Abstract

The purpose and benefits of this research are to show the reader the primary concern and components of reading aloud to children in the early years of children's life. Reading aloud to children should occur in the academic settings and at the personal comfort level of children's homes. Some children enter early learning programs and kindergarten with high levels of vocabulary, phonological awareness, and alphabet knowledge and other students come into academic settings with little to no knowledge. Students' learning is mainly based on parental education, socioeconomic status, and race/ethnicity standards and status.

Children progress development positively and negatively benefit from reading aloud to them at a young age. The following research will briefly explain data, cover the following aspects of the shared experience, personal interest of shared book reading, two parental styles, phonological awareness, Jim Trelease point of view on reading in the classroom, and the three risk factors linked to shared book-reading to young children's emergent literacy ability. Reading aloud to the students at home and in the classroom has always been a debatable subject when linked to academic settings and educational practice. Many parents have trouble realizing all the benefits of reading aloud to children at a young age. There are many points and explanations of the positive aspects of why parents and other adults should read aloud to children to help children with cognitive, physical, and social-emotional aspects of development. The progress of reading aloud to students stems from the style and personal interest, parental styles of reading, phonological awareness, prior knowledge of the alphabet, fifteen minutes of reading in the classroom, and the two risk factors.

Reading Aloud as a Shared Experience

Reading aloud to students and children in a shared manner has many benefits: having the child answer questions and point out features in the text/book can help them on multiple comprehension levels. Lennox states " Before, during, and after reading, adults may use opportunities to incorporate dialogic strategies. These are strategies that actively engage children in reciprocal, conversational exchanges with participants sharing ideas with each other and listening to alternative perspectives'(2013, p2). Having the children frequently engaged throughout the reading by identifying pictures, colors and analyzing the detail of each page. Benefits the child by making children feel involved and having the experience of a big role during the reading, spike interest, positively benefit academic achievement and discover new vocabulary and words. Lennox states ''Children adjust their discourse to match the level of the adult's conversation'' (2013, p 6) Asking the children comprehension questions will keep them involved, adults' level of focus

and engagement will affect children's help them build more logical and reasoning thinking skills, that makes them pause, reflect and comprehend what the child is currently reading. The main target of reading aloud is to maintain the skills of audio learners. Reading aloud to the children can motivate the children to learn how to read and in the
future read their books to have that sense of independence.

Style and Personal Interest of Shared Book Reading:

The challenge of maintaining and keeping the children motivated while reading a book is a struggle for the parent and the teachers. When introducing a book to the classroom teachers have to cater to all of the children in the classroom's interests. Duursma states "When children's encounters with literacy are pleasant, they are more likely to develop a positive disposition towards reading frequently and broadly." (2008, p.555) While children have an experience with a new book, the potential of how that experience occurred can affect the feelings of children in the future. Perhaps the book was too long, short, with few pictures, or didn't spike the interest of the child. It may affect what and when they want to read in the future. Conserving the interest of children at any age is a difficult but important task to maintain. The key factors to help keep the children motivated during the charred reading are the conversations between the adult and children. Duursma states "the type of conversations adults and children have during shared book-reading, as well as the emotional quality of the interactions and the discussions related to print is even more important." (2008, p.555) All of the following can help positively affect the children if the adults point out the key features within the text, the meaning of

the photos, and the character traits of the character within the book. Assisting the children by making connections to the text may help the students attain interest and be excited to see how the book will end.

Connections can be formulated during any book however it can be troublesome for the children to make these connections at times. When the children pick a book the interest in the book has already been made which results in interest and absorption in the text. However, children have a habit of selecting their favorite books that may be below reading level and this can be negatively affected by not challenging them with their readings. This is when the adults need to assist and guide them to other books that also interest, challenge, and enlarge the children's perceptions in all aspects.

Two parental styles of reading

Studies show that the performance-oriented and the describer style were the two main styles of reading that were able to benefit the children's literacy and early language development. While the styles of reading affect the children, the parent's availability and effort put into the reading also affect children. Duursma states "White middle-class parents tend to use a more interactive style when reading to their children. Working-class non-white parents, on the other hand, tend to focus more on labeling and describing pictures during book-reading." (2008, p.555)

  - Describer style: Analyzing and describing the pictures throughout the reading, best
  suitable for the children within the lower levels of grammar and vocabulary. In this style, the picture throughout the book may help the children attain a better understanding

that might not be achieved through the words (Visual Thinking)

- Performance-Oriented style: Discussing and analyzing the main points of the story after the story is complete, preferred for children with higher levels in vocabulary.

Phonological Awareness and Alphabet Knowledge

The ability to be able to read stems from phonological awareness and the knowledge of the alphabet. Children should be able to make the connections between the letter-sound relationships prior to reading, this knowledge will help children become better fluent readers. Duursma states "children also need to recognize the role that alphabet letters play and that letters have different sounds. It is easier to learn these letter-sound relationships once children know at least some alphabet letters and are able to recognise words that start with the same phoneme" (2008, p.556) Children will need to be able to know some of the alphabets, know that letters can have multiple sounds to be able to make the letter-sound relationships.

Studies have shown that many students entering early learning programs know their name and a majority of the alphabet, but the percentage of students from middle, high, and lower-class families vary. "Four-year-old children from middle-class families knew an average of 54% of the letter names and 5-year-old children knew 85% of the letters. However, 4- and 5-year-old children from low-income families who enter programs such as Head Start know on average four letters and learn an additional five while enrolled in the program. " (Duursma, 2008, p.556)

While the middle-class children know double the amount of letters like the lower class children. However, the different family styles, parenting, time, and effort from the adults all have to be factored in this data.

Many benefits stem from the children that have prior knowledge of the alphabet by reading the common, simple alphabet books before starting early learning programs. One of the main benefits is that it provides the children with the link of the letters with a common object linked to that letter. (example- A for Apple) Other studies show that a lesser percentage of children don't benefit from the books or anything prior learned before kindergarten and that the children will gain all of the material in kindergarten. " For kindergarten children, alphabet books frequently are recommended as read-aloud materials because of their potential to explicitly focus attention on the print that builds letter-sound knowledge and on vocabulary that develops oral and written language" (Brabham, 2006, p.2) In kindergarten the alphabet books are recommended to potentially build the letter-sound connection, however it is sometimes used as a refresh in the classroom.

Jim Trelease Point of View on Reading in the Classroom

Jim Trelease believes that it is an abundance of benefits from the educator to read for a minimum of fifteen minutes a day in the classroom. How the job of reading to students in the academic setting shouldn't just fall on the librarian one time per week but daily in the classroom. Jim Trelease strongly believes that "reading is an accrued skill" (Trelease,1989,p.3)Trelease states "The more you do it, the better you get at it; the better you get at it, the more you like it;

and the more you like it, the more you do it. This is nothing more than the concept of automaticity in reading. If children don't read much, they can't get much better at it. And they will not read if they hate it." (1989, p.3). If reading is constantly practiced the more students will be persuaded to read and like it which will result in students reading more and progressing within the classroom.

Eight ways reading aloud for fifteen minutes in the classroom will expose and benefit the students by:

> 1. "A positive reading role model;
> 2. New information;
> 3. The pleasures of reading;
> 4. Rich vocabulary;
> 5. Good sentence and story grammar;
> 6. A book he or she might not otherwise be exposed to;
> 7. Fully textured lives outside the student's own experience; and
> 8. The English language spoken in a manner distinctly different from that in a television
> show. "

(Trelease, 1989, p.3)

Just from fifteen minutes of reading in the classroom daily, the students will be able to have these 8 benefits and exposes and many other aspects that can give the students a desire to read outside of the classroom and love it.

2 Risk Factors

Parental involvement and level of education, and socioeconomic status are the most common risk factors when it comes to the students' prior knowledge or reading and time devoted to practicing and having a shared reading experience at home. In a classroom, the range of background of the students will have a wide range from the lower-class to the higher class and the level of education reached by the students' parents or guardians. The majority of students come into the early learning programs and kindergarten with some prior knowledge of reading, alphabet, letters, grammar, and numbers. Some students don't have any prior knowledge which stems from parental involvement and level of education, and socioeconomic status. In the higher class families, the students come into the classroom with more knowledge than some of the other students and use more verbs and nouns based on grade level. Duursma stated "children in professional families had an observed cumulative vocabulary of 1100 words, while children in working-class families had an observed vocabulary of 750 words and those in welfare families of just above 500 words. In professional families, parents not only talked more but also used more different words and provided a greater richness of nouns, modifiers and verbs" (2008, p.555). The use of the data shown from the professional, working-class, and welfare families students is based and factored on the way the students' parents talked and used words around students. At a young age, the students gain knowledge from their families, therefore the knowledge and level of education the parents have will negatively or positively affect the students in the end.

A variety of things have to be considered and researched on students when viewing the effects of reading aloud to children. In an early level classroom setting all the students will come into the classroom on different reading levels. However, teachers have the role and responsibility of reading aloud to the students with books that will be beneficial to their cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Many

students will come into the classroom with prior knowledge or reading and benefits of reading aloud and some students will have no prior knowledge. The progress of reading aloud to students stems from the background of the students' life at home coinciding with the factors of socioeconomic status and the parental involvement and level of education, style, and personal interest, parental styles of reading, phonological awareness, prior knowledge of the alphabet. All of these factors need to be considered when students enter an academic setting with an abundance of skills or little to none.

Implications for Practice

After completing all of my research-based around the aspects of young age students benefit from reading aloud by themselves and a shared reading experience. As a future educator the three main concepts that I would factor into my classroom with the younger students will be:

> - The two parental styles of reading. The describer style and the performance-oriented style and the positive benefits from them both when in an academic setting.
> - The phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge prior to entering the early learning programs, and kindergarten. While factoring in the different social classes of the students and how that will potentially affect them in the academic setting.
> - The benefits that the students will have from reading in class for fifteen minutes a day.

The benefits of both of the parental styles of reading will have big effects and help both the students with the higher and lower levels in grammar and vocabulary. As a future

educator, I would need to implement both of these styles when reading to my children in the hope that each student with either high or low grammar and vocabulary proficiency will both benefit during and after the reading. I am prepared to be able to adjust my style of teaching and reading to fit all the students' ways of attaining knowledge and comprehending the readings.

Growing up in a middle-class society I would have to put into the preference of the lower and higher class students' abilities within their phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge prior to entering the early learning programs, and kindergarten. Also, the many factors that go into their abilities from the different classes like their parents' ability, education of parents, and community. I also know that their different factors won't have the same effect on each student. Therefore I shouldn't place high or lower standards based on this information and statistics on the students.

As a student myself I remember the effect of my parents and older siblings reading to me growing up. My parents had a tradition of reading to each of my siblings and me every night before bed and sometimes before nap time. When my parents were too busy with other things my siblings would always take turns reading to me and my younger sibling. I believe that the shared reading experience growing up benefited my love for reading growing up. It also persuaded me to read on my own to my parents and siblings before bed growing up. I think that a student reading in class for fifteen minutes a day will only benefit them and sharpen their skills of grammar, comprehension, seeing different perspectives, and their vocabulary skills inside and outside of the classroom.

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Motivations Behind Manifest Destiny
By
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In 1845, American columnist John O'Sullivan coined the term "Manifest Destiny," which is the belief that the United States is divinely ordained to control all the land from the nation's east coast to the west coast.[24] This ideology is generally viewed with optimism and hope in America's future. Many historians agree that the United States acquired territory to build a stronger nation. However, historian Alan Taylor states a different perspective of Manifest Destiny in his book, *American Republics: A Continental History of the United States 1783-1850.* Taylor said, "That pervasive, driving fear of dissolution debunks the optimistic certainty of 'Manifest Destiny' as the most misleading phrase ever offered to explain American expansion" (Taylor).[25] While Alan Taylor's book exhibits extensive research and a reasonable conclusion on the Manifest Destiny ideology, John O'Sullivan's views on westward expansion, expansionist ideas from presidents, American citizens traveling west, and a lack of fear of opposing groups shows that American expansion was done out of optimism rather than fear.

John O'Sullivan's articles regarding Manifest Destiny convey his optimism and hope for America's future. In an article from 1839, O'Sullivan described America as a nation of progress. He stated, "Yes, we are the nation of progress, of individual freedom, of universal enfranchisement… For this blessed mission to the nations of the world, which are shut out from the life-giving light of truth, has America been chosen."[26] John O'Sullivan clearly viewed American expansion as not only good but also as a "blessed mission."[27] He established Manifest Destiny as an optimistic vision of America's future.

Another prominent contributor to the Manifest Destiny ideology was the third United States President, Thomas Jefferson. Like John O'Sullivan, Jefferson viewed expansion as a great opportunity for the nation. Jefferson demonstrated this view in the Louisiana Purchase when he bought present-day Louisiana and surrounding land from France. Maurice Isserman notes in *Exploring North America, 1800–1900,* "The American West, he hoped, would prove a land of fertile soil and abundant rainfall, just waiting to be settled and developed by farmers."[28] Additionally, Jefferson was

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[24] O'Sullivan, John. "Annexation," *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Volume 17 (New York: 1845), 5-6, 9-10.

[25] Taylor, Alan. *American Republics: A Continental History of the United States, 1783-1850.* W.W. Norton & Company. May 18th, 2021.

[26] O'Sullivan, John, "The Great Nation of Futurity." *Infobase.* November 1st, 1839.

[27] O'Sullivan, John, "The Great Nation of Futurity." *Infobase.* November 1st, 1839.

[28] Isserman, Maurice. *Exploring North America, 1800–1900.* Discovery and Exploration. Infobase. 2005; 2016.

interested in the West because he hoped to discover a water route that would link the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean.[29] This shows that Jefferson wanted to expand United States boundaries to benefit the nation instead of attempting to secure land from other nations.

Another former president who influenced Manifest Destiny was James K. Polk. He is notable for being president during the Mexican American War and the annexation of Texas. Like Thomas Jefferson, Polk displayed great interest in expanding the nation's borders, believing it was the United States' destiny. According to historian Timothy Roberts, Polk "believed that the destiny of the United States was to be a continental nation, from the Atlantic to the Pacific."[30] Polk's belief that America was destined to control land from the east to the west clearly demonstrated the core values associated with the Manifest Destiny.

While influential Americans such as Thomas Jefferson and John O'Sullivan displayed optimistic attitudes toward westward expansion, the average American citizen shared a similar attitude. Americans eagerly traveled west, while others were excited to see what opportunities would come from exploring the West. One reason Americans traveled west was the search for gold in California. George Keller, a traveler to California, wrote about his experiences and advised others on the same journey in *A Trip Across the Plains, and Life in California*. Keller's writing shows that gold motivated westward expansion throughout the 1800s. Additionally, a song from the era

titled "To the West!" exhibits a desire to settle in the western portion of the continent and see what opportunities the land holds. The singer exclaims, "To the west! To the west! To the land of the free, Where the mighty Missouria rolls down to the sea, Where the young may exhult and the aged may rest."[31] This song, which advocates for westward expansion, carries a hopeful tone and conveys the attitude of American citizens on expansion.

Alan Taylor believes that the United States wanted to secure the West from groups considered anti-American such as Native Americans. Taylor wrote, "Fear drove American leaders to expand deep into the continent to push rival empires farther away from the United States."[32] While fear of these groups has existed at various points in United States's history, fear was not the primary motive for westward expansion. In George Keller's work, *A Trip Across the Plains, and Life in California,* he reminds travelers of potential encounters with Native Americans but does not regard them as overly dangerous. He says, "The Pawnees, Sioux, Crows and Snakes, will most probably treat you civilly enough, if you observe the Golden Rule."[33] He continues by saying that others "may attempt to injure you, or your stock, but the report of a gun will generally sufficiently frighten them."[34] Here, Keller shows that he does not think potential Indian encounters should deter

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[29] Isserman, Maurice. *Exploring North America, 1800–1900*. Discovery and Exploration. *Infobase*. 2005; 2016.

[30] Roberts, Timothy. *The Early National Period and Expansion*. Handbook to Life in America. 2009; 2016.

[31] "To The West!" *Infobase*. 1845.

[32] Taylor, Alan. *American Republics: A Continental History of the United States, 1783-1850.* W.W. Norton & Company. May 18th, 2021.

[33] Keller, George. *A Trip Across the Plains, and Life in California*. Digital Public Library of America.

[34] Keller, George. *A Trip Across the Plains, and Life in California*. Digital Public Library of America.

people from traveling west. This implies that fear of Native Americans was not a primary motivation behind migration to the West.

Throughout the 1800s, the United States Government exhibited power over Native Americans and forced them to relocate further west. The most notorious example is President Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act when he forced Native Americans to relocate west of the Mississippi River so that the land could be used for the growing nation.[35] In his letter to the Cherokee Nation about voluntary removal, Jackson wrote to the Natives as if they were under his control and had already lost. He says, "You are now placed in the midst of a white population. Your peculiar customs, which regulated your intercourse with one another, have been abrogated by the great political community among which you live; and you are now subject to the same laws which govern the other citizens of Georgia and Alabama."[36] Here, President Andrew Jackson demonstrates control over the Natives and claims that they are under American law.

Although the motives of Manifest Destiny have been debated, optimism and hope in America's expansion have been the primary motivators. Prominent Americans such as Thomas Jefferson, James Polk, and John O'Sullivan viewed westward expansion as an endeavor that would strengthen the United States, and many American citizens moved west hoping to discover gold or start a new life in the West. Although tensions

have undoubtedly existed with groups considered non-American, the United States did not compete with these groups for control of territory. Although Dr. Alan Taylor's *American Republics: A Continental History of the United States, 1783-1850* exhibits extensive research, Manifest Destiny is not "the most misleading phrase ever offered to explain American expansion."[37] Americans desired expansion for the benefits it could bring to the nation, displaying an attitude of optimism instead of fear.

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"To The West!" Infobase. 1845

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The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
By
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Abstract

The social distancing, quarantine, and face
mask mandates that were created during the
COVID-19 pandemic had an especially
adverse effect on young children with ASD
because of their social inhibitions,
dependence on facial detection, and
adherence to routines. This paper uses
Bandura's theory of Social Learning and
Piaget's theory of Cognitive Development to
discuss the specific relationships between
autism and social isolation, face masks, and
telehealth and assess potential treatment
recommendations or predictors of positive
outcomes. Treatment modalities such as
Applied Behavior Analysis therapy and
video modeling were utilized to explain
both autism spectrum disorder itself and its
interactions with the pandemic, as well as to
explain future research recommendations to
study the scope of the pandemic's long-term
effects and hypotheses of how to handle the
adjustment back to in-person life. An
integrated approach from caregivers and
professionals and a consistently supportive
environment were identified as a foundation
for more consistent predictors of positive
outcomes. These influences can be used as a
foundation for future research on integrated
treatment models and individualized
perspectives on autism.

When the first few cases of coronavirus
were reported in Wuhan, China in late 2019,
it was impossible to predict that what
appeared to be a variant of pneumonia
would expand into a pandemic within
months. The social, economic, and medical
repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic
eroded individual and national stability and
generated significant loss of life. However,
some of the pandemic's most serious
ramifications were associated with the
forfeiture of socialization and disruption of
daily life caused by stay-at-home orders and
mandates, as well as the struggle of medical,
educational, and mental health organizations
to adapt to these restrictions. Numerous
demographics reported a sharp increase in
depression, anxiety, or feelings of isolation
or helplessness, but the most adverse effects
occurred among intellectually disabled
children and their families or caregivers.
The interference with education and
socialization, when compounded with the
complicated and often contradictory
information available about the coronavirus,
was already difficult for neurotypical
children to grasp fully, let alone for those
with developmental disabilities.

Neurodivergent children, such as those with autism spectrum disorder, possess social and communicative inhibitions that necessitate strict routines and accommodations for sensory struggles. These exigencies, especially the "particular sensitivity to change and persistence in specific routines and interests with a multitude/plethora of behavioral acts" (Saliverou et al., 2021, p. 1), made the pandemic exponentially more difficult for autistic children to understand and adapt to. This paper seeks to examine the effects of social isolation and face mask mandates on autistic children through the lens of Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Albert Bandura's social learning theory, and to assess treatment modalities such as Applied Behavior Analysis therapy and other telehealth options, and to consider ethical considerations and dilemmas within the research.

Symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder

The most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) defines autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as an umbrella term that encompasses persistent communication deficits in 3 or more areas, difficulty establishing social relationships, a high sensitivity to change, and at least 2 types of limiting or repetitive behavior (5th ed.; DSM–5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Several subtypes exist under the larger category of ASD, such as Asperger's Syndrome, or level 1 ASD, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-NOS, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014). Each of these subtypes tends to possess subtly different communicative or behavioral symptoms and manifests them to varying extents and severities. The symptoms can occur on a continuum but must have been noticeable, if not diagnosed, from early childhood and must result in significant impairment of daily functionality. Communicative deficits generally manifest as fragmented conversational abilities, inappropriate social responses, or as an observable disconnect between verbal interactions and body language (APA, 2013; Spain et al., 2021). Such deficits impair social relationships and can cause individuals to be uninterested or greatly challenged in bonding with peers or in adjusting behaviors to suit different environments. Similarly, resistance to change and adherence to routines create inflexible or ritualized patterns of behavior and hyperreactivity to sensory or visual stimuli, causing extreme distress at even minor changes (APA, 2013). Approximately 1 in 44 children is affected in the United States and 1 in 100 worldwide, with boys being 4 times more likely to be diagnosed, but comparable prevalence rates occur in most racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups (CDC, 2014). Historically, ASD was not considered to be either common or permanent, but recent years have seen an increase in the reported incidence rate and an emphasis on the lifelong nature of the disorder. These changes are generally ascribed to spikes in research interest and clinical modifications that suggested more pervasive and frequent effects than were previously assumed (Saliverou et al., 2021). This expanded impact and clinical implications for both research and daily life and encouraged more specific studies of how children with autism operate socially. The turmoil from the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing re-adjustment to normal socialization and daily life constituted a massive global disruption that interacted negatively with autistic symptoms. This is an excellent and comprehensive opportunity to conduct research into building resilience and predicting positive outcomes for autistic

children and their families, as well as to better understand the disorder.

Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder can be assessed with a variety of scales, surveys, and interviews. One of the most commonly used is the Autism Diagnostic Interview, Revised or the ADI-R, which is a standardized and semi-structured interview conducted with parents. The ADI-R focuses on communication, social interaction, and any repetitive or obsessive behaviors and is designed to take external factors and personal history into account to decrease false positives or generalizations (Kamp-Becker et al., 2021). While this interview possesses excellent interrater reliability and convergent or content validity, ranging between 0.96 and 0.99, it is less suitable for younger children and can over-diagnose when used by itself (Kamp-Becker et al., 2021). These errors are generally attributed to distorted parental perceptions of behavioral qualities such as reciprocal social interaction and communication (Mildenberger et al., 2001). The verbal format can also limit accurate understanding and reciprocal communication in minority or immigrant populations, leading them to be misrepresented, necessitating a variety of approaches and formats to ensure an accurate diagnosis. Another assessment that is frequently used alone or in conjunction with the ADI-R is the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition, or ADOS-2. The semi-structured assessment analyses communication, social interactions, and physical behaviors such as playing (McClain et al., 2021). The ADOS-2 is popular among clinicians due to its standardized and observational qualities. According to the *Guide to the ADOS-2 For Autism Assessment* (2022), observational

assessments minimize interference from unconscious cognitive biases such as availability heuristics or anchoring and decrease margins of error. The ADOS-2 diagnostic accuracy can be analyzed through its high levels of interrater and test-retest reliability, which range between 0.87 to 0.96, as well as its ability to account for individual strengths and resilience factors (*A Guide to the ADOS-2 For Autism Assessment*, 2022). These psychometric strengths make the assessment suitable for planning treatment and tracking progress in addition to diagnosing autism. However, both the ADI-R and the ADOS-2 faced numerous complications during COVID-19, as the testing environments and data interpretation were heavily restricted. Cultural and linguistic variations were amplified by remote conduction and professionals were unable to complete naturalistic observations at the time (McClain et al., 2021). In the case of the ADOS-2, many of the integral elements, such as observing children interacting with toys, were rendered impossible due to sanitation concerns or social distancing (McClain et al., 2021). These disruptions altered the standardization of the scoring and therefore inherently decreased the validity of any diagnoses.

Autism Spectrum Disorder and COVID-19

The international response to the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020 with containment or prevention measures and tapered off in early 2022 for the most part to more passive precautionary guidelines. The pandemic's airborne transmission gave rise to a period of intense social restrictions, with product shortages and unemployment spiking and with most public buildings closing or requiring virtual participation. The most visible strain was placed on healthcare personnel and organizations, with hospitals

becoming overcrowded and understaffed, but schools, jobs, and mental health services were equally unprepared to not only confront demands but to do so within the confines of a virtual environment. This strain, when exacerbated by the lack of a pre-existing vaccine and ever-evolving transmission parameters, led to the "expanded implementation of health protection measures…from the simple use of masks, social distancing, and regular hand and facial hygiene to the most effective measure: social isolation and quarantine" (Saliverou et al., 2021, p. 2). These precautions were intended to confront transmission rates and protect vulnerable demographics such as children, senior citizens, and those with pre-existing medical conditions. However, the abruptness of implementation and the unanticipated length of the pandemic disrupted daily routines to the point of increasing anxiety, self-destructive or self-injurious behavior, and pre-existing mental health problems (Paulauskaite et al., 2021). The economic fallout from global supply chain crises, product shortages, and rising unemployment further contributed to families' stress levels and reduced their ability to care for each other, especially for those with developmental disabilities. Individuals with ASD were extremely vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic because of their executive functioning and neurocognitive impairments regarding change, uncertainty, and adaptability (Baweja et al., 2021; Spain et al., 2021). Additionally, the available information about the pandemic was unfamiliar and often unclear, which interacted negatively with cognitive delays in processing or responding to communications (Jacques et al., 2021). A survey conducted by Paulauskaite et al (2021) indicated that over 90% of their sample reported increased stressors and disruption of health services, as well as

difficulty relaying relevant and consistent information to their children. Many children with ASD did demonstrate a high degree of resilience and adaptation, but even when supplemented with sufficient support and care, they still experienced emotional, psychological, or behavioral changes from the pandemic's abeyance of social activities and routines (Saliverou et al., 2021). Previously established patterns of negative behavior were strengthened and tantrums, hyperactivity, or new fixations and stereotypes related to home confinement were observed, placing a secondary source of strain on caregivers (Saliverou et al., 2021).

Face Masks

One of the most significant consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic was the near universal adoption of face masks to inhibit airborne transmission. This caused muffled speech and obscured physical features, which damaged communicative abilities and facial detection or recognition. The holistic process of facial recognition is highly dependent on integrated information, which for neurotypical people comes predominantly from the eyes, but for individuals with ASD, comes from the nose and mouth. Children on the autism spectrum, who were already operating with decreased abilities to empathize with or understand others, could not derive enough information from masked faces to respond appropriately to social cues (Tso et al., 2022). Their tendency towards eye-contact avoidance made them more susceptible to interference from face masks and some individuals suffered from sensory aversions that rendered them incapable of tolerating protective coverings (Berard et al., 2021; Spain et al., 2021). A study by Tso et al (2022) found that successful communication between masked individuals relied on

adaptive cognitive strategies such as shifting attention to the eyes and uncovered features to compensate for the mask. ASD decreases mental flexibility and increases the possibility of distraction by task-irrelevant features, making it less likely individuals will employ adaptive strategies (Tso et al., 2022). These findings applied whenever faces had to be both learned and recognized under two different conditions, such as when faces were originally learned without masks and then were presented with masks during the recognition phase. When faces were only analyzed under a single condition, such as when they were both learned and recognized with a mask on, both neurotypical and neurodivergent participants performed comparably. This indicated that the face mask itself was only part of the problem and that the cognitive flexibility and adaptive strategies necessary to communicate with them successfully made up a significant portion of neurodivergent children's struggles.

Telehealth

Virtual services such as Zoom were employed relatively early in the pandemic to facilitate meetings, classes, and medical or mental health services while cooperating with public health guidelines. This improved accessibility and feelings of social connectedness for the most part, but it quickly became apparent that remote interactions were not inclusive of disabilities such as ASD. While children were often more comfortable in their home environments, they struggled to participate in virtual sessions and understand what was expected of them (Aishworiya & Kang, 2020). Children who were unused to virtual interfaces found it confusing or intimidating, with some refusing to appear on camera. Some individuals did report benefits from the quarantine and feelings of higher degrees of freedom without the pressures of socialization and behavioral norms. However, they also described concerns related to behavioral regression and reduced self-esteem (Spain et al., 2021). The distractions in the home environment and the lack of familiar routine anchors such as teachers, rooms, or even school bells made it difficult to establish a meaningful and consistent schedule and delayed working toward social goals (Spain et al., 2021). Most telehealth services were also being utilized to a previously untested extent and had been hastily adapted from in-person or hybrid models. This impacted oversight and professional boundaries as well as restricted what interventions could be employed, as caregivers were untrained and ill-equipped to mediate behavior by themselves. An online survey conducted by Spain et al (2021) indicated that 65% of their sample felt that there had been a major disruption to service provision, 27% felt there had been mild disruption, and 8% described an apodictic loss of service and support. Mental health professionals struggled to choose between evidence-based or clinically pragmatic options and cited ambiguous standards and concerns of compromised clinical quality, as well as decreased confidentiality due to the household setting (Spain et al., 2021). This tended to delay diagnosing autistic symptoms or identifying problem behaviors, even in cases when they were exacerbated by social isolation or quarantine, which further strained familial care during the intermediate period without formal support or interventions. These secondary sources of stress that emerged in tandem with COVID-19, such as amplified maladaptive behaviors, financial or economic strain on familial structures, and inhibited external support underscored the importance of identifying theoretical foundations for understanding ASD and its interaction with the pandemic. Two such

theoretical models that can be used to analyze the neurodivergent experience during COVID-19 are Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory is a social-cognitive framework that was developed to emphasize the role of observational learning and visual models. Bandura (1977) based his theory on the interactions between behavior, personality, and environment and stated that attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation must occur for learning to take effect. This expanded on the behavioral tenets of classical and operant conditioning while also identifying a system of imitation that occurs after processing stimuli (Bandura, 1977). Children have a higher tendency to imitate people who are perceived to be similar to them and whose actions are positively received and therefore vicariously reinforced (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, individuals who are more capable of learning and perception will fare better when forming relationships and social roles. This helps to explain why autistic children struggle with not only replicating acceptable or appropriate behaviors but also with recognizing them in others. Their decreased attentional capacity and atypical cognitive processes lead them to be distracted more often and have more difficulty being interested in certain situations or models. Failure to attend to tasks reduces retention and may interfere with the effectiveness of common mnemonic devices or learning interventions, requiring special approaches. Reproduction then suffers in turn, as it heavily relies on the successful completion of attention and retention. Lastly, motivation may be low for children with ASD because they have trouble committing to and focusing on tasks and take more time recovering from defeat.

Social Learning Theory assesses neurodivergent struggles with isolation through the lens of appropriate observational learning. Quarantine and social distancing reduced the number of people that autistic children interacted with daily outside of their immediate family or caregivers. This caused behavioral delays or regression in socially significant skills and did not provide opportunities to expand their attentional fields or reproduce a high variety of actions. Autism spectrum disorder reduces cognitive flexibility when addressing complex tasks, facilitating increased retention and reproduction when manual, in-person, and direct learning methods are employed. The pandemic's conversion to remote services regarding telehealth exacerbated learning delays because of the convoluted cognitive tasks required in recognizing individuals and social cues in a virtual environment and the focus needed to successfully complete sessions. Additionally, face masks complicate even the most basic in-person conversations by restricting facial features and expressions from which autistic children could derive intent or emotions. This created a disparity between neurodivergent children who originally learned socialization tasks during COVID-19 and those who were adjusting to social restrictions from face-to-face existence before the pandemic. Not only was this a struggle for families during the phases of societal disruption, but the discrepancy also remained a concern as the world began returning to normal, as this constituted yet another substantial upheaval that autistic children were required to grapple with.

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

A second theoretical model that explains behavioral, psychological, and cognitive delays in autistic children is Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development. Piaget proposed a 2-factor definition of intelligence and 4 developmental stages essential to conventional development. In the 2-factor definition, operative intelligence represents the active involvement of individuals to understand or predict changes in objects or persons, while figurative intelligence represents the static form of intelligence, such as imitation, perception, and verbal skills (Wiki Targeted (Entertainment), n.d.). Piaget's developmental stages are sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational, with abstract and moral reasoning and communication increasing with each stage (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.) The sensorimotor and preoperational stages deal primarily with forming an awareness of others, symbolic communication, and tangible problem solving, while the concrete operational stage deals with logical thinking and compound mental processes (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). Lastly, the formal operational stage represents the permanent foundations of deductive thought, moral reasoning, and complex cognitive functions (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). Autism can therefore be understood as causing developmental impediments through a disjointed relationship between operative and figurative intelligence, with operative intelligence lagging and failing to evolve past the sensorimotor stage. This imbalance would result in individuals who are able to speak, perceive, and respond but who have trouble connecting abstract concepts and more complex behavioral skills, such as communicating digitally (Spain et al, 2021). Children with autism may also experience more problems relating to others and may therefore find fewer figures to imitate that resemble how they process information.

Application of Piagetian Theory to Autism

Piagetian schools of thought deal primarily with cognitive evolution over a series of developmental milestones. As autism connects with impaired social relationships, linguistic functioning, and generalization or synthetization of information, it represents children who are mired in earlier developmental stages, such as sensorimotor or preoperative. Basic intelligence and cognitive capacities, or figurative intelligence, may not be adversely affected by autism. However, decreased executive functioning, often connected to operative intelligence, would hinder the expression of working memory, cognitive flexibility, and other social abilities. Active or dynamic abilities to predict and handle change and grasp the permanence of objects' natures throughout transformations in appearance, context, or portrayal would therefore not evolve appropriately. Delays from ASD can cause children to interpret simple social situations as intimidating or overwhelming, making them reluctant or unable to engage fully with people or places. Arrested development prevents them from progressing through Piaget's typical stages and applying inductive reasoning and abstract schemas to external stimuli. The children might require additional prompting or rely on concrete objects and habits to generate responses and reason through conversations or tasks. Their behaviors exhibit the egocentric thinking of the preoperational stage, where individuals can primarily understand their own perspective and the effects of others' actions on themselves, but cannot reverse this to perceive how they impact others.

Cognitive Development Theory During COVID-19

This rigid thinking was especially evident during the pandemic, as many autistic children lacked the capacity to engage with telehealth providers. They were prone to losing interest and wandering away or not comprehending what was being asked of them. For specific treatment modalities such as Applied Behavior Analysis, professionals were not able to physically redirect the children away from task-irrelevant stimuli and distractions or correct them directly. Regression and obstructed progress tended to stem from affected individuals' inability to strategize independently about meeting societal or interpersonal requisites. Their detachment from reality-based central coherence limited empathetic or selfless motivators but did not necessarily preclude them from achieving positive self-concepts and relationships. However, particularly as ASD manifests to various extents and in differing areas, it was laborious to adopt or maintain a consistently effective standard of care.

Assessment Concerns

The majority of the assessments used to determine COVID-19's effects on autistic individuals were surveys or questionnaires that deliberately controlled for recall bias or recency effects and that used randomized sampling wherever possible. However, these assessments were still subject to the biases or inaccuracies of the respondents, as they were retrospective recollections instead of independent observations (Theis et al., 2021). Many of them were also conducted remotely, which decreased the quality of qualitative narrative data that could have been gathered from in-person interviews or assessments, as causality could not be established. Additionally, the unfamiliar or novel stimuli such as masked faces that were being studied required modified stimuli for many assessments, such as the Weschler

Memory Scale (WMS-IV), which limited the potential internal validity and reliability. This does not inherently constitute an ethical problem, as psychologists are free to adapt assessments or instruments to make them appropriate and relevant for their construct (American Psychological Association, 2017, 9.02). However, the relative recency of the pandemic also made it difficult to establish valid long-term causes or patterns and the full scope of potential permanent effects, as cross-sectional descriptive studies were used to capture the epidemiological prevalence and reception of the pandemic, instead of longitudinal studies. In order to sufficiently overcome potential interference, clinicians would have to develop modified evaluations that emphasized bidirectional communication, interagency collaboration, and contextualized data, in both assessment and treatment (McClain et al., 2021).

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy

Applied Behavior Analysis Therapy is an evidence-based treatment that is often used with autistic individuals because it breaks larger behavioral or cognitive tasks down into smaller units and pairs the process with reinforcement (Baweja et al., 2021). This encourages socially significant habits and phases out repetitive, problematic, or self-injurious behaviors (Sergi et al., 2021). Stimulus transfer, token systems, differential reinforcement, and numerous other modalities are used to shape preferred tasks and assist children in understanding why and when to perform them. This process connects to Bandura's understanding of observational learning and firsthand interaction as facilitating retention and connecting better with autistic children by motivating them directly. The application focuses on keeping the children's attention and the theory concatenates tangible and abstract concepts to teach more complex

skills, drawing on Piaget's developmental definitions to expand their social and cognitive identity and to improve their dynamic intelligence. During COVID-19, ABA therapy utilized both a real-time method where therapists provided telehealth services to children themselves and a store-and-forward method, where caregivers guided children through scripted scenarios (Spain et al, 2021). The latter required more structured involvement and support from professionals to be successful, both with the caregiver and the child, as observation of behavior is fundamental to ABA therapy (Spain et al., 2021). Both systems proved to be effective in mitigating behavioral regression and problematic habits, but they faced significant difficulties in meeting the same level of competency as in-person treatment. The manual and observational qualities of ABA therapy lead it to be primarily designed for in-person use, and the majority of treatment plans and tasks during the pandemic were adopted without complete foresight of how they would shape behavior. Despite these setbacks and limitations, the flexible and customizable aspects of ABA therapy enabled it to remain successful in remote or digital settings.

Video Modeling

Children with autism frequently engage in repetitive behavior or focal points and demonstrate highly restricted attentional fields (Garretson et al., 1990 as cited in Corbett & Abdullah, 2005). This makes them predisposed to learn better from visual information and allows instructors to customize the stimuli if socially typical prompts are not of interest (Corbett & Abdullah, 2005). The visual models used can range from peers, strangers, siblings, or the child himself, depending on the target behavior and the individual child (Corbett & Abdullah, 2005). This approach eliminates

any requirement to comprehend complicated verbal instructions or auditory stimuli and it facilitates retention through repetition and active involvement, following Bandura's stages of learning (Corbett & Abdullah, 2005). Video modeling has been specifically successful with autistic individuals because it capitalizes on their natural affinity for screens and technology or television and makes procedures more easily generalizable (Corbett & Abdullah, 2005). During the pandemic, multiple-baseline studies employed video modeling, role-playing, and self-modeling by instructing parents and caregivers as they guided children through simple tasks (Vascelli & Berardo, 2021). Ordering numbers, reading or sounding out words, and basic greeting skills were the most commonly used tasks because they were uncomplicated and interactive tasks (Babcock, 2021; Vascelli & Berardo, 2021). The variety of live, pre-recorded, or hybrid videos that could be utilized, as well as the increased parental and familial involvement, increased performance accuracy and engagement in most instances. The atypical format was unique in that it was facilitated by telehealth settings, unlike the majority of interventions or treatments, and the education of parents made skills more transferable outside of sessions. However, because of the individualized models and other potential influences on satisfaction and ease of use, such as digital access, stable households, and positive motivators associated with technology, more research should be conducted to establish causality and consistency.

Ethical Concerns

Psychological studies are governed by the APA Code of Ethics as well as the general principles of scientific research. The primary questions to justify research are the quality of its contribution to the scientific or

empirical body of knowledge and its potential insight into improving the quality of life for its population of interest. Within the parameters of the American Psychological Association's ethics code, these goals are governed by the principles of beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect (APA, 2017). When interacting with autistic children, researchers had to take specific measures to account for their decreased autonomy and understanding of intent, involving family and caregivers to ensure informed consent, and emphasizing the voluntary aspect of participation. Autistic children might have impaired abilities to recognize what they are agreeing to and as such, it is important to seek consent from the family as well as assent from the child to prioritize everyone's best interests (APA, 2017, 3.10). Surveys and questionnaires were designed to minimize disruption and distress, especially due to the secondary sources of strain already being caused by the pandemic, and these also controlled for discriminatory variables that might affect the responses of minority or immigrant families. Despite these precautionary measures, it is always possible that equality and the diversity of both the autistic spectrum and various cultural and social approaches were not entirely accounted for. Additionally, the causality and internal validity of research regarding autism spectrum disorder are somewhat limited, as there is neither an ethical nor a perfectly valid method of manipulating the independent variables for such studies.

The research examined throughout this paper was primarily conducted during the pandemic, with the self-report data partially drawn from points in time before COVID-19 as well to establish comparison points. The subjective elements of the surveys used made it preferable to minimize elapsed time between the pandemic's advent and data collection, so the predominance of the studies did not make extensive future recommendations. This focus engendered an emphasis on the initial response and adaptations to COVID-19 but it did not account for possible difficulties with replication. The severity of the pandemic's social consequences, such as prolonged and highly restricted social isolation, generates ethical dilemmas with recreating or re-applying comparable conditions to any experimental group of participants. Additionally, while a considerable amount of research has been conducted on social isolation or autistic individuals' difficulty with change, the additional medical and economic concerns that arose during COVID-19 created a unique environment. It would be nigh impossible to ethically replicate such conditions, as the isolation being studied was not a natural pattern of life or a naturally occurring condition, but rather a result of taxing social restrictions. The treatment modalities of ABA therapy and video modeling that were cited in this paper, due to the telehealth settings, also run the risk of inviting a closer relationship than prudent between professionals and clients. Viewing the home and other family members could compromise confidentiality or private settings that are not intentionally shown and might lead to feelings of relaxation or intimacy. The lack of a defined professional environment and meeting space could also contribute to these decreased boundaries. Another example of how telehealth might impact previously established boundaries is the limited jurisdiction of professionals with licensure in one state to perform services for clients in another state where they are not licensed. Failing to respect one's physical or educational limitations could lead to psychologists taking on clients in areas they are not fully competent, which severely

impacts care (APA, 2017, 2.01). Communication may also be complicated, as the lack of face-to-face interaction might increase misunderstandings and an expanded range of information is revealed digitally, risking breaches of confidentiality. Mental health professionals have an obligation to obtain consent for all recordings and confidential information stored in any form, but it is considerably more difficult to control access and exposure to online files and data (APA, 2017, 4.01; 6.02). Despite the benefits of telehealth regarding accessibility and continuity of care, it is now being used more extensively than ever before and will require modifications to serve clients appropriately and competently across varying services, backgrounds, and cultures.

Future Recommendations

The most pertinent and prominent topics to address when studying the interactions between ASD and COVID-19 are causality and permanence. Cross-sectional, correlation, and *ex post facto* studies were utilized throughout the pandemic to collect data from a large pool and assess the prevalence of the virus, as well as the exposure, outcomes, and reactions. However, these cannot establish causality unless the exposure is revealed to be stable over time and not directly influenced by confounding variables. Temporal precedence was achieved in studies involving participants who had been officially diagnosed prior to the pandemic but was not established with true consistency. Longitudinal studies should be required to test both internal validity and causality and establish long-term effects and altered behavioral patterns after the pandemic. COVID-19 also revealed the need for a virtual treatment modality that can approach individuals on a holistic or heterogenous

basis and eliminate the need for transitions between in-person, remote, and hybrid care. Treatment and assessments for autism could benefit from improving validity and sensitivity in locally normed diagnostic tools, as well, so that global data can be integrated and compared more easily. This would not only improve diagnoses, but it would also establish consistent portraits of certain traits or manifestations of autism spectrum disorder, as potential cultural or social influences on how autism presented would be constructed.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on the stability of families' employment, medical care, and mental health. Adults and children alike struggled with social isolation, constant uncertainty, mandated face masks, and ever-evolving information and recommendations. Children with autistic spectrum disorder were among the most vulnerable populations during this time, as quarantine and social distancing were highly likely to "profoundly affect physical activity and mental health" (Theis et al., 2021, p. 1) in individuals with developmental disorders. This vulnerability is particularly significant when the rising prevalence rates of ASD are considered and the percentage of affected populations in respective countries grows. Parents and caregivers of children with ASD are under higher and more specific levels of demand than parents of neurotypical children, and any change in familial structure or individual challenges tend to interact negatively with this pressure. Unfortunately, the pandemic produced unanticipated and rapidly evolving changes that not only affected autistic children but also decreased the quality of life for their families, therapists, and schools. Unstable routines increased anxiety and self-destructive or self-injurious habits and decreased progress in socially significant

behaviors. Many children struggled to remain active and productive without the familiar visual and behavioral anchors they had experienced at school, social events, or therapists' offices. A small percentage of the samples referenced in this paper felt higher levels of relief or relaxation while at home, due to the absence of societal norms and stressors, but cited anxiety about re-adjusting to their normal routines. The return to socializing in late 2021 was not wholly a positive experience, either, as face masks interfered with communication and facial recognition and triggered sensory difficulties for many individuals. Interacting with friends and family was further complicated by social distancing requirements or rigid hygiene requirements and the inhibited executive functioning and cognitive flexibility caused by ASD tended to heighten children's distress.

The behavioral, social, and developmental components of ASD require a highly integrated approach to fully and accurately account for the spectrums of severity and symptomatology that the disorder can occur on. Telehealth, and the common treatment modalities it employed, such as ABA therapy or video modeling, had tremendous success and benefits regarding minimizing interruptions of services and remaining accessible. However, it limited what mental health professionals could reliably and expertly observe about their clients and reduced strategies for keeping children's attention and correcting their actions. Some children were too frightened or confused to even initiate engagement with virtual therapists and avoided appearing on camera or speaking to the screen. This meant that despite the availability of telehealth treatments, they were not improving quality of life or behavioral goals because of individualized struggles with technology. These complications make it a priority to

emphasize integrated interventions where the family is capable of carrying on part of the treatment without the professional present, as well as researching a wholly digital model of therapy that does not require children to adjust formats. The pandemic's most prominent effects are generally considered to be over at this point, but many individuals with ASD are now grappling with the second period of change and disruption as the world goes back to normal. Understanding and supporting their unique demands is integral to not only expand psychological knowledge on how best to treat ASD, but also to improve their lives and opportunities in society.

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Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder: Background, Theories, and Treatments

By

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Abstract

Narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) is a disorder that is difficult to have and treat. The construct of narcissism itself has a far-reaching history and an extensive body of research behind it. This extensive literature includes many nuances about narcissism and how it presents in its pathological form, as NPD. In these nuances, the literature reveals a general lack of clarity involving the defining features of narcissism as a construct and a disorder. Grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism are two manifestations of narcissism that can underlie a diagnosis. Both manifestations play a large role in the uncertainties in defining narcissism as it presents as a diagnosable disorder. This thesis looks at these different manifestations of narcissism, theoretical models to explain them, measures for assessing them, and treatments for an NPD diagnosis, concluding with ethical concerns in working with this population. Ultimately, the need for clear defining features of NPD and empirical studies on treatments for NPD are emphasized, so as to lead to a better understanding of the varied presentations of the narcissistic individual, thus unifying the field as a whole.

Keywords: narcissistic personality disorder, grandiose narcissism, vulnerable narcissism

Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder: Background, Theories, and Treatments

Narcissism is a construct with an origin that long prefaces its immersion into the field of psychology in the early 20th century. It finds origins in Greek mythology, with the commonly told tale of Narcissus, and has since become a modern fascination in numerous areas, and of particular importance, in the field of psychology (Floyd & Narramore, 2017). With Sigmund Freud's introduction of narcissism as a psychological construct in 1914 in *On Narcissism*, and continued work from Otto Kernberg and Heinz Kohut in the late 20th century, narcissism erupted as a topic of psychological researchers' interest (Bergner, 2016; Tyler, 2007).

Succeeding this increase in psychological interest, pathological narcissism received a diagnosis in the *Diagnosis and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) as narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), in 1980 (Dhawan et al., 2010). Per its recent entry into psychology, NPD has become a developing area of research, as researchers publish works that attempt to clarify it as a diagnosis. Despite the great deal of research done on narcissism, NPD is a disorder that is still lacking clear defining features, as well as empirical studies of its treatment methods. Therefore, clear defining features

of NPD and empirical studies on the treatment of this difficult disorder are of great importance, so as to provide clinicians with a better understanding of the varied presentations of the narcissistic individual, unifying the field.

Accordingly, this thesis will open with a brief review of narcissism, including events that pertain to the development of it as an important concept in psychology, its history in the DSM as NPD, NPD's prevalence, and two phenotypic manifestations of narcissism. Next, theoretical explanations for NPD will be reviewed. Succeeding this, concerns that have the potential to arise in assessing NPD will be discussed. Two valid narcissism measures will be mentioned along with criteria, according to the DSM, for diagnosing NPD. Two specific treatment modalities' approaches to treating NPD will then be reviewed and discussed. Concludingly, ethical concerns that could arise in working with clients with NPD will be addressed.

Historical Context

Narcissism is a psychological construct that has roots as far back as ancient Greek mythology. In *Metamorphoses*, Ovid tells the story of Narcissus who, in the common translation of the myth, is a man who falls in love with his reflection, and eventually "withers away" as he is unable to look away from himself (Floyd & Narramore, 2017, p. 1). His name, Narcissus, is where the word narcissism finds its origin (Bergner, 2016). In sum, this myth showcases when one focuses love on the self, it results in a discomfiture that is difficult to bear (Bergner, 2016). With Narcissus' tragic tale, the trait of narcissism is seen as negative from its origins.

In looking into narcissism's history in psychology, it is difficult to discuss the origins of the construct of narcissism without acknowledging Sigmund Freud. Freud was one of the firsts to formalize narcissism as a psychological construct (Yakeley, 2018). He did so in 1914 as showcased by his psychoanalytic theory in his work entitled *On Narcissism* (Yakeley, 2018). Freud viewed narcissism as having a primary form that every individual possesses in some form from infancy, or a secondary form that is either "normal or pathological" dependent on the degree of severity (Bergner, 2016, p. 89; Tyler, 2007). Infant narcissism can be seen through the way that infants begin life in such a way that they must be focused on themselves to survive (Bender, 2012). This primary narcissism is seen as necessary and even healthy for development and the formation of one's identity and personality. Stemming from this, Freud cites individuals use "the self as [their] first love object" (Bender, 2012; Tyler, 2007, p. 344).

Eventually, Freud, along with other theorists, began to see narcissism as a personality type, and not just a state (Campbell & Miller, 2011). The possibility of narcissism being a disorder was not addressed until 1961 (Campbell & Miller, 2011). Shortly following this, a boom in research on narcissism occurred in the 1970s, largely inspired by influential researchers, Otto Kernberg and Heinz Kohut (Tyler, 2007; Yakeley, 2018). Kernberg and Kohut are authoritative voices in the field who increased awareness of and interest in narcissism (Bergner, 2016; Tyler, 2007). Both have produced extensive research to develop personality theories, and specifically, have done significant work in the realm of narcissism.

Using Freud's initial work as a foundation, Kernberg and Kohut developed theories involving narcissism and its origins and treatments in respective ways, as Yakeley (2018) summarized. Kernberg saw narcissism as being derived from childhood experiences of parents that were distant or cruel (Yakeley, 2018). Children would then respond to this by developing a belief that they are special, with a grandiose view-of-self defending the individual from their anger at themselves. Kernberg's model was identified as a conflict model. On the other hand, Kohut viewed narcissism as a response to unempathetic parents. The grandiose view-of-self is unable to properly integrate with one's parent image, and thus the individual uses the grandiose view-of-self as protection. Kohut's model was identified as a deficit model.

Defining Narcissism, NPD, and Grandiose & Vulnerable Narcissism

Due to the work of Kernberg, Kohut, and other researchers, the acknowledgment of narcissism being able to present as a disorder was made a reality. Before continuing with this development of narcissism as a disorder, it is of great importance to acknowledge definitions essential to the understanding of this thesis. Critical to define are the constructs of narcissism and NPD, thus distinguishing the use of these two constructs for this thesis. Narcissism as a construct, for this thesis, is understood to be "entitled self-importance" and a trait that can be possessed by any individual in varying amounts (Krizan & Herlache, 2017, p. 4). On the other hand, NPD is to be defined as the trait of narcissism in its pathological form, as it can present itself in various ways, via the diagnostic criteria of the DSM.

For narcissism to be pathological, and therefore to merit an NPD diagnosis, in addition to having the aforementioned criteria in the DSM, it is to possess the key distinction of having traits that are "inflexible, maladaptive, and persisting and cause significant function impairment or subjective distress" (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 672). Therefore, NPD is distinguished from an individual who is simply high in narcissism based on the criteria in the DSM, as well as the persistence of these traits, and the impaired functioning the traits cause to the individual (APA, 2013). This thesis focuses on pathological forms of narcissism that can be diagnosed as NPD in the clinical setting. Other constructs to be discussed further are grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism. To be defined shortly, these constructs, for this thesis, are understood to underlie an NPD diagnosis in a myriad of presenting possibilities. Despite the nuances and criticisms of the DSM criteria for diagnosing NPD, that are to be discussed further, this thesis takes the approach that an individual diagnosed with NPD could present with high amounts of grandiose narcissism, high amounts of vulnerable narcissism, or a combination of the two, the latter of which is most typical in individuals (Grapsas et al., 2020; Krizan & Herlache, 2017).

Grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism are constructs that can be assessed together, as some measures attempt to measure both manifestations in assessing narcissism (e.g., Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory; Glover et al., 2011). Or grandiose and vulnerable narcissism can be assessed separately, such as in individuals that present much higher in one manifestation of narcissism (e.g., Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire Short Scale; Leckelt et al., 2017). Those high in one of these

manifestations of narcissism are presumed to merit an NPD diagnosis, but it is debated whether the DSM truly captures both constructs, and instead only focuses on grandiose components, as will be discussed.

History of NPD in the DSM

Continuing with the development of narcissism as a disorder, NPD first became an official diagnosis in the DSM in 1980 with the third edition of the manual (Campbell & Miller, 2011; Dhawan et al., 2010). The current edition of the DSM (DSM-V) identifies an NPD diagnosis as including nine possible criteria, later to be looked into, five of which must be met for an individual to be diagnosed with the disorder (APA, 2013). These criteria in the DSM-V are the same as what were present in the DSM-IV, despite heavy criticism (Yakeley, 2018). Criticisms of the DSM criteria include there being too great of an emphasis on grandiose components of narcissism, and not enough on vulnerable components, a lack of distinguishability from other personality disorders, and too narrow of criteria for assessing the complexity of narcissism (APA, 2013; Campbell & Miller, 2011; Yakeley, 2018).

Owing to these criticisms of the DSM-IV unidimensional approach to diagnosing NPD, a DSM-V personality and personality disorder workgroup worked to develop an alternative model for diagnosing personality disorders in general (Campbell & Miller, 2011). The current DSM includes this multidimensional model, the Alternative Model of Personality Disorder, in Section III, the section entitled "Conditions for Further Study" (APA, 2012; Skodol et al., 2015). However, this model was not included as the standard approach for diagnosis in the current edition due to controversy surrounding it (APA, 2013;

Yakeley, 2018). This controversy includes the potential for being too complex for the general clinician to use as well as being too disruptive to current clinical practice (Skodol et al., 2015). Countering this view, some professionals recommend the use of this alternative model over the standard approach (Kealy et al., 2014).

Looking at other facets of NPD, presenting characteristics of the disorder, according to the standard approach DSM-V criteria, include grandiose fantasies, willingness to exploit others, and a lack of empathy (APA, 2013). NPD is classified as a cluster B personality disorder along with borderline, antisocial, and histrionic personality disorder (APA, 2013). Disorders in this cluster are characterized as dramatic, emotional, or erratic (APA, 2013). This disorder is also commonly a comorbid diagnosis with depression, anorexia nervosa, suicidality, substance use, and other personality disorders (APA, 2013; Tanzilli et al., 2017)

Scope and Severity of NPD

As for the scope of NPD, it has an estimated 0-6.2% prevalence rate in the general population, 1.3-20% prevalence in the clinical population, and an 8.5-20% prevalence in outpatient private practices (APA, 2013; Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). This wide variance is attributed to the inconsistencies across fields, as well as in the field of psychology alone, in determining what characterizes NPD (Yakeley, 2018). The DSM cites that 50-70% of these NPD diagnoses are given to males (APA, 2013). Looking into the severity of the impact of NPD, individuals diagnosed with the disorder, with grandiose and vulnerable components, are cited to have major relational issues, particularly having superficial relationships, and result in

great conflict in romantic and professional settings (Dimaggio et al., 2013; Krizan & Herlache, 2017). These interpersonal conflicts are likely due to the externalizing nature of the narcissist's behaviors (Dhawan et al., 2010). Interpersonal conflicts have the potential to significantly impact those in the narcissist's life, as narcissists are cited to commonly drive others in their lives to therapy (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015).

Grandiose & Vulnerable Narcissism

Following this brief description of NPD's prevalence and impact, two general manifestations or phenotypes of narcissism, being grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism, are to be discussed. As was mentioned, these constructs, for this thesis, are to be understood to underlie an NPD diagnosis in various degrees depending on the individual. Grandiose narcissism is also referred to as overt narcissism, and vulnerable narcissism is also known as covert narcissism (Miller et al., 2008). According to the literature, these variations of narcissism have created a debate of modern relevance over how to bring the two into alignment in defining NPD, due to their unrelated appearances, while still possessing some commonalities (Edershile et al., 2019). The literature also cites a need for an assessment that will properly account for grandiose and vulnerable features in NPD (Crowe et al., 2019).

Grandiosity entails thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of vanity (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). Grandiose narcissism is associated with entitlement, little observable anxiety, envy, and interpersonal exploitation (Campbell & Miller, 2011). Additionally, grandiose narcissism tends to be related to dominance in relationships, causing individuals high in grandiosity to be liked initially (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). The grandiose manifestation of narcissism tends to be the layperson's understanding of narcissism and is the most cited form of narcissism in theoretical development (Campbell & Miller, 2011; Krizan & Herlache, 2017). This is no surprise considering the criticism that grandiose narcissism is also considered to be the focus of the DSM standard criteria for diagnosis.

By contrast, vulnerability entails thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of defensiveness, withdrawal, and resentment (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). It is associated with hypersensitivity to others' criticism, avoidance of interpersonal relationships, and shame (Campbell & Miller, 2011). Vulnerable narcissism has been linked to issues with self-esteem, emotional regulation, and attachment, as well as introversion (Miller et al., 2016). Narcissistic vulnerability has also been tied to a number of other personality disorders, including borderline, schizotypal, and paranoid personality disorders (Miller et al., 2017). For individuals high in this construct, there does not appear to be a definitive diagnosis considering the criticism of the current NPD criteria only assessing grandiose components.

Both of these forms of narcissism come from a place of one viewing themselves as superior to all others and having needs that are special. In other words, entitlement and feelings of self-importance, the preferred definition of narcissism for this thesis, are the common threads between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). These separate manifestations of narcissism are components that drive debate over the definition of NPD and what should determine a diagnosis. Future research in this recent area of study will prove interesting for determining how to classify NPD, as it presents itself so variedly.

Despite the far-reaching history of narcissism's existence, the relative recency in its addition to the field of psychology leaves ample room for growth and clarification. The literature acknowledges that there is a need for a distinct operational definition for the construct of narcissism. Variables associated with narcissism have ranged from self-confidence to more shy tendencies, which is made apparent in the possible grandiose and vulnerable manifestations (Crowe et al., 2019). Researchers seem to have a consensus in acknowledging the need for a distinction between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Campbell & Miller, 2011). Controversies over narcissism revolve around the nature of the construct; how to define narcissism, how to diagnosis narcissism, and how to treat narcissism are all seeking clarification (Kealy et al., 2014; Miller et al., 2017). Considering these uncertainties present in the field, it becomes evident how essential it is for clear features of NPD to be defined. Defining these features could result in clarification in the research, which could then lead to the development of randomized control trial studies looking into treatments, those of which are currently lacking, for this difficult population. Moving forward, models will be addressed that propose explanations for the dynamic and complex construct that is narcissism as it presents in individuals.

Theoretical Explanations

The average person in the general public seems to possess varying amounts of narcissistic tendencies, as Freud was mentioned to have claimed. However, some possess narcissism in much greater quantities than others. How can these extreme cases of narcissistic tendencies seen in those with NPD and pathological forms of narcissism, be explained and identified? Psychological theories can aid in this attempt to understand narcissism in the variety of ways it presents itself. Amongst the number of psychological theories that exist that attempt to explain the existence of such extreme personalities and tendencies, as was previously attested, there is great disagreement. There is uncertainty over how best to classify, measure, and explain narcissism, as well as whether current measures and classifications gauge the full scope of what narcissism is (Crowe et al., 2019; Krizan & Herlache, 2017; Miller et al., 2017; Yakeley, 2018).

Out of the plethora of research present in the scientific literature on narcissism, as well as the mentioned uncertainties among it, this paper focuses on the main theoretical models of the Status Pursuit in Narcissism Model (SPIN Model; Grapsas et al., 2020) and the Narcissism Spectrum Model (NSM; Krizan & Herlache, 2017). The SPIN Model develops an explanation for why narcissists act and how they go about acting, specifically focusing on grandiose components, and the NSM provides a method for identifying the factors that make narcissism what it is, with grandiose and vulnerable components.

Status Pursuit in Narcissism Model

The Status Pursuit in Narcissism (SPIN) model attempts to provide a 'why' for narcissism, meaning an explanation for what narcissists pursue, as well as a 'how' for narcissism, meaning an explanation for what narcissists do to go about pursuing what they want (Grapsas et al., 2019). In answering these questions, the model provides an approach that solely seeks to understand grandiose narcissism, as opposed to vulnerable narcissism. The SPIN model posits that the grandiose narcissist is

motivated to pursue status, which addresses the 'why' for narcissism. It also explains the 'how' of narcissism by citing self-regulatory processes as the way motivation manifests as it occurs within the narcissist, inspiring the individual to act to acquire the best possible social status. These regulatory processes either manifest as self-promoting behaviors or other-derogating behaviors.

Important conceptual definitions to understand from the model are grandiose narcissism, social status, vigilance, and appraisal. Grandiose narcissism, per the model, is seen as the way narcissism manifests with agentic and antagonistic components. Agentic features are "characterized by assertiveness, beliefs of personal greatness, and feelings of superiority" and antagonistic features are "characterized by arrogance, quarrelsomeness and exploitativeness" (Grapsas et al., 2019, p. 151). Social status is conceptualized as the respect an individual derives or holds in a social setting. This is then the answer to what, at least in terms of what this model argues, narcissists seek above all else.

Vigilance is defined as a chronic awareness of certain cues that one perceives will allow one to pursue a goal. Narcissists are seen as being vigilant in identifying social cues that give them insight into their social status, such as how much others look at them, as opposed to how much their competitors in the social realm are looked at. Another manner by which narcissists are vigilant is in how they observe the status pursuit of other individuals. Based on their observations of how others pursue status, narcissists, through self-promotion or other-derogating behaviors, attempt to improve their own pursuit of status. The final important conceptualization is

appraisal. In this model, an appraisal is defined as how an individual analyzes the resources available to them in their pursuit of a goal.

Looking at the function of the model itself, it begins with an individual high in grandiose narcissism choosing a situation by which they will gain the best social status. This is the situation selection. Next, the individual goes down one of two paths, either the admiration pathway or the rivalry pathway. If through vigilance and appraisal, the individual perceives a situation as allowing them to pursue status, they go down the admiration pathway. This pathway would then result in the individual self-promoting to gain status. However, if the situation is perceived as threatening to the status pursuit, the rivalry pathway is followed. This would then result in the individual derogating others, particularly those seen as threatening their status pursuit. This final stage is the response execution by which narcissists act in the manner they see will provide them the most status gain. As the cycle continues to occur as the narcissist is faced with status-relevant situations, their behaviors become habits, causing the pursuit of status to define the behaviors of the narcissist continually.

The SPIN model is helpful in its identification of a root reason for narcissistic tendencies. This model also provides insight into how these tendencies can be actively pursued within an individual high in grandiose narcissism. Despite the model's sole focus on grandiose narcissism, as opposed to the NSM's integration of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism into a model, the SPIN model still proves to be useful in analyzing the reasons for narcissistic tendencies in many diagnosable individuals, as grandiosity is a common

characterizing factor in narcissistic individuals.

In a specific way, the model addresses the dynamic social consequences of narcissists' status pursuit in different environments, providing insight into the variations of where narcissists may do well, and may not do well while helping to explain why. For instance, Grapsas et al. (2019) cite status-oriented settings, such as job-related situations, as being an area where narcissists can thrive due to their narcissism being misperceived as self-esteem. However, in affiliation-oriented settings, such as friendships, narcissists do not tend to succeed as well due to their constant status-pursuit, which proves to lack positive regard in the long-term in friendships. Conclusively, the model can also aid researchers in creating studies that look into "precise interventions" for treating narcissism (Grapsas et al., 2019, p. 165). In this way, the SPIN model is a beneficial model for providing explanations for narcissism, and a better understanding of narcissism as it presents in the population.

Narcissism Spectrum Model

The Narcissism Spectrum Model (NSM) seeks to synthesize the vast array of literature present on narcissism (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). Whereas the SPIN model attempts to provide explanations for narcissism and narcissistic behaviors, the NSM helps provide a broad view of understanding and interpreting the factor structure of narcissism. The model addresses three problems in the literature by working to clarify three points: naming the main aspects that make up narcissism, shedding light on how the features that make up narcissism are organized and how they relate to each other, and lastly, addressing what explains the relationship of these narcissistic features and how they are organized. Importantly, this model addresses the grandiose and vulnerable components of narcissism and gives a model for understanding how these components can present simultaneously in an individual. This is cited to be a long-overdue approach to combing all the theories that exist concerning narcissism into one model.

Concerning these grandiose and vulnerable components, the authors identify two orientations to aid in the defining of the two manifestations of narcissism: an approach-orientation (grandiosity) and an avoidance-orientation (vulnerability). The approach-orientation is highlighted as reflecting the functional orientation of boldness. On the other hand, the avoidance-orientation is defined as reflecting the functional orientation of reactivity. Therefore, this model holds that grandiose and vulnerable manifestations of narcissism are formed from distinct "personality-environment transactions," as influenced by temperament and varying types of self-regulation strategies (Krizan & Herlache, 2017, p. 9). Analyzing these distinct orientations provides a better understanding of the diverse presentations of narcissism, which is then helpful for pinpointing the likely many developmental causes that lead to narcissism.

In defining constructs in this model, narcissism, narcissistic grandiosity, and narcissistic vulnerability are important terms to understand. As it relates to this model, narcissism is understood to be "entitled self-importance" (Krizan & Herlache, 2017, p. 4). Hence, entitlement and self-importance are then understood to be the "cardinal axis of narcissism," providing a reference point for viewing the possible dimensions of narcissism as it presents in grandiose and vulnerable manifestations

(Krizan & Herlache, 2017, p. 21). This entitlement and self-importance are further defined to be one's belief that he or she is superior, or more special, than others, and deserving of special treatment. Therefore, in viewing the narcissistic qualities of entitlement and self-importance as the axis for the model, this definition is seen as the commonality between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism that enables different combinations of these two components as they present in individuals.

Narcissistic grandiosity, as it is portrayed in the NSM, is characterized by exploitative behaviors, the pursuit of status, and high self-esteem. The boldness orientation that underlies grandiosity is articulated as motivation to approach situations, rather than avoid them, and a general lack of regard for risks associated with the pursuit of rewards. Vulnerable narcissism in the NSM is characterized by high stress, a shy or dismissive personality, and an intention to protect oneself. The reactivity orientation that underlies vulnerability is then understood to be a general motivation to avoid situations, and a general lack of concern for rewards being missed in their attempt to avoid criticisms, which are perceived to be threats.

Viewing these constructs as they pertain to the NSM, narcissistic entitlement is the starting point, as was previously mentioned, to addressing the distinct types and variations that arise in individuals with narcissism in relation to the presentation of grandiose and vulnerable qualities. Accordingly, this model holds that an individual can present with various combinations of grandiose and vulnerable traits if he or she is high in entitlement and self-importance. It sees the relationship between these two components as being able to present simultaneously, with one

presenting more than the other, or a mix of the two. It also perceives that if an individual is high in one component, they will then be lower in the other component.

In this way, the NSM develops a model that helps address the uncertainty in defining narcissism in light of the variations present in the possible grandiose and vulnerable forms of narcissism. It identifies the commonality between the two with entitlement and provides an application for aiding clinicians in identifying these manifestations of narcissism in an approach that caters to each individual, not confining their diagnosis to a restrictive scale.

Assessment Concerns

After considering theoretical models that address narcissism, concerns in the assessment of narcissism and valid measures of narcissism are to be discussed. Before looking into concerns in assessing narcissism, the criteria in the DSM for an NPD diagnosis are to be reviewed. As previously stated, there are nine criteria listed in the DSM, five of which are to be met for an individual to be officially diagnosed with NPD (APA, 2013). The individual also must present these criteria by early adulthood, and the criteria must occur in multiple contexts (APA, 2013).

The nine criteria include the following: "a grandiose sense of self-importance," a preoccupation "with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love," the individual believes he or she is special and "can only be understood by, or should associate with, other special or high-status people," a need for excessive admiration, "a sense of entitlement," exploitation in an individual's relationships, a lack of empathy, jealousy of others or believing "that others are envious of him or

her," and "arrogant, haughty behaviors or attitudes" (APA, 2013, pp. 669-670). Criticisms of this criteria were previously mentioned, particularly the focus on grandiose components, which can be seen through these criteria.

The previously mentioned Alternative Model of Personality Disorder, in contrast to the standard approach, takes into account grandiose and vulnerable components of narcissism in its determining of an NPD diagnosis. This alternative model also takes a multidimensional approach, considering many criteria to develop a personality disorder diagnosis, as opposed to the one-dimensional approach of the standard model. Criterion A in the alternative model considers the level of personality functioning, as determined by a clinician via interviews and formal psychometric instruments, which are completed by the individual and potentially someone in the individual's life (APA, 2013). In particular, for this criterion, the Levels of Personality Functioning Scale is used to assess identity, self-direction, empathy, and intimacy in these individuals' lives (APA, 2013). Particularly for NPD, there are to be issues on two of these scales in determining a diagnosis.

Criterion B in the alternative model assesses pathological personality traits. For NPD, antagonism is an important trait. Specifically, grandiosity, whether overt or covert and attention-seeking are the aspects of antagonism that are to be met to be considered NPD (APA, 2013). Criteria C and D of this model pertain to the pervasiveness and stability of the traits, meaning the traits are to present in many contexts and that the individual is unable to change the behaviors and thoughts that have shown to not work for them in the past (APA, 2013). The final criteria of the

alternative model, criteria E, F, and G, concern alternative explanations for personality pathology. An important feature of this model is that individuals can be assessed for personality functioning without receiving an official diagnosis or can be given more specified diagnoses that are trait-specific (APA, 2013).

Considering the previously mentioned uncertainty regarding the definition of the construct of narcissism, as well as adding the inconsistencies in the approaches used to diagnose NPD, it is apparent that the lack of clarity on narcissism is prevalent. Clinicians can utilize the standard approach for NPD diagnosis, or could potentially use the alternative model, as it was mentioned that some professionals recommend this alternative approach. These inconsistencies and disagreements are major concerns in the assessment of narcissism and NPD. If the approaches and measures are not consistent in what they hold narcissism and NPD to be, it is difficult to determine what these measures are measuring. This also leads to difficulty in interpreting past findings, as well as with moving forward with research in an effective manner. Overarching and consistent definitions of narcissism and NPD in the field are of great importance moving forward.

As was mentioned earlier, it is difficult to get individuals high in narcissism to treatment. Not to mention the added difficulty in getting them to stay and finish the treatment by the chance that they ever start it (Dhawan et al., 2010; Floyd & Narramore, 2017; Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). This is a major area of concern in analyzing the assessment of narcissism and NPD, as a general lacking of information and research on this portion of the population ought to be acknowledged and considered, as it is a possibility that

many individuals go undiagnosed and untreated. Researchers even go so far as to call NPD a largely underdiagnosed disorder (Dimaggio et al., 2013). All in all, NPD is a difficult disorder to accurately study and measure. In light of this and the mentioned concerns, it is important to choose measures that are valid and reliable in measuring narcissism in the sense that the researcher understands it, or is seeking to define it.

With these concerns being articulated, this thesis focuses on the measures of the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire Short Scale (NARQ-S; Leckelt et al., 2017) and Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory (FFNI; Glover et al., 2011). The NARQ-S measures solely grandiose features of narcissism, and the FFNI measures narcissism through both grandiose and vulnerable components. A measure that focuses on grandiose narcissism was chosen due to the prevalence of research on grandiose components of narcissism, as a majority of theoretical development has looked into this narcissism phenotype (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). A measure that looks into both grandiose and vulnerable components of narcissism was then chosen due to the focus of these two narcissistic phenotypes in this thesis.

Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire Short Scale

The Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire Short Scale (NARQ-S) is a recently developed short self-report measure consisting of 6 items (Leckelt et al., 2017). It is the short version of the NARQ, cited to have been developed due to a need for an accurate and short assessment of agentic and antagonistic components of grandiose narcissism. Accordingly, there are two subscales of this measure, the admiration and rivalry subscales, which measure

agentic and antagonistic components respectively. There are three items assessing the agentic components, via the admiration subscale, and three items assessing the antagonistic components, via the rivalry subscale.

In taking this assessment, individuals rank statements on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being do not agree at all and 6 being agree completely. An example of an item on the admiration subscale is: "I deserve to be seen as a great personality" (Leckelt et al., 2017, p. 5). An example of an item on the rivalry subscale is: "I want my rivals to fail" (Leckelt et al., 2017, p. 5). This measure has been shown to have adequate reliability across samples even though it is a brief measure. It showed a Cronbach's alpha of .84 for the admiration subscale and a Cronbach's alpha of .70 for the rivalry subscale. This is represents adequate reliability, meaning these subscales appear to be measuring the constructs they intend to be measuring.

Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory

The Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory (FFNI) is a self-report measure of narcissism that consists of 148 items (Glover et al., 2011). This measure utilizes the perspective of the Five-Factor Model of assessing personality, a widely cited valid model of personality assessment, to specifically assess narcissistic personality traits. It has 15 subscales that measure reactive anger, shame, indifference, need for admiration, exhibitionism, thrill-seeking, authoritativeness, grandiose fantasies, cynicism/distrust, manipulativeness, exploitativeness, entitlement, arrogance, lack of empathy, and acclaim-seeking. Four of these scales assess vulnerable narcissism. These subscales are reactive anger, shame, need for admiration, and cynicism/distrust.

The remaining 11 subscales assess grandiose narcissism.

In taking this assessment, individuals rank statements on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagreed and 5 being strongly agreed. An example item assessing the subscale of entitlement is as follows: "I believe I am entitled to special accommodations" (Glover et al., 2011, p. 503). This measure is cited to have adequate internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .90, meaning the subscales appear to be measuring what they intend to measure, and good incremental validity, meaning the measure improves on the predictivity of other similar measures. Importantly, this measure is cited to be useful for enabling future studies to be able to empirically test the hypothesis that an individual can possess high amounts of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, or fluctuate between the two.

The NARQ-S and FFNI differ in a number of ways. The FFNI was validated some years before the NARQ-S, is significantly longer in length, and assesses two manifestations of narcissism. These measures are similar in that they are both self-report measures. The self-report measure is another assessment concern in itself. Individuals high in narcissism, or diagnosed with NPD, tend to have little insight into themselves, are highly manipulative, meaning they may be prone to try to deceive or hide things about themselves and may underreport symptoms because of their tendency to not perceive their weaknesses, and desire to present a grandiose image of themselves to others (Dimaggio et al., 2013; Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). Overarchingly, both of these measures focus on assessing different components of narcissism, both are valid and useful measures for assessing the construct, and both can be used depending upon which aspects are pertinent to the individual being treated or assessed.

Treatment Modalities

Properly treating those with NPD is of great importance. A major factor influencing this importance is the fact that NPD not only affects the individual diagnosed with the disorder. Those in the life of individuals with the disorder are also tremendously impacted (Dimaggio et al., 2013). This interpersonal impact of narcissists in relationships, which was briefly addressed prior, is largely because individuals with NPD have a wide range of externalizing behaviors, which include willingness to exploit relationships, practice infidelity, and behave aggressively, both verbally or physically (Dhawan et al., 2010). Not seeking any sort of possibly beneficial change, these individuals also commonly avoid treatment, which affects the lives of those around them as they continue to act the same (Dhawan et al., 2010). Interpersonal interactions with the narcissist are also a source of struggle for all involved because these interactions allow the narcissist to see where their ideal-self and their actual-self diverge from each other (Schie et al., 2021).

In viewing the common trends seen among the relationships of those high in characteristics of narcissism, grandiosity is associated with relationships of exploitation that end poorly over time (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). Vulnerability is connected with being needy in relationships that are full of ups and downs (Krizan & Herlache, 2017). This creates a problem for the narcissistic individual, especially with the individual high in grandiosity, as they tend to excel at self-presentation and forming new relationships, being well-liked initially,

but having trouble with their relationships later on (Floyd & Narramore, 2017; Grapsas et al., 2020). Provided these difficulties that individuals with NPD commonly present with, especially in interpersonal relationships, it becomes clearer why NPD tends to be cited as a highly challenging disorder to treat (Tanzilli et al., 2017).

Many considerations factor into an NPD diagnosis. Krizan and Herlache (2017) advise that the determination of narcissism pathology in individuals only be done by trained clinicians. In this respect, a trained clinician includes a mental health professional of some sort, commonly a psychologist or psychiatrist. As a clinician, these individuals have gone through extensive training including continued education after college in a graduate school, thus obtaining a Doctoral degree, as well as a great deal of clinical shadowing and hours (Pepperdine University, 2021). Finally, psychologists are to have obtained a license to practice, which involves an exam and other requirements depending on the state one is practicing (Pepperdine University, 2021). Concerning working with patients with NPD specifically, there is not necessarily required expertise, but experience and extensive knowledge in proper treatment for these individuals is likely needed to ensure the best approach and outcome, as these patients are more difficult to work with, and tend to not stay in therapy for long (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). Typical NPD diagnosis is done through a structured interview or a specific diagnostic questionnaire (Campbell & Miller, 2011).

Treatments for NPD are varied. Personality disorders in general, and specifically those high in narcissism, are considered one of the most difficult diagnoses to provide treatment for (Tanzilli et al., 2017). This is not only due to the difficulties that arise in treatment, but also the difficulty in getting them to treatment. Individuals with NPD are mentioned to tend to only seek out treatment when a "life ultimatum," such as a divorce, causes an extreme challenge to their typical functioning (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020, p. 133). As far as recommendations for treatment approaches, professionals claim that in treating NPD, an awareness of the patient's increased likelihood to fall into feelings of shame and humiliation, as well as patience with them in this, are key components to effective treatment (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020).

As for the best possible treatment for NPD, there is no single approach cited to be the most superior in the literature. This is due to the absence of empirical studies that gauge the effects of treatments on the prognosis of

NPD (Dimaggio et al., 2013). Psychotherapy, or talk therapy, tends to be a common approach for treating personality disorders (Bach et al., 2016). Specific types of psychotherapy include dialectical behavior therapy, schema-focused therapy, and metacognitive psychotherapy (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). A specific type of psychotherapy that is also common for personality disorder treatment is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020; Yakeley, 2018). This thesis addresses the form of psychotherapy called metacognitive interpersonal therapy (MIT; Dimaggio et al., 2013), and a form of therapy called eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR therapy; Mosquera & Knipe, 2015) for treatment of NPD.

Metacognitive Interpersonal Therapy

Metacognitive Interpersonal Therapy (MIT) is a treatment approach that aims to address the cognitive aspects that result in issues for

individuals with NPD (Dimaggio et al., 2013). Hence, this approach uses cognitive dimensions to explain the source of narcissistic tendencies. These cognitive components, which this treatment presupposes are characterizing factors of NPD, include the use of intellectualization when recounting experiences, poor ability to think about one's cognitive abilities, improper and harmful schemas in relationships, diminished and hyper-agency, and a lack of purpose.

Intellectualization in individuals with NPD is seen through the recounting of personal experiences from a distant, abstract perspective. Metacognitive issues can entail an inability to empathize with others, an unawareness of this inability, and difficulties with understanding personal feelings and emotions. Incorrect schemas in MIT, via the defining of schemas in the Core Conflictual Relationship template, involve a wish, a procedure entailing a cause and effect that creates a reaction in another person, and the reaction of the person with NPD to how the other person reacted to them. Those with NPD tend to have schemas of others that lead them to believe others will respond to their wishes by not giving them the attention they desire. Ultimately, then, these schemas lead them to exercise coping strategies such as fighting in response or hiding their "vulnerable self" (Dimaggio et al., 2013, p. 86). Concerning diminished and hyper-agency, individuals with NPD are understood to have a lessened drive to act when persistence is needed over time but respond with hyper-agency when pursuing grandiose ideals or countering others who threaten their grandiosity. This, in turn, feeds into the lack of purpose in these individuals' lives, as they are cited to have lessened existential agency, due to their constant focus on how others perceive them.

To address these cognitive deficits, this treatment utilizes two procedural steps entitled *shared formulation of functioning* and *change-promoting*. Shared formulation of functioning aims to help the patient in changing their pathogenic and maladaptive schemas and grow in developing an awareness of self. Initially, the therapist works to get specific details from the patient regarding specific memories that the patient experienced. This is an effort to counteract the NPD patient's tendency to tell stories from the intellectualized standpoint that was previously mentioned. Next, the therapist is to aid the patient in recognizing their feelings, specifically working to identify the origins of what causes these emotions to be triggered. This attempts to address the patient's poor metacognition and seeks to help them to be aware of what occurs internally. The therapist can then encourage the patient to integrate their specific memories to recognize the common underlying patterns in each. This tactic enables the patient to understand that they have incorrect representations of others, which commonly includes believing that others are going to hurt them. Upon gaining this realization, the patient can then be led to the understanding that this maladaptive assumption leads them to be "oversensitive to criticism or passive when the admiration and praise they need are lacking" (Dimaggio et al., 2013, p. 87).

Next, change-promoting continues aiding the patient in developing more adaptive cognitive processes. After the patient realizes that they have false schemas involving how they expect others to react to them, it becomes apparent that the continued awareness of this, and the use of new perspectives in social settings, is difficult to maintain between therapy sessions. Thus, the therapist's goals continuing forward with the therapy are to aid the client in creating

new schemas for interpersonal situations, as well as to aid the individual in becoming autonomous, and to have agency in the pursuit of his or her wishes, specifically wishes that are outside of his or her desire to be superior to others. Upon recognizing that he or she has interests that can be pursued and provide fulfillment, the therapist can aid the individual in understanding that desiring superiority and admiration is normal in humans, but there is more to life than this. Ultimately, the patient will then be aided in becoming more empathetic toward others, gaining a greater awareness of how he or she impacts others.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy

The second type of treatment for NPD to be looked into is Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy, a therapy cited to work well in treating Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015). EMDR therapy is a form of therapy that, when applied to treating NPD, involves addressing childhood traumas and aiding individuals in shifting from a false view of self to being comfortable with a real perception of self. This therapy presupposes that it is these core childhood traumas that bring about the false narcissistic self. This false narcissistic self is then viewed as a defense from these traumatic memories. These traumas could be traumas of commission, such as sexual abuse from caretakers, or, as they are cited to more commonly be, traumas of omission, such as neglectful or disengaged caretakers.

As a defense from these memories, the false narcissistic self allows the individual to focus on positive qualities they possess, as well as qualities they would like to possess, thus combining these ideals into the narcissistic, positively-skewed self.

Accordingly, any thought or idea contradicting this positive self-image is eliminated. In this manner, the individual with NPD uses the false narcissistic self as a defense, protecting them from fears or beliefs of not being good enough, which arise from these traumatic memories. Narcissists also tend to perceive themselves and others in a distorted manner. The narcissist's need to be seen as perfect by others is a distorted perception of self that commonly could have been the defense used to protect from complete abandoning in childhood.

To address the "unpleasant emotion and overly negative self-definition" as well as the "core memories engendering an overly positive sense of self" that are understood to underlie an individual's NPD diagnosis, EMDR therapy is an approach that utilizes eight phases for treatment (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015, p. 47). These eight phases are history taking, preparation, assessment, desensitization, installation, body scan, closure, and reevaluation. The first two phases involve the therapist gathering history, and importantly, developing a strong therapeutic alliance. This therapeutic alliance in turn helps to allow the client to be able to move and develop into the reprocessing phase. This then leads into phases three through seven, which are phases that aim to aid the individual in processing specific target experiences (e.g., the traumatic childhood memories) in a different way.

As the client progresses through these phases with the therapist, patience is of utmost importance, as the process is cited to take time. Diving deeper into the phases, after a therapeutic alliance is developed in phase one, and the client is more willing to reveal aspects of the vulnerable self, phase two can be moved into. Phase two consists

of psychoeducation, which involves helping the client look at their past differently, as well as seeing their defenses as such, not as flaws. Phase two also entails a technique called bilateral stimulation. This is a calming technique, commonly involving having the client follow the therapist's finger with their eyes as it moves back and forth, meant to stimulate both sides of the brain, and enhance the individual's processing of their traumatic memories.

Following phase two, the individual moves into the reprocessing of these specific memories. In the assessment phase, phase three, the therapist assesses changes in the client using the Subjective Units of Disturbance Scale and the Validity of Cognition Scale. Next, the client is aided in feeling the emotions associated with these memories in phase four, desensitization. In phases five through seven, the client is helped to realize their inability to possess the grandiose ideals they hold and desire, moving to a more realistic view of self through the process of acknowledging events of the past, and working through the emotions and bodily sensations that come with these traumas. Ultimately, in phase eight, reevaluation, the client is helped to stay on track, addressing one targeted memory at a time, with the likelihood of continuing the process with the same memory, and others in the future.

Specifying Circumstances for Varied Treatment of NPD

Importantly, there have not been any randomized control trial studies done on treatment methods for NPD (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). Therefore, it is difficult to name one therapy as superior in specific situations. However, dependent on the etiology of the individual's particular manifestation of NPD, one treatment could potentially suit a client more so than another. For instance, an individual presenting with NPD could have underlying past traumatic experiences of neglect in childhood. If this is discovered to be the case, EMDR therapy could be a good fit for the client. However, MIT could also still be a helpful approach in addressing current maladaptive cognitive functions in the client. Both therapies have been cited to require time and patience, so the choice of therapy seems to currently be one left to the clinician, as he or she sees treatment to be fit for the unique client they are presented with.

Ethical Concerns

There are a number of ethical concerns that could arise in providing treatment for, and in working with an individual with narcissistic tendencies or NPD. It is important for clinicians to be aware of the potential risks of violating these ethical principles so that violating them can be avoided at all costs. The ethical concerns, as they are presented in the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (American Psychological Association, 2017), that are to be addressed as they apply to work with individuals diagnosed with NPD, include Principle 3.08, Exploitative Relationships, and Principle 2.01, Boundaries of Competence.

Principle 3.08: Exploitative Relationships

Principle 3.08 says that psychologists are not to exploit their clients, or any others they have authority over, in any way (APA, 2017). Therefore, in providing treatment for NPD, a clinician is to exercise care in ensuring that they do not exploit their client in any way. Individuals with narcissistic tendencies can start to bring a clinician into their grandiose ideas, allowing the clinician to buy into the fantasy that the client is very

special, and the clinician is, therefore, their very special therapist. This is called projective identification (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015). Therefore, the clinician needs to guard against falling into the grandiose fantasies, as this could prove to be fatal to the progress of the narcissistic individual, at the expense of the clinician being able to feel good about themselves (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015).

Though not explicitly stated in the ethical principle, this potential for a clinician to exploit the client is also relevant in the opposite manner, as the client could exploit the clinician. There is a desire for power that is often present within NPD, as well as strong manipulative and deceptive tendencies. As mentioned by Weinberg and Ronningstam (2020), "NPD patients need to feel in charge of treatment, and they will invest any effort to remain in control" (p. 136). Another important consideration is the previously cited exploitative nature of narcissists in their relationships (APA, 2013; Dhawan et al., 2010). Based on these commonly presenting characteristics in NPD, it is also important for a clinician providing treatment that they are not manipulated or exploited in any way by the patient. Accordingly, clear boundaries are necessary. These boundaries will help to guard against countertransference, which is the clinician's emotional response to the client (Weinberg & Ronningstam, 2020). To be able to set boundaries, a clinician needs to understand the narcissistic individual fairly well. This knowledge pertains to the next ethical principle, which addresses the need for relevant experience and knowledge for providing treatment to clients.

Principle 2.01: Boundaries of Competence

The second ethical principle to be considered is Principle 2.01, Boundaries of

Competence (APA, 2017). The portion of this principle that is of particular importance says that psychologists are to only treat those populations that they are competent to treat, which is determined by "their education, training, supervised experience, consultation, study, or professional experience" (APA, 2017, p. 5). In working with the NPD population, it is important to have the proper background and experience needed to work with them. As previously mentioned, there is extensive schooling to be a licensed clinical professional.

To be able to work with NPD clients, these requirements should be met, and the best possible clinician able to provide treatment for NPD should always be the one paired with the affected individual. As per the principle, in an attempt to not deny services to individuals, if no clinicians have the competence necessary for working with NPD clients, clinicians with similar training or experience can provide services so long as they make a reasonable attempt to gain competence in the area of providing treatment for those with NPD (APA, 2017). This principle is of particular importance when considering the damage these types of clients can cause as well as their tendency to not see therapy through to the end, that is on the unlikely chance that they come to receive treatment in the first place. If competence is not had by a clinician, there is a risk of the clinician misperceiving a "false vulnerable self" in the client, and then failing to protect the others in the narcissist's life "who might be in danger" (Mosquera & Knipe, 2015, p. 53).

Conclusion

Narcissism is a topic of antiquity that has only increased in its popularity and interest over the years. It is not only of psychological interest, but also relevant in

empirical research in political science, cultural studies, educational research, and criminology (Campbell & Miller, 2011; Yakeley, 2018). Based on this great span of history and subject matter that narcissism possesses, it is clear it is a topic of great interest and importance, that continues to Studies on effective treatments for this population are lacking. This is an area for growth, particularly for moving forward with addressing the varied presentations of the disorder. If a better understanding of these varied presentations is developed, concerning the grandiose to the vulnerable manifestations, the origins of narcissism have the potential to be better understood. This more comprehensive understanding of the etiology of narcissism could then in turn lead to the development of better and more specific treatment approaches. Along with this improved understanding, the underlying issue surrounding NPD could be attempted to be addressed: how to best aid individuals with NPD in getting treatment.

In summary, moving forward with research on NPD first requires consistent definitions of narcissism as a construct and a consistent manner of diagnosing its pathological manifestation of NPD. This could increase the potential for the field to move forward efficiently with randomized control trial studies of treatment methods for NPD. The

remain relevant. Despite continued interest in this construct, there continues to be struggle involving the defining of narcissism, and defining it as it presents as a disorder.

clarifying of these definitions ought to take into account the drastic variations that narcissism presents in, from grandiose to vulnerable manifestations. Once clearer definitions are made, and studies developed, greater understanding can then be provided for the general population for understanding narcissists. Along with this understanding, individuals who are faced with narcissists, or currently dealing with them in their lives, could then be given insight for recognizing the narcissist in their life, to set boundaries to protect themselves. This approach could aid in counteracting the difficulty of getting narcissists to treatment by helping those in the life of the narcissist, that may not even be aware of what they are dealing with. In this way, therapeutic techniques have the potential to be transferred from the clinical setting into the real-world setting. As growth continues in the field, there is hope that these issues will be addressed, and positive change will be seen on the narcissism front for the field of psychology, thus providing benefit to the population as a whole.

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The Role of Attachment in Treating Partner-Violent Men

By

Amanda M. Johnson

Abstract

Intimate partner violence affects 30% of women and 10% of men (World Health Organization, 2021; Center for Disease Control, 2020). Predominantly, it is understood as a behavior used by men to gain power and control over women, as is encouraged by societal norms (Pence & Paymar, 1993). This understanding is accompanied by the Duluth models of treatment, which make up 53% of batterer intervention programs for partner-violent men (Herman et al., 2014). Unfortunately, research into the Duluth model indicates that it lacks effectiveness in reducing subsequent abusive actions (Arias, Arce, & Vilariño 2013; Cotti et al., 2019; Herman et al., 2014), which researchers attribute to causes such as group differences in lack of motivation to change (Murphy & Meis, 2008). The therapeutic alliance offers a promising remedy to these criticisms; building an attachment-based bond with the client could increase treatment effectiveness (Wallin, 2007; Yalom, 2002). Additionally, implementing motivational interviewing techniques before and throughout treatment could challenge the potential resistance to change (Bohall, Bautista, & Musson, 2013; Butters et al., 2021; Lawson, et al.,2012; Santirso, Lila, & Gracia, 2020). Such strategies could greatly improve batterer intervention programs as a whole, especially when coupled with ethical practice and research (APA, 2016).
keywords: intimate partner violence, attachment dimensions, batterer intervention programs, motivational interviewing, therapeutic alliance

Prevalence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a dangerous reality and has been for centuries. Across the current literature, IPV is defined as any threatened or actual physical, sexual, or emotional harm in an intimate partner relationship (Bohall, Bautista, & Musson, 2016; Butters, et al., 2021; McDermott & Lopez, 2013; Sleath et al., 2018). Physical harm in IPV can range from a forceful shove to a brutal homicide and sexual harm can involve coercion into sexual acts or violent assaults. Emotional harm is often normalized in its tamest forms (e.g., name-calling, stonewalling; Knox et al., 2022) but can increase in severity with behaviors aimed at intimidation, control, or isolation from others. The World Health Organization (2021) estimates that 30% of women suffer from intimate partner violence at some point in their life, as opposed to 10% of men in the United States, 97% of whom reported female perpetrators (CDC, 2020).

Assessing IPV: Revised Conflict Tactics Scale

In clinical settings, intimate partner violence is assessed using the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2; Sleath, Walker, & Tramontano, 2018). The CTS2 is an inventory of intimate partner violent behaviors that can be taken by either victims or perpetrators of IPV; the wording of each item is altered depending on the target population. With five subscales (Negotiation, Psychological aggression, Physical assault, Sexual coercion, and Injury) the CTS2 has 78 items. Each subscale has a range of severity, with sample items including "I grabbed my partner," and "I punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt." Each item is rated on a Likert-like scale of 0-7; 0 = *never*, 1 = *not in the past year, but it happened before*, 2 = *once*, 3 = *twice*, 4 = *3-5 times*, 5 = *6-10 times*, 6 = *11-20 times*, 7 = *more than twenty times*. Sleath, Walker, and Tramontano (2018) report adequate to excellent reliability, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from α = .75 to .95. Some items were determined to be too conceptually similar, particularly within the severe Physical assault and Injury subscales. These similarities can be attributed to the fact that injury is presumably preceded by a severe physical assault. For the scale overall, some items may be very similar due to the authors' dedication to making an inclusive scale which assesses many possible types of IPV.

The researchers also found that severe Physical and Sexual subscales had low variability (95% chose *never*), indicating that perhaps such a good face validity is an impairment to the accuracy of responses. Especially in cases of perpetration, respondents might be subject to conformity bias; they may be unwilling to admit the use of particularly severe violence due to a fear of being hated or socially rejected. Additionally, perpetrators of intimate partner

violence are known to minimize the severity of their actions and avoid responsibility for their behavior (Pence & Paymar, 1993). These clearly-worded items assume a level of honesty that partner-violent men are unlikely to demonstrate before undergoing an effective treatment.

Sociocultural Feminism – The History of IPV Theory

Feminism (under the broad Socioculturalism) is the predominant theory for understanding why intimate partner violence occurs. In 1980, a brutal homicide by intimate partner violence became the catalyst for the city of Duluth, Minnesota to conceptualize a treatment modality and accompanying theory to confront male IPV perpetrators. Spearheaded by the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP), the treatment was developed and implemented over the course of one year. (Pence & Paymar, 1993) The Duluth model has since become the most prominent form of treatment in North America, making up 53% of what are called Batterer Intervention Programs (BIPs; Herman et al., 2014). According to Pence & Paymar's book *Education Groups for Men Who Batter* (1993), this treatment operates under a few core assumptions: physical and sexual violence, coupled with other tactics that fall under the umbrella of emotional abuse, are used against women to gain power and control over them. Furthermore, a misogynistic society reinforces these behaviors through depictions of violence in media and a history filled with violence being used to dominate. Pence & Paymar (1993) posit that not one person in American culture is spared from this belief – it is completely normalized. Drawing from the idea of a patriarchy, the sociocultural theory limits its understanding of IPV to a strictly male-to-female violent population. The

theory's assumptions likely stem from the discrepancy in victimization between men and women (CDC, 2020; WHO, 2021).

Sociocultural feminism assumes that men operate under a set of core beliefs that justify and characterize their violence toward women. Abusers may use justifications such as, "Women are manipulative," or "women are provoking," (Pence & Paymar, 1993, p. 9; Weldon & Gilchrist, 2013, p. 767) to shift the blame elsewhere. Other core beliefs of male IPV perpetrators include "anger causes violence," "violence is normal," "I need to be in control," "she needs to change," and many more. (Pence & Paymar, 1993; Weldon & Gilchrist, 2013) While these beliefs inspire an interesting conversation surrounding the justification of IPV, they are often drawn from a small sample of men (4 and 6 men, respectively). Such a small sample size makes it difficult to generalize these core beliefs to all IPV perpetrators, especially those who are either female or in same-sex relationships.

More reliable literature on the sociocultural model exists in abundance: Harrington, Overall, & Cross (2021) explored the relationships between masculine gender role stress, low relationship power, and intimate partner violence. Masculine gender role stress (MGRS) is defined as "stress men may experience within situations that threaten expectations associated with a traditional masculine identity," (Harrington, Overall, & Cross, 2021, p. 50) and includes situations such as emotional expression, physical inadequacy, intellectual inferiority, performance failure, and subordination to women. Masculine gender role stress has, in previous research, been found to correlate positively with IPV and theoretically relates to the Duluth model's understanding of socialized misogyny.

Relational power is described as a perceived influence over one's romantic partner. Subsequently, low relational power implies a perceived lack of control or influence over an intimate partner. This variable is theoretically aligned with the Duluth model's understanding of power and control being a driving factor in men's decision to abuse; it has also been statistically associated with male perpetration of abuse. Harrington, Overall, & Cross argue that "men may be more likely to respond to low relationship power with aggression [because of] social expectations associated with traditional masculinity." (2021, p. 48) That is, men who believe they do not have much influence over their female partners may become stressed because of a societal expectation that the man should be in power. Therefore, this study is particularly relevant to the sociocultural model posited by Pence & Paymar (1993).

Using self-report assessments, Harrington, Overall, & Cross (2021) explored the correlations between these variables. They found that MGRS significantly moderated the associations between both physical and verbal aggression and low relational power, indicating that men who experience low relational power only respond to their partners with aggression when they feel significant gender role stress. The inverse of this implies that men who do not experience significant stress about their masculinity are less likely to act aggressively. This relationship was reflected in all four studies that Harrington, Overall, and Cross (2021) conducted, which strengthens these findings. The sociocultural model's claim that men engage in IPV both due to masculine role norms and a desire for power is both widespread and well-supported by empirical research.

The Duluth Model

The feminist theory for intimate partner violence is closely accompanied by a treatment known as the Duluth Model. This treatment is characterized by a group psychoeducational format that meets for 2 hours weekly. Most participants are court-mandated to attend, and attendance lasts a minimum of 26 weeks. Within 1 week of their initial order to attend, facilitators conduct intake interviews with each of the clients, sometimes in groups. The clients are assessed for the pattern, severity, and prevalence of their violence against intimate partners; any drug or alcohol usage; risk to self or others as related to homicide or suicide; personality characteristics as related to how they will participate in the groups; and any violence directed toward their children. Any men with significant substance abuse, psychological problems, or extremely disruptive behavior are referred elsewhere for treatment (Pence & Paymar, 1993, pp. 17-26).

Each group has a facilitator or two designed to both teach concepts and lead group discussions. The goals for the facilitators include keeping women's experience alive in the conversation of the group, avoiding distraction by the member's personal problems, and "keep[ing] the men focused for 2 hours in each group on themselves and their use of violence against women, rather than on their partners or relationships." (Pence & Paymar, 1993, p. 29) These goals are not only practical in nature, but specifically align with the overall theory that violence is a tool to gain power over women. These ideals are furthered by Pence & Paymar's (1993) list of group member goals, including "understand that his acts of violence are a means of controlling his partners' actions, thoughts, and feelings… [and understand] the causes of his violence by examining the cultural and social context in which he uses violence against his partner." (p. 30) Facilitators will often confront clients on their beliefs, feelings, and behaviors as a first step to educating them. It is clear through the authors' curriculum that Duluth-modeled groups are deeply grounded in the feminist model.

The prominent tool by which facilitators educate men on abuse is the Power and Control Wheel (Figure 1). Here, the outside of the wheel labeled "physical violence" and "sexual violence" is seen as the primary tactic of abuse, where each section of the inner wheel (e.g., male privilege, emotional abuse) are secondary yet significant tactics to gain power and control over female partners.

Figure 1.
Power and Control Wheel

Pence & Paymar (1993), p. 3

While Duluth model treatment is the most widely used when treating IPV perpetration,

it has not remained uncontested. Experiments on the effectiveness of the treatment as compared to other modalities, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and acceptance and commitment therapy have not resulted in the Duluth model's favor. In a meta-analysis of 38 years' worth of literature on the effectiveness of BIPs, Arias, Arce, & Vilariño (2013) found that there was a non-significant, moderate effect (δ = 0.42) on re-offense rates when looking at official police reports. When computing for a counternull effect, the researchers found that there was a 39% success rate. However, couple reports indicated that there was almost no effect on perpetration (δ = 0.05), suggesting that men who completed Duluth programs did not experience significant change. This finding is further reflected in Herman et al.'s (2014) longitudinal study that found no statistically significant difference in recidivism rates for men who completed a Duluth model BIP when compared to those who dropped out or were terminated prematurely ($\chi^2(1)$= .03, p = .87; p. 10). These statistics are very concerning, especially considering that Duluth programs are the most utilized modality of treatment. There could be many factors contributing to its overall ineffectiveness.

Bohall et al. (2016) question the foundation of the model, given that it was established by a group of activists and not a team of clinicians. The theories and curriculum may be too complex or sophisticated for some clients to understand – Pence & Paymar even state that 7% of their clients were unable to read or write. Tools such as the Power and Control Wheel, which heavily uses words, may be unhelpful for such clients. Likewise, there is no required licensure to facilitate these groups, bringing

to mind questions of competency and validity.

The group format is criticized by Murphy & Meis (2008), who offer concerns for the individualization of treatment. Clients are likely to differ in their level of readiness for change. Group formats make it difficult to address each client on a personal level; what time is spent addressing one client's resistance could be entirely unhelpful for one who has demonstrated an appropriate level of compliance. Some clients may demonstrate disordered personality traits, not on a severe enough level to be referred out, but significant enough to disrupt their growth. Facilitators of a group may be unable to help these clients with those problems, especially given that they may not have license to practice. Individualized goal-setting, as is custom in one-on-one therapy, is hard to achieve as it would take too much time to complete and keep up with within each group.

Murphy and Meis (2008) also discuss the topic of deviancy training, which is primarily studied in delinquent youth groups, but could be relevant to IPV perpetrators. Deviancy training is defined as a "peer contagion effect" demonstrated by specific patterns of peer interaction, such as laughter, that reinforce "rule-breaking" talk or behavior (Murphy & Meis, 2008, p. 178). Though this has not been directly studied in reference to group programs for abusers, it could present as a particularly impactful problem. Furthermore, facilitators cannot control or avoid deviancy training altogether since they cannot dictate what contributions are made in conversation. Such behaviors can be confronted, but clients' internal response to peer feedback is not regulated or known unless specifically disclosed. Treatment in the form of groups is therefore

generalized and unpredictable by nature, which may hinder real growth.

The Therapeutic Alliance

Empathy, responsibility, and therapist-client bonds are essential in any sort of treatment. Often, these characteristics come together in what is conceptualized as the therapeutic achieved through cohesion within the members of the group and the overall climate of their interactions. Studies indicate that the therapeutic alliance has a positive relationship. with treatment outcome in BIPs. Perpetrators' self-reports of both the working alliance and their overall attitudes toward treatment reflected significantly high correlations (r=.60 -.83; Boira et al., 2013). These correlations provide ample support for the prioritization of the therapeutic alliance within BIPs.

However, since most of the clients in BIPs are court-mandated to attend, a traditional therapeutic alliance is difficult to build. In these situations, compliance is a pre-requisite to outcomes. Many of the men mandated to a BIP may be resistant to change. This presents a unique challenge to facilitators as they must "care for, but also have control over, the [client]" (Skeem et al., 2007). Furthermore, because these facilitators have control over clients, the collaborative nature of the working alliance is sacrificed. A perpetrator of IPV may have differing goals for treatment than the therapist. For example, he may want to learn how to implement "time-outs" during arguments, which can be its own form of abuse (Pence & Paymar, 1993); a facilitator would not share this goal, likely overriding the client's desire in place of a healthier resolution to arguments.

Skeem et al. (2013) developed an assessment for this unique relationship,

alliance, also known as the working alliance. The therapeutic alliance is more specifically defined as "the collaborative relationship between the client and the therapist, and is based on the degree of agreement with the goals of intervention, the tasks to be performed, and the creation of a positive bond between both parties" (Boira et al., 2013, p. 2). In groups, this alliance is called the Dual-Role Relationship Inventory (DRI). The DRI consists of three subscales, dedicated to each of the domains necessary for this sort of relationship: Caring-Fairness, Trust, and Toughness. The toughness scale was reverse-coded so that a high total score would indicate a caring and trustworthy relationship, as this aspect is associated with "an indifference to the [clients'] views and feelings [and] an expectation of compliance" (Skeem et al., 2013, p. 407). Each of the subscales have excellent internal reliability, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from =.87-.96. When the researchers measured its construct validity as relates to the traditional measure for a working alliance, the WAI, they found a moderate positive correlation. This correlation indicates that the DRI is conceptually similar to the WAI, but differs as necessary. For example, the DRI items assessing collaboration were removed as they appeared to be unapplicable to this particular relationship. Additionally, Skeem et al. (2013) found that high non-reversed scores on the Toughness subscale predicted an increase in the likelihood that the client would reoffend (p. 405). This statistical finding supports the claim that empathy in treating perpetrators of IPV is extremely important.

Attachment Theory in IPV

Attachment theory was established by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth beginning in

the 1950s and stretching into the 1970s. Originally, the researchers sought to understand parent- child relationships through the study of behavior during separation. The theory differed from previous research as Bowlby made it clear that attachment, unlike dependency, is an indication of a healthy relationship between mother and child (Bretherton, 1992). It is more specifically defined as an emotional connection between two people, characterized by the presence or absence of sensitivity, acceptance, and collaboration. The secure mother, who demonstrates these characteristics, is contrasted with the insecure mother, who either inconsistently or completely fails to demonstrate them (Wallin, 2007). This leads to an "insecure" or uncertain attachment to the caregiver, which is understood in adulthood as falling into two dimensions: anxiety and avoidance. Attachment anxiety is defined as a fear of rejection from the attachment figure and is associated with a negative view of oneself, whereas attachment avoidance is defined as a fear of emotional intimacy and is associated with a negative view of others (Fraley et al., 2015; González-Ortega et al., 2020; Knox et al., 2022; Nisenbaum & Lopez, 2015). In adult attachment research, which focuses on an adult's attachment to their intimate partner, the dimensional approach is favored to the categorical one. Insecure attachment – that is, high levels of avoidance and/or anxiety – has been associated with both perpetration and victimization of intimate partner violence (e.g., González-Ortega et al., 2020; Harrington, Overall, & Cross, 2021; Knox et al., 2022; McDermott & Lopez, 2013; Nisenbaum & Lopez, 2015). According to Bartholomew & Allison (2006), both prominent

Figure 2.

Two-dimensional model of attachment.
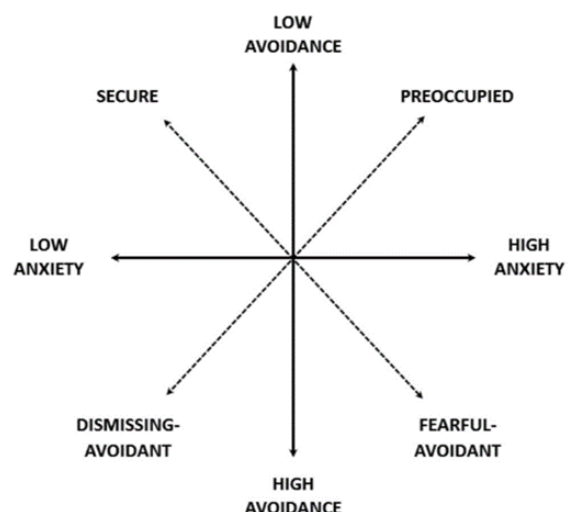
(Fraley et al., 2015)

attachment researchers, intimate partner abuse is "an exaggerated and dysfunctional form of protest behavior… Thus, anger toward a partner is expected to be precipitated by attachment-related threats, such as interpersonal conflict and fears of rejection, separation, and abandonment" (pp. 106-107). That is, abuse is best understood as a reaction to a perceived threat.

Attachment-avoidant partners may use IPV tactics to regulate the emotional intimacy in a relationship, conceptualized as distancing behaviors (Bartholomew & Allison, 2006). For example, an avoidant person may feel threatened by their partner's desire to increase intimacy by moving into the same apartment. During a conversation or argument about this, they may shove their partner away from them as a physical manifestation of the distance they seek. Likewise, the partner of an avoidant individual may engage in IPV as an attempt to gain closeness (Knox et al., 2022). Hypothetically, during the same conversation about moving in together, the partner of the avoidant individual may

minimize their fears of intimacy by calling their partner paranoid (coupled with more colorful and insulting language).

Attachment-anxious people may use violence to "close the gap" between themselves and their partners and increase closeness (Bartholomew & Allison, 2006). For instance, when the anxious person's partner goes to a social event without them, the anxious partner may feel as though it is a threat to their relationship. They might take away their partner's car keys, effectively isolating them from other people. Partners of anxious people may engage in IPV in a response to perceived "clinginess" in their partners (Knox et al., 2022). In the same situation of the non-anxious partner wanting to go to a social event without their partner, being met with protest behavior, they might slap the anxious partner, causing shock and pain so they have a chance to get away. While these examples are conceptualized in the context of attachment, it is important to note that such violent behaviors are abnormal. In the case of either actor or partner effects of attachment on IPV, the physical, sexual, or emotional harm inflicted on a partner is not excused by the insecure attachment of either partner. Nor is it typical for an adult with an insecure attachment to engage in violent behavior toward their partner.

Attachment Dimensions and Treatment

While an explanation of IPV behaviors by insecure attachment is interesting, it often fails to have practical applications in treatment. Instead, focus should be directed to how attachment anxiety and avoidance affect a perpetrator's engagement in treatment. Wallin (2007) posits that, "by implication, attachment relationships may also be the setting in which… our early emotional injuries are most likely to be healed. The therapist, then, maybe a new attachment figure in relation to whom the patient can develop fresh patterns of attachment." (p. 57) The goal of therapy is to create a secure relationship, where the client can share intimate thoughts and feelings with the therapist while still feeling free to act autonomously. This can most effectively be achieved in an empathetic relationship with the client similar to the secure mother, who demonstrates sensitivity, acceptance, and cooperation.

Wallin (2007) outlines four features of effective communication between parent and child (learning about the child's feelings and needs; mutually repairing the relationship when disrupted; using accurate language at the child's level while still challenging them; and engaging with the child when their sense of self or others alters). These parental communication features closely mimic the goals of an empathetic therapist (engaging in conversation with emotional language to highlight the client's feelings and views; remaining sensitive to and repairing relationship disruptions; accepting the client while still making expectations for growth known; and being able to confront the client and meet them in a place of struggle for identity and relationship). Once more, the author demonstrates the conceptual parallel between the parent-child and therapist-client relationships. Not only do these indicate a new attachment bond between therapist and client, but they encourage the idea that the therapist's empathetic approach toward the client plays a significant role in the effectiveness of treatment.

However, no matter the population being treated, responsibility is an essential part of the therapeutic process. Yalom (2002) encourages clinicians to strike a balance between empathizing with the hurting client and confronting their behaviors: "If

[therapists] hope for more significant change, we must encourage our patients to assume responsibility – that is, to apprehend how they themselves contribute to their distress." (p. 139) Yalom notes that this balance is uniquely realized in group treatment, where other members may give feedback on a client's behavior and its impact on the group. By learning how others understand and are impacted by their behavior, members can begin to form a more realistic view of themselves. Wallin (2007) expands on the idea of responsibility with confrontation, which involves the expression of one's experience with the client, however negative, as a means to increase their awareness of their behavior. Confrontation takes different forms when dealing with different attachment styles.

A dismissive or avoidant person is, as stated above, one who resists intimacy and emotionality as a learned defense mechanism from childhood experiences. In individual therapy, this client may be resistant to dive deeply into their experiences and feelings, dismissing the therapist as disposable or unimportant (Wallin, 2007). In a group context, an avoidant person may appear stand-offish toward other members and have low engagement in discussion. Facilitators are called to see this avoidance as its own form of communication: the avoidant individual is "conveying their fears of closeness and dependency… acknowledging the need for help may feel like an invitation to rejection," (Wallin, 2007, p. 214). By understanding even partner-violent men in this context, therapists can increase their empathy and work to ensure the avoidantly-attached that they will not reject them. This may involve being honest with the client about how their dismissal effects the therapist without engaging in self-pity or demonstrating dependence on the client. Rather, by addressing the client's rejection as a

communication of needs, the facilitator may increase his awareness and allow him to consider that he is really not avoiding emotion at all – just expressing it in a subtle, nuanced way. In turn, this confrontation in treatment could have a substantial impact on the client's intimate partnerships as he breaks out of his cycle of avoidance and engages in real change.

On the other hand, preoccupied (anxious) clients may become too emotional, taking on a helpless demeanor and resisting change as it would mean admitting they can meet their own needs. Other anxious clients may appear eager to engage and work with the therapist, making quick progress. Wallin (2007) warns that an anxious client's possible readiness to change "is less an indication of their ability to collaborate than a sign of their desire to comply and to please." (p. 227) During group sessions, this client may quickly engage with other clients, overshare, and even appear to be taking responsibility for their actions (in the case of partner-violent men). However, facilitators should be wary of the anxious person's fear of rejection and understand that treatment may not be as effective as it appears. Confronting this sort of client may look like directly asking how the apparent change came about. In a more subtle approach, a facilitator may ask questions about that client's self-esteem. Calling attention to the anxious client's pattern of clinging to others could increase their awareness of themselves and call them to establish a more individual identity, one that is not so tied to others' perceptions of them. This awareness would not only change the client's experience of treatment, but could transform their relationships with others.

Yalom (2002) talks at length about the impact of the therapist-client relationship on treatment. He relays countless stories of his

own clients sharing their appreciation for his attunement to their specific relationship. Speaking specifically about empathy, Yalom (2002) states "Patients profit enormously simply from the experience of being fully seen and fully understood" (p. 18). Approaching clients with empathy is transformative – more so, at times, than the treatment techniques themselves. Regardless of modality, it is essential for treatment facilitators to build this intimate relationship with clients, however one-sided. An attachment approach to treatment enhances the therapist's understanding of their clients by seeking to reorient the client's working model of relationships to be secure rather than filled with anxiety or avoidance. Specifically, an attachment-focused approach may address a cyclical maladaptive pattern (CMP), marked by acts or thoughts of self, expectations of others' reactions to self, observed reactions of others, and acts toward self in response to the previous three concepts (Lawson et al., 2012). For example, an anxiously attached man may experience self-conscious worry around his partner (thought of self). Because of this self-consciousness, he expects his partner to insult him or show nonverbal disrespect, such as turning her back on him (expectations). These expectations may distort his perception of reality and, due to a confirmation bias, allow him to observe his partner engaging in this behavior: she might not answer his phone calls, which he perceives as disrespect (observed acts of others). As a final phase in the cycle, the anxious man is now certain that his partner is disrespecting him and may tell himself, "She really doesn't love me" (act of self toward self). This maladaptive cycle of thought may lead him towards abusive tactics in the future and certainly create an unhealthy view of his intimate relationship. Clinicians should address clients' CMPs and be careful not to engage in the ongoing

patterns. Facilitators could break this particular cycle by, perhaps, leaning into moments of defensiveness on the client's part and demonstrating an ongoing acceptance for the client even during resistance. By stopping the cycle at this point, the facilitator can provide a corrective emotional experience and work to create a more secure bond with the client.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Many batterer intervention programs use cognitive-behavioral techniques to treat perpetrators of intimate partner violence. According to Cotti (2019), the CBT model specifically emphasizes the therapeutic bond between group participants, as well as understanding how environmental triggers influence thoughts (cognitions) and, in turn, actions (behaviors). A solely CBT model can be used regardless of the perpetrator's gender. However, a great number of BIPs use a blend of Duluth and CBT techniques, limiting the treatment to male perpetrators (Butters et al., 2021; Zarling & Russell, 2022). Experimental studies indicate that CBT techniques greatly reduce the chances of further IPV offenses. In Cotti et al.'s (2019) study, 3.9% of CBT-treated perpetrators were convicted of an abusive act post-treatment, compared to 13% of Duluth-treated perpetrators. Even a focus on male offenders showed a 14% higher chance of recidivism for Duluth participants. However, CBT models alone, though more successful than Duluth programs, may still not have the effectiveness desired for reducing IPV perpetration.

Cognitive-behavioral techniques operate best under the assumptions that clients are motivated and capable of change – which most court-mandated perpetrators do not fit (Lawson et al., 2012). Fortunately, there are

therapeutic techniques designed to address this lack of motivation.

Motivational Interviewing

Every clinician must learn to balance empathy and confrontation, but this is especially challenging and necessary for those working with perpetrators of intimate partner violence. The Duluth model does not seem to stress the importance of empathizing with clients (Bohall, Bautista, & Musson, 2017; Lawson et al., 2012; Pence & Paymar, 1993), which could contribute to its low-to-moderate effect on client outcome. Additionally, given that treatment for IPV is often involuntary, facilitators have the added challenge of motivating their clients to change, since in many cases clients do not possess that on their own.

Multiple articles suggest implementing motivational interviewing, a technique that places emphasis on client autonomy and change. In MI, the therapist "reflectively listens, provides support, and develops a collaborative relationship" (Butters et al., 2021, p. 397) instead of assuming a purely authoritarian role. These characteristics closely mirror those of the secure mother: sensitivity, acceptance, and collaboration. With the unifying characteristic of collaboration, listening to the client looks like being sensitive to his needs and supporting him means accepting him as who he is. Using this technique before and throughout traditional treatment would strengthen the relationship between therapist and client and improve outcome as well as transform the client's bonds with others outside of treatment.

Santirso, Lila, and Gracia (2020) explored the differences between standard batterer intervention programs (SBIPs) and those that implemented motivational interviewing

strategies throughout treatment (BIPs+IMP). The goal of the integrated treatment was to focus on the working alliance and on protherapeutic behaviors. The latter is understood as a collection of traits: acknowledging personal responsibility, possessing positive influence toward other group members, and indicating positive views of the program and other members. In this modality, participants attended three motivational interviews before starting group sessions where they worked on individual motivational plans (IMP), which were revisited periodically throughout the program. Therapists in this modality used confrontation only when necessary, focusing on building an empathic relationship with each client. Where Duluth models might focus on confronting "victim blaming," those utilizing the IMP technique would take this as an opportunity to explore change. For instance, the facilitator might say to the client, "I clearly hear that you don't think it's fair that you have to attend group when you believe your wife was just as violent as you… Talk with me about the things happening in your relationship that make you want to resolve this violence and stay in the relationship" (Lawson et al., 2012, p. 195). By both acknowledging the client's concerns and imploring them to look into other factors, the bond between client and therapist is strengthened.

Post-treatment outcomes indicate that using motivational strategies increase client engagement, responsibility for behaviors, and bond with the therapist – significantly more so than standard interventions (Santirso, Lila, & Gracia, 2020). If a client is not engaged, does not assume responsibility for his actions, and resists building a relationship with his facilitator, it seems unlikely that he would experience positive change. Recalling Skeem et al.'s (2013) evidence that toughness predicts higher

recidivism rates than care, it is safe to assume that a lack of relationship with the facilitator would put the client at risk for reoffending. While Santirso, Lila, and Gracia's (2020) study did not test recidivism rates, it certainly supports the claims that therapist-client bonds significantly impact the appraisal of treatment.

Ethical Considerations

All clinicians are expected to adhere to the American Psychological Association's Code of Ethics (APA, 2016), but facilitators working with IPV perpetrators have unique ethical practices to consider and follow. Under the general principle of Beneficence and Nonmaleficence, clinicians are expected to "safeguard the welfare and rights of those with whom they interact professionally and other affected persons…" (APA, 2016, p. 3). When considering partner-violent men, the phrase "other affected persons" can refer to the victims of their violence, whether the couples are separated or still in a relationship. Specifically, safeguarding the welfare of the victims of IPV can involve the disclosure of otherwise confidential information; if a client indicates an intent to harm the victim again, clinicians have a duty to inform any parties involved (4.05; APA, 2016). In this case, the privacy of the perpetrator is outweighed by the importance of preventing further violence.

Another ethical concern arises when conducting experiments with those in court-mandated treatment. Under Principle E: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity, researchers should be aware of populations who have limited autonomy in consenting to experiment. Santirso, Lila, and Gracia (2020) studied the differences between standard batterer intervention programs and those with implemented motivational strategies. Most of the participants were court-mandated to treatment and could not decline to attend at all without facing legal repercussions. However, the researchers were aware of the legal obligations under which the clients were attending a BIP and specifically told any potential research participants that declining to participate in the study would have no legal consequences. Santirso, Lila, and Gracia (2020) demonstrated an admirable dedication to the APA Code of Ethics and the clients' right to choose.

Future Suggestions: Integrated Treatment

Even considering the many criticisms against the Duluth model, it is simply not feasible to do away with such an essential component of the justice system and IPV treatment. Therefore, it is necessary to consider possible modifications to current BIPs as opposed to suggesting entirely new methods of treatment. Current clinicians and facilitators involved in treating partner-violent men should consider using an integrated treatment approach: blending the Duluth, CBT, and MI models. Certainly, research supports the sociocultural theory's claims that gender roles and a desire for power and control are motivating factors in why men engage in IPV (Harrington, Overall, & Cross, 2021; Weldon & Gilchrist, 2013). Addressing these aspects during treatment is very necessary. However, special attention to the individual's readiness to change as well as his bonds with the facilitator and other group members must be paid (Bohall, Bautista, & Musson, 2016; Butters et al., 2021; Cotti et al., 2019; Murphy & Meis, 2008; Santirso, Lila, & Gracia, 2020; Zarling & Russell, 2022). Lawson et al. (2012) posit a unique approach which integrates several treatment modalities, including CBT and motivational interviewing.

Lawson et al.'s (2012) model includes six core goals for treatment which have been reflected in current BIPs, including: teaching nonviolence in response to conflict, restructuring maladaptive thoughts, and reeducating on gender roles. The researchers also include two new treatment goals for their integrated model: "A corrective emotional (relational) experience that addresses issues related to family of origin attachment…" and "Using [motivational interviewing] … before beginning group treatment as well as periodically within the group setting at points of intense resistance." (Lawson et al., 2012, p. 194) Overall, the treatment seeks to address many aspects attributed to positive client outcomes as well as theoretical explanations for IPV perpetration, including feminism and attachment. First, clients would attend one or two sessions of MI, then would enter a group encouraging safety, stability, and group cohesion. As clients would get oriented with their group, facilitators would introduce ways to work on self-regulation, relationship skills, maladaptive cognitions and harmful core beliefs (as in Weldon & Gilchrist, 2013). Additionally, the researchers posit the importance of "providing a corrective emotional experience" (Lawson et al., 2012, p. 194), utilizing the new attachment between therapist and client to increase security in the therapeutic relationship, perhaps through correcting cyclical maladaptive patterns. The security within-treatment would hopefully transform the clients' relationships outside of treatment (Wallin, 2007).

In order to strengthen the therapeutic alliance, facilitators should include an attachment assessment in their initial assessments of clients. Beginning treatment with an understanding of how avoidance and anxiety play a role in the client's life will inform therapists of what to expect and how to approach clients. Of course, not all clients with an insecure attachment will respond to treatment the same; but it could be helpful to begin with a basic understanding of the client's attachment. After completion of treatment, facilitators may wish to test the clients' attachment once more to assess for any change in security. In addition to recidivism rates, lower scores on anxiety and avoidance could indicate an effective treatment, especially for a problem related to intimate relationships.

An integrated treatment model could be very helpful for clinicians seeking to better the batterer intervention programs in their community, but there are limitations to this position. First, as the topic of IPV is uncomfortable for many people to discuss or even think about, training an adequate number of professionals in this field poses a challenge. It is fair to say that, when most people think about IPV, they want to assist victims instead of perpetrators. Having individual sessions of motivational interviewing before group BIPs may not be possible given the lack of clinicians here. Additionally, Murphy and Meis (2008) have concerns that deviancy training could hinder the effectiveness of BIPs due to the unpredictable nature of the group format, especially with men who may already try to justify their abusive actions. In the scope of the current research, there is no feasible way to control deviancy training in group formats without resorting to completely individual treatment for partner-violent men. Again, the challenge of having enough therapists trained and interested in this field makes this option sadly unlikely. Though the suggestions for further treatment are conceptually promising, there are practical limitations to their implementation. Nevertheless, having an open dialogue on how to improve BIPs is important in order to keep victims and perpetrators safe.

Though the overall effectiveness of current batterer intervention programs is criticized in the current literature, they provide a promising framework off which to build. To create more positive treatment outcomes, facilitators should prioritize the bond between themselves and the clients. They

should approach the clients through the lens of attachment theory, as it provides great insight into how they relate to others. By providing that "corrective emotional experience," facilitators can encourage a more positive client outcome.

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And Rise to Bless You Still: Suffering, Compassion, and Virtue in the Catholic Tradition
By
Anna Katherine Howell

Introduction

Last semester, I contracted a persistent cold which eventually developed into pneumonia. Needless to say, I was completely miserable. At one point, during the worst part of the illness, my then-roommate Megan was on the phone with a friend. This person presumably asked how I was doing, because I overheard Megan say, "Yes, it's pneumonia," and then a pause, followed by, "Well, you know, Anna-Kate is Catholic, so she's suffering with Jesus."

While that remark was no doubt intended to be tongue-in-cheek and certainly made me laugh, it reflects a broader cultural perception of Catholics: namely, that the topic of suffering occupies an important place for us, both theologically and in our day-to-day lives. This perception is not an incorrect one.

Suffering is a universal human experience that has been studied and contemplated across religious and philosophical traditions for millennia; however, the Roman Catholic tradition offers a unique perspective on suffering and the ways in which it can be understood as a pathway to virtue. At the heart of this perspective is the concept of compassion, which plays a crucial role in the relationship between suffering and virtue in Catholicism. Compassion motivates individuals to act courageously in the face of suffering and promotes a sense of solidarity with those who are suffering. Today, I intend to explore the nature of suffering and

compassion in the Roman Catholic tradition, with a particular focus on the role of compassion as a virtue.

Before I begin, I wish to take a moment to define the scope of this project. Firstly, this is not an attempt to solve or even address the problem of evil. The problem of evil is a philosophical dilemma that asks, "How can an all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-benevolent God allow evil and suffering to exist in the world He created and controls?" This is of course a compelling and meaningful question which has captured the attention of scholars for centuries if not millennia, but it falls outside the scope of my work here.

Nor do I aim to write a biography of St. Augustine or provide an exhaustive catalog of his writings on the subject, although I will draw heavily on his work because I consider it to be of particular importance. Rather, the aim of this thesis is to provide a normative account of compassion as a virtue in the Roman Catholic tradition broadly, which includes but is not limited to the writings of St. Augustine.

Thirdly, while a few of the authors I will cite are not Catholic, my field is theology rather than world religions or religious studies. I am therefore by no means an expert on any tradition outside of Christianity, nor do I have personal experience as a member of any non-Christian faith. I am a Roman Catholic writing from a Roman Catholic perspective. I want to be very careful not to

overgeneralize or misrepresent the beliefs of others. Therefore, I will not be engaging in lengthy explorations of the beliefs of other faith traditions because I do not feel qualified to do so.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge that, while this project draws on a range of historical, philosophical, and theological perspectives, it is in no way exhaustive. I have chosen a broad and rich topic about which a near-infinite amount could be written. I will likely spend the rest of my academic career thinking and writing about this subject of virtue and suffering which has, to quote my advisor, "captured [my] theological imagination." However, as an undergraduate thesis, this particular project necessarily represents only a partial engagement with the subjects of compassion and suffering. Nonetheless, this project seeks to contribute meaningfully to ongoing conversations about the relationship between suffering and virtue, particularly within the context of the Catholic tradition.

Definitions

The terms suffering, virtue, and compassion are vital to this work. While these words may have many possible definitions in common parlance, I want to nail down the definitions I will use in this paper.

In Catholic theology, the term "suffering" refers to the experience of physical or emotional pain, distress, hardship, or the deprivation of some good. Suffering is an inevitable part of the human condition, and it can be caused by a variety of factors such as illness, injury, poverty, injustice, and loss.

The Catholic Church acknowledges that suffering is a difficult and often confusing aspect of human existence, and it is something that can be challenging to understand and to endure. However, the Church teaches that suffering can also be a means of spiritual growth and transformation, as it can help us to draw closer to God and to deepen our faith.

From a Catholic perspective, suffering can also be redemptive, as it can be united with the suffering of Christ on the cross. Through our own experiences of suffering, we can participate in the saving work of Christ and offer our pain and hardship as a form of sacrifice for the sake of others. Suffering is a difficult and often painful experience, but it is also a fundamental part of the human journey, and it can be an opportunity for spiritual growth, transformation, and redemptive sacrifice.

A virtue is "a habitual and firm disposition toward the good."[38] It is a characteristic or quality that enables us to act in accordance with what will allow us to flourish and to develop a deep and lasting relationship with God. Virtues are seen as essential to living a good and fulfilling life, and they are understood to be gifts from God that enable us to grow in holiness and to participate in the divine life.

Christian thought recognizes two main types of virtues: theological and cardinal. Theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity, and are called "theological" because they have God as their object and source. Cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and are called "cardinal" because they are considered the foundation of all other virtues and have their roots in Greek philosophy. However, the word "virtue" can be applied to more than just these seven specific things. Virtues are dispositions, formed by habitual good action, which are ordered toward our

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[38] CCC 1803

flourishing in this life and our ultimate good, which is to encounter God in the fullness of His glory in the beatific vision.

Virtues are not just abstract concepts or ideals; they are meant to be lived out in concrete actions and decisions. For Catholics, virtues are developed through a combination of grace from God and our own efforts and choices. Through prayer, frequent recourse to the Sacraments, and regular practice of virtuous behavior, we can cultivate and strengthen virtue, and grow in our holiness and likeness to Christ. Compassion is an example of such a virtue.

Compassion can be defined as the act of recognizing and sharing in the suffering of another person, with a desire to alleviate their pain and to promote their well-being. It is a virtue that flows from recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of every human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God.

Compassion is a key element of the Christian faith, as it is rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ, who demonstrated great compassion towards the sick, the poor, and the marginalized. In Catholic theology, compassion is closely linked to the concept of mercy, which involves showing kindness, forgiveness, and love to those in need.

As I noted earlier, virtue is not merely a feeling but necessarily includes action as well. In the case of compassion, this action can involve reaching out to those who are suffering, praying for them, offering them practical help and support, and standing in solidarity with them. Oliver Davies notes, "Compassion...involves not only recognizing the suffering of others but also the active desire to alleviate it".[39]

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[39] Davies 3

Compassion also involves recognizing our own limitations and weaknesses and relying on God's grace to help us to love others more fully and bear their burdens with them. Compassion is an essential virtue in Catholic theology, as it reflects the love and mercy of God and inspires us to work towards building a more just and merciful society.

Suffering

Suffering is a part of every human life. Christ Himself tells us that the rain falls and the sun shines on the righteous and the unrighteous alike. (cf. Matthew 5:45) The question is not whether we will experience suffering, but how we will respond to it. Everything we experience in this life is an occasion to grow in either virtue or vice (which is the opposite of virtue), and suffering is no exception. Since we are what we habitually do, to paraphrase Aristotle, how we choose to respond to suffering both reveals the person we already are and helps form us into the person we are becoming– whether that person is more or less virtuous than our current state.

Let's look at an example from Christian history: the life of St. Augustine of Hippo. Besides the striking similarities in our conversion stories and my own personal devotion to Augustine, there is another reason I fell in love with his *Confessions*: his profound insights on suffering and its place in the life of virtue. Dr. Susan Wessel, a professor at the Catholic University of America, has reflected extensively on the role of suffering and compassion in the works of St. Augustine, particularly his Confessions. Her book *On Compassion, Healing, Suffering, and the Purpose of the Emotional Life* sheds further light on Augustine's views on suffering and compassion. Wessel highlights the distinction between ordered and disordered

Augustine writes about the relationship between sin and suffering, arguing that suffering is a result of human sinfulness– that is to say, the effects of original sin on all of creation– and that it serves to remind humans of their fallen nature. He writes, "For what is it that torments the good but the evil which is present in them and struggles against the good? What is it that torments the wicked but the evil which they love, and to which they are willing slaves?" Augustine's view of suffering is thus intimately tied to his understanding of the nature of sin and its effects on human beings.

Moreover, Augustine sees suffering as a means of purification and growth in virtue. He writes, "We must not think it strange that even men who are our enemies are by the just judgment of God subjected to trials and tribulations which are intended to prove, and so strengthen, their virtues" (XIX.19). Augustine's perspective here is that suffering can be a means of strengthening virtue, particularly the virtues of patience, humility, and charity.

S.K. Byers further explains Augustine's views on the relationship between suffering, compassion, and virtue. Byers argues that Augustine believes suffering can be redemptive and that it can lead to a deeper sense of compassion for others who are suffering. He writes, "For Augustine, suffering leads to moral transformation, and moral transformation leads to greater sensitivity to the suffering of others" (Byers, p. 24). Augustine's views on suffering and compassion are thus deeply intertwined, as he sees suffering as a means of cultivating greater compassion for others and strengthening one's own virtue.

Augustine's views on suffering and compassion reflect his broader philosophical and theological outlook and highlight the ways in which suffering can serve as a means of growth and transformation. His perspective emphasizes the importance of compassion in the face of suffering, both for the individual's own growth in virtue and for cultivating a sense of solidarity with others who are suffering.

Augustine's vision of the "City of God" (in his book of the same title) is a central component of his theological framework and informs his views on suffering and virtue. In Book XIX of the City of God, Augustine contrasts the "City of God" with the "earthly city," highlighting the tension between the two and emphasizing the superiority of the former.

Augustine writes, "Two loves have made two cities: love of self unto the contempt of God made the earthly city; love of God unto the contempt of self made the heavenly city".[43] This statement encapsulates Augustine's view that the earthly city is characterized by self-centeredness, while the heavenly city is characterized by love of God and others.

Augustine also suggests that suffering can play a role in our journey toward the City of God. He writes, "For though the suffering be sweetened by the hope of the divine reward, yet it is bitterness itself to undergo it".[44] Here, Augustine acknowledges the difficulty of suffering, but suggests that it can be endured if one has hope in the divine reward that awaits them in the heavenly city.

Augustine's views on suffering go beyond seeing it as an inevitable part of human life. Rather, he sees it as a means for individuals to develop virtues and grow closer to God.

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[43] *City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 28
[44] *City of God*, Book XIX, Chapter 11

As he writes in *City of God*, "For as gold is tried in the fire, so the mind of man is tried by pain".[45] Augustine believes that suffering can help individuals develop virtues, such as patience, perseverance, and humility. He writes, "Whoever would not be troubled by anything that befalls him in this life would have to withdraw from the world and isolate himself from all human society".[46] Augustine is clear that the path to virtue is not easy and that suffering is a necessary part of that path. However, he also emphasizes that suffering is not an end unto itself, but rather, a means to an end. The goal is to become closer to God; suffering can help individuals achieve that goal.

Overall, Augustine's concept of the "City of God" provides a framework for understanding suffering and virtue in the Roman Catholic tradition. By contrasting the earthly city with the heavenly one, Augustine highlights the tension between self-centeredness and love of God and others. Moreover, his view that suffering can help us grow closer to God and develop virtues has had a lasting impact on Catholic thought.

Augustine's ideas on suffering and compassion continue to be a subject of interest and debate among contemporary thinkers. In her book *On Compassion, Healing, Suffering, and the Purpose of the Emotional Life*, Susan Wessel notes that Augustine's concept of compassion has resonated with modern theologians and philosophers alike, citing examples such as Hans Urs von Balthasar and Martha Nussbaum. Wessel argues that Augustine's view of compassion as a "suffering with" and a "loving with" rather than simply a feeling of pity is particularly relevant

today.[47] Additionally, in his book *On Augustine*, former Archbishop of Canterbury and renowned Anglican scholar Rowan Williams reflects on the ongoing relevance of Augustine's thought to contemporary philosophical debates. Williams writes, "What we find in Augustine, then, is not a set of easy answers, but a language for framing questions in a new and transformative way. Augustine's significance for us is not that he gives us definitive solutions but that he helps us to ask new questions and challenges us to look again at the old ones"[48] Augustine's ideas on suffering and compassion challenge contemporary thinkers to consider new ways of understanding the relationship between compassion, suffering, and virtue, and his insights continue to inspire fresh perspectives and insights in theological and philosophical discourse today.

Compassion

The Catholic Church views compassion as an essential component of the Christian faith. Central to the Church's understanding of compassion is the concept of God's love as the source of all compassion. As Pope John Paul II writes in his encyclical Salvifici Doloris, "The love that goes to the essence of salvation is the love of the Father who is the source of all love" (Salvifici Doloris 11). In other words, we are able to love because God first loved us. (cf. 1 John 4:19) Compassion is thus seen as a way of participating in God's love for humanity.

Another important theological underpinning of compassion in Catholicism is the idea of redemptive suffering. According to this concept, suffering can be transformative and purifying and can help individuals grow

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[45] *City of God,* Book I, Chapter 8
[46] *City of God*, Book 1, Chapter 9

[47] Citation needed
[48] Williams xiii

closer to God. This idea is rooted in Christ's suffering on the cross, which is seen as the ultimate expression of compassionate action. By embracing suffering and using it as a means of drawing closer to God, individuals can follow in Christ's footsteps and participate in the divine plan of redemption. Compassion is not just an abstract concept but a powerful motivator for virtuous action in the face of suffering. According to Augustine's concept of sensus communis, individuals are able to perceive the suffering of others as if it were their own, which can motivate them to act virtuously to alleviate the suffering of others, even if it involves personal sacrifice. As Byers notes, "The empathy that arises from this sensibility is an essential precondition of love and compassion." This empathy and compassion can be seen as a natural outgrowth of the Christian commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself, and a way of participating in God's love for humanity. (cf. Mark 12:31) Through empathy and a recognition of shared suffering, compassion can motivate individuals to take virtuous action in the face of suffering. In Roman Catholicism, this is particularly significant because it is seen as a way of participating in God's love for humanity. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "Compassion for the sick and the suffering is an essential part of [Christ's] messianic mission, and is a sign of messianic times" (CCC 1504). By cultivating compassion, individuals can participate in this mission and help to bring about a more just and compassionate world.

Ultimately, the connection between compassion and virtuous action can be seen as a central tenet of the Catholic faith. As *Salvifici Doloris* notes, "Compassion, which is love, must become the characteristic of our whole life...together with it we must go towards suffering, which is the test of love,

and at the same time towards definitive and eternal happiness".[49] For Catholics, compassion is not just a moral virtue, but a way of participating in God's love for humanity and acting virtuously in the face of suffering.

Cultivating compassion in one's own life includes engaging in acts of service, practicing empathy, and developing an awareness of the suffering of others. As Powell writes, "Practical ways to cultivate compassion include volunteering at a local charity or nonprofit organization, engaging in acts of service for others, and practicing empathy by actively listening to and trying to understand the experiences of others." These practices are not only beneficial for those who are suffering, but also have the potential to transform the individual and help them grow in virtue. Powell also suggests some other practical ways to cultivate and practice compassion as a virtue. These include "deep listening, practicing empathy, increasing mindfulness, and cultivating forgiveness". These practices are informed by Catholic theology and philosophy, which emphasize the importance of connecting with others, recognizing the humanity of all people, and seeking to alleviate suffering in the world. By engaging in these practices, individuals can develop habits of compassion that will inform their actions and help them to respond to the suffering of others in a more virtuous way.

Nussbaum notes that there are also challenges and pitfalls to cultivating compassion itself. In her book, *Upheavals of Thought*, she explores the potential for bias and misdirected compassion. Nussbaum writes, "We are biased in our emotional response to others, and we are often unaware

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[49] *Salvifici Doloris* 30

of the extent and nature of our biases."[50] These biases can lead to misplaced or misdirected compassion, which may do more harm than good. For example, as people who have been born, it can be easy to forget or ignore the plight of the unborn. The same goes for other marginalized groups to which we personally may not belong– such as the poor, the incarcerated, and immigrants– but we cannot neglect such persons in our work of compassion and justice, even when we cannot relate directly to their experience. This bias can prevent individuals from recognizing the suffering of others who do not fit within their preconceived notions of who is deserving of compassion. An additional challenge in cultivating compassion as a virtue is the difficult work of sustaining compassion in the face of overwhelming suffering can be a difficult and emotionally draining task. As Nussbaum explains, "Compassion fatigue is a well-known phenomenon in health care professions."[51] Even those of us who are not healthcare professionals might experience compassion fatigue from time to time, especially if we are heavily involved in working for justice in some capacity. The constant exposure to suffering can make it difficult to maintain the emotional and physical resources necessary to act compassionately. We must remember that we, too, need compassion, and this self-compassion may come in the form of time for rest, reflection, and renewal, enlisting the assistance of others, or reevaluating how much we can reasonably take on. It may also include seeking out professional help, whether therapeutic or spiritual. While pride can easily tempt us into thinking we can do it all ourselves or make it difficult for us to ask for assistance from others, it may be helpful to remember

that even Our Lord allowed His cross to be carried for Him. The work of compassion requires both the strength to carry one another's crosses and the grace to allow others to do likewise for us.

Augustine also recognized the limits of virtue, including the difficulty of cultivating virtues in the fallen human condition. As Wetzel explains in *Augustine and the Limits of Virtue*, "Augustine's teaching on the struggle to cultivate virtue in a fallen world highlights the difficulty and importance of working towards the acquisition of compassion."[52] The demands of compassion can be overwhelming, and it can be easy to neglect personal responsibilities in the pursuit of acting compassionately.

Despite these challenges, compassion remains a valuable and essential virtue. As both Augustine and Nussbaum recognize, the key is to cultivate compassion with humility and awareness of our own limitations and biases. By recognizing the challenges and pitfalls of cultivating compassion, we can develop a more nuanced and effective approach to compassionate action, and it is vital that we do so.

Compassion is a central concept in Roman Catholicism and is grounded in a deep theological understanding of God's love for humanity. According to *Salvifici Doloris*, "the love that goes to the essence of salvation is the love of the Father who is the source of all love"[53] This love is the foundation of all compassion, as it reflects the divine nature of God's mercy and love for mankind. Compassion, therefore, is not just a feeling of sympathy or empathy, but

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[50] Nussbaum 218
[51] ibid.

[52] Wetzel 163
[53] *Salvifici Doloris* 11

rather a way of participating in God's love for all of creation.

The role of suffering in purifying and transforming the individual is also an important aspect of Catholic theology. The Catechism of the Catholic Church talks about how suffering can lead to spiritual growth and maturity, as it challenges the individual to grow in faith and to deepen their relationship with God by participating in the suffering of His Son.[54] This understanding of suffering is closely linked to the concept of redemptive suffering, as it acknowledges the transformative power of suffering in the individual's spiritual life.

The concept of redemptive suffering is also an important part of Catholic theology and informs the understanding of compassion. Christ's suffering on the cross is seen as the ultimate model of compassionate action, as he voluntarily took on the suffering of humanity in order to redeem them from sin. This model of suffering teaches that suffering can have a redemptive quality and can be transformative for the individual. *Salvifici Doloris* goes on to say, "Christ's suffering was not just an emotional or physical experience, but rather an act of self-giving love that is redemptive for all of humanity".[55]

In contemporary Catholic thought, new and innovative approaches to understanding compassion and suffering are emerging. Salvifici Doloris emphasizes the importance of compassion as a way to participate in God's love for humanity and as a means of redemptive suffering. This emphasis on compassion as a way of participating in God's love is also found in the writings of Pope Francis, who has called for a "revolution of tenderness" in the world. This revolution of tenderness emphasizes the importance of compassion as a way of creating a more just and loving world and highlights the need for a renewed commitment to compassion in contemporary Catholic moral theology.

One innovative approach to the concept of compassion in Catholic moral theology is the idea of "compassionate accompaniment." This approach emphasizes the importance of being present with those who are suffering, and accompanying them through their struggles. Pope Francis discusses this kind of accompaniment in *Evangelii Gaudium*. He says, "Someone good at such accompaniment does not give in to frustrations or fears. He or she invites others to let themselves be healed, to take up their mat, embrace the cross, leave all behind, and go forth ever anew to proclaim the Gospel. Our personal experience of being accompanied and assisted, and of openness to those who accompany us, will teach us to be patient and compassionate with others."[56] Our own suffering, experienced rightly, can help us to cultivate this virtue of compassion, which can then be used to accompany others in the trials and tribulations of their lives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, compassion is a fundamental value of the Catholic faith that is reflected in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the actions of his disciples. Through acts of kindness, empathy, and service to others, we can embody the principles of compassion and contribute to a more just and loving world. As discussed in this paper, compassion is rooted in the Catholic tradition and is essential for building meaningful

[54] CCC 1505
[55] *Salvifici Doloris* 19

[56] *Evangelii Gaudium* 172

relationships with others, fostering a sense of community, and promoting social justice.

However, while the importance of compassion is clear, living out this value can be challenging in the face of adversity and conflict. It requires a willingness to step outside of our comfort zones, to listen to those who may hold different beliefs or experiences than our own, and to work towards the common good. Additionally, cultivating a spirit of compassion requires ongoing reflection and prayer, and a commitment to continued growth and learning.

Despite these challenges, the call to compassion remains a central aspect of the Catholic faith. As we seek to live out this value in our daily lives, we can draw strength and inspiration from the examples of Jesus and the saints who have gone before us. By embodying the principles of compassion in our interactions with others, we can contribute to a more just and loving world, and work towards building the kingdom of God here on earth.

The broader implications of the topic for contemporary ethical and theological discourse are significant, as noted by Wessel. The intersection between suffering and compassion is relevant to many other areas of contemporary ethical and theological discourse, such as healthcare ethics, social justice, and ecological ethics. Understanding the role of compassion in the Roman Catholic tradition can provide valuable insights into how we can respond to the suffering we encounter today.

Suggestions for further research on the topic of suffering and compassion within the Roman Catholic tradition are abundant. One promising area for future research would be to investigate the relationship between

compassion and justice in Catholic social teaching. As Salvifici Doloris notes, "Love for others, and in the first place love for the poor, in whom the Church sees Christ himself, is made concrete in the promotion of justice". Exploring the ways in which compassion and justice intersect in Catholic social teaching could provide insights into how the Church's understanding of suffering and compassion relates to broader societal issues.

Another area for further research is the role of suffering in the spiritual life. As Augustine writes in *City of God*, "God had one Son on earth without sin, but never one without suffering"[57]. How can suffering be understood as a means of spiritual growth, and how does this relate to the cultivation of compassion as a virtue? Further exploration of this topic could shed light on the complex relationship between suffering and compassion in the Catholic tradition.

In reflecting on the significance of the topic of suffering and compassion, it becomes clear that this relationship has far-reaching implications for contemporary ethical and theological discourse. As Susan Wessel notes in her book on Augustine, "The question of how to deal with human suffering remains a vexing ethical problem, and it is one that is difficult to answer without some reference to the virtues".[58] The Catholic tradition offers a unique perspective on this issue, emphasizing the importance of cultivating compassion as a means of responding to suffering.

There is always the danger that some may interpret the Church's teaching on suffering in a way that is potentially harmful or that leads to a lack of compassionate response to

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[57] *The City of God* Book XIX, Chapter 17
[58] Wessel 139

those who suffer. That is, one might ask, "If suffering is good and helps others to grow in virtue, why should we do anything to alleviate their suffering?" The Church recognizes the validity of this concern and responds to it with a message of compassion and solidarity.

Salvifici Doloris emphasizes that the Church recognizes that suffering can be experienced as meaningless or as a source of despair and that it is called to respond to this reality with compassion and solidarity. Here John Paul II emphasizes the importance of empathy and compassion for those who suffer, recognizing that the Church's response must be one of solidarity with those who are hurting.[59]

Similarly, *Spe Salvi* presents the Church's teaching on suffering as a message of hope, which can be a source of comfort and strength for those who suffer. In *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI emphasizes that the Church's message of hope is not just a matter of words, but is expressed through concrete acts of love and compassion towards those who suffer.[60]

Deus Caritas Est, also authored by Pope Benedict, emphasizes that the Church's teaching on love includes a call to solidarity with those who suffer and that this solidarity includes concrete actions to alleviate their suffering. In paragraph 28, Pope Benedict says that "love of neighbor is a path that leads to the encounter with God," recognizing that the Church's call to love and serve others is an essential part of its mission and a vital part of every Catholic's relationship with God.[61]

Lastly, *Evangelium Vitae* emphasizes that the Church's teaching on the value of human life includes a call to defend the vulnerable and to alleviate their suffering. In paragraph 73, Pope St. John Paul II is very clear that the Church's mission includes a commitment to the promotion of life and the alleviation of suffering, recognizing that this is an essential part of its prophetic witness to the world.[62] As these and other documents show, the fact that suffering can be an opportunity for growth and the cultivation of compassion and the undeniable call to every Catholic to show mercy (in both spiritual and tangible ways) to and seek justice for those who suffer are not mutually exclusive.

Ultimately, the significance of the relationship between suffering and compassion lies in its ability to provide a framework for understanding the human condition. That framework starts and ends with the grace of God and with the hope we have in Jesus Christ, who overcame not only tremendous suffering but death itself, and calls us not only to suffer and die with Him, but to be raised with Him in glory as well. Whatever our circumstances, in joy or in sorrow, we have this hope that anchors our souls in the source of all joy and goodness and allows us to face the ills of this world virtuously and with the assurance of Christ's accompaniment.

In conclusion, I wish to share the last verse of the hymn "O God Beyond All Praising," whose powerful words about hope in the face of suffering gave my thesis its title:

"Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring
That we who know Your favor may serve You as our King

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[59] *Salvifici Doloris* 19-20
[60] *Spe Salvi* 35-36
[61] *Deus Caritas Est* 28

[62] *Evangelium Vitae* 73

And whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill
We'll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless You still
To marvel at Your beauty and triumph in Your grace
And make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise."[63]

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[63] "O God Beyond All Praising," Journeysongs: Third Edition, vol. 25, no. 4 (Chicago: OCP Publications, 2012), 25.

Freshman Essays

Mental Health Care in Correctional Institutions
By
Anna Li

The environment in correctional institutions has been a concern for several years. With America having the highest incarceration rates in the world, there needs to be a change in managing correctional institutions in the most efficient ways. Psychology and criminal justice are tightly linked together due to the positive correlation between mental illnesses and criminal acts. Mentally ill inmates make up about half of the population of jails and prisons in America. It has become a large issue that inmates do not receive appropriate care for physical and mental conditions. Many inmates are suffering from those conditions on a daily basis, and the lack of access to professional medical care is a violation of their personal rights. Psychological help is essential because it provides an opportunity to improve emotional state while incarcerated and an easier transition after release. Correctional institutions need to enforce more mental health programs and implement alternative approaches in order to improve mental health care. It would help inmates better themselves as well as diminish overall spending on corrections by reducing the proportion of the mentally ill.

Overwhelming evidence suggests poor mental health treatment among inmates, which correlates to misconduct. Researchers argue that "…inmates with a mental condition are more likely to have been charged with breaking correctional facility rules" (Al-Rousan et al. 6). This shows that a stressful environment combined with the lack of mental health care is most likely provoking mentally ill inmates to act out. Mental conditions merged with physical conditions could be strongly associated with misconduct, and this "cumulative health-related strain may be worsened by poor prison conditions, the inability to access efficient healthcare, and the lack of resources to help cope with being ill" (Semenza and Grosholz 8). It demonstrates that the lack of proper care can have detrimental effects, as there is a significant amount of frustration inmates suffer, as well as health problems, which can often influence misconduct. Additionally, inmates undergo a lot of stress from the environment of corrections, as well as health conditions that some prisoners struggle with daily. Several factors can be correlated to higher rates of misconduct among inmates, but lack of access to proper health care in correctional institutions is definitely one of the most significant.

There is evidence suggesting that co-occurring health and mental conditions also correlate to poorer mental health in inmates. Co-occurring health conditions include substance abuse as well as physical conditions. There have been some investigations into this topic, which "[found] that of those in jail with severe mental disorders, there is a 72% rate of co-occurring substance abuse" (Semenza and Grosholz 1). It demonstrates that poor mental health significantly correlates to substance abuse. Additionally, there is evidence that, in general, increased disciplinary sanctions are linked to

co-occurring conditions. Researchers uncovered results that "indicated that women in the sample who were diagnosed with co-occurring disorders were more than 4 times more likely to receive disciplinary sanction than those without a diagnosis" (Gottfried and Christopher 340). This shows that co-occurring conditions can have a negative impact on the lives of inmates in corrections.

Evidence links solitary confinement to poorer mental health in jail and prison populations. Research suggests that the solitary environment takes a significant strain, as well as the amount of time spent and isolation from social ties in the outside world. Researchers suggest that "Examinations of the association between length of incarceration, experience or time spent in solitary confinement, or distance from the inmate's social ties outside of the facility with mental health outcomes…" might broaden the understanding of this issue (Yi et al. 908). This supports the idea that the environment itself, as well as isolation, play a crucial role in creating stress in inmates. It is clear that "Mentally ill individuals are at higher than normal risk of being victimized, and these environments can contribute greatly to psychiatric deterioration. Solitary confinement is particularly harmful" (Mulvey and Schubert 237). This shows that feeling isolated, in general, correlates to stress; and, combined with mental health issues, could worsen the mental state of inmates even more. Moreover, an environment with prison guards, handcuffs, bars, etc., can have a detrimental effect on mental health as well. Furthermore, there are not many resources for seeking psychological help, which strains the brain even more with the feeling of helplessness.

Timely and professional diagnoses followed by efficient treatment can significantly help improve health care in correctional institutions. Understanding and considering other social factors is also an essential part of treating mentally ill persons. It is vital to emphasize the fact that "Timely diagnosis at intake and awareness of racial and other disparities are critical to improving health care in these patients" (Al-Rousan et al. 8). This supports the argument of how accurate timely diagnosis can positively impact inmates with mental illnesses and help them receive appropriate treatment. However, the lack of treatment is one of the main issues. There is research showing that "Of the jail inmates with a mental health problem, only 17.5% received mental health treatment at the jail, and only 14.8% took prescribed medication" (Gottfried and Christopher 337). Evidence displays an extremely low statistic; to put it in a different perspective, the system leaves about 82% of mentally ill inmates untreated. Lack of action could potentially serve as a significant burden on the improvement of mental health care in correctional institutions. People tend not to put a lot of attention or effort into prisoners because the issue is not affecting them daily. However, being aware of the issue and also trying to do something about it would benefit all citizens because, in the long run, treating mentally ill inmates while incarcerated can drastically reduce recidivism. Consequently, it would create safer communities and reduce high rates of incarceration in the United States.

Improving the training of the support staff in jails and prisons is a crucial practice that needs to be enforced. There is an apparent shortage of mental health professionals in correctional institutions; much of the problem is due to smaller salaries than in jobs that are in the community. It is critical to stress that "Many correctional institutions

have a shortage of QMHPs [qualified mental health professionals] and lack of effective services. There are multiple barriers to maintaining an adequate and consistent number of QMHP in a correctional setting. Among these, correctional institutions often lack sufficient mental health funding, which has not increased to keep pace with growing demands" (Kolodziejczak and Sinclair 255). Evidence shows that mental health care in jails and prisons is suffering because of the shortage of professionals and effective services. Consequently, correctional staff became the new source of help for inmates. However, "Despite the high prevalence of mental illness among inmates and the service-provider roles placed on correctional officers, adequate mental health training is absent from most institutions," which is a problem that needs to receive more attention (Kolodziejczak and Sinclair 256). Therefore, there is a growing need for improvement in mental health training for correctional officers, which could tremendously change the dynamic of corrections. Another source states, "effective training in mental health for support staff and the use of EBT [evidence-based treatment] modalities is likely to improve the efficacy of mental health services provided" (Gottfried and Christopher 342). This evidence helps support the claim that improved training for correctional staff can have a largely positive effect.

Reducing the proportion of the mentally ill could be an alternative solution to the issue of poor mental health care among prisoners. There is a lot of research that suggests that it is unsafe to keep mentally ill individuals in jails and prisons for both themselves and the rest of the population. Studies suggest that "A jail or prison is just not the right place for a person who is having a severe mental health incident or who has limited ability to relate to people or to negotiate dangerous social situations. Leaving mentally ill individuals in jails and prisons hurts them and undermines efforts to maintain safe and ordered institutional environments" (Mulvey and Schubert 238). This connects to the argument that it is dangerous to have inmates with severe mental problems in the same facility as other inmates and leaving them untreated can be detrimental. Carolyn Zezima states, "Anybody arrested on a misdemeanor in Miami-Dade County is out within 3 days if they meet the criteria of a serious mental illness, specifically, schizo-affective disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, and PTSD. They are transferred to a crisis stabilization unit and because it is considered a criminal hold, they are kept for up to two weeks, instead of the usual 72-hour limit for crisis care in civil Baker Act cases." This provides a post-arrest diversion solution that could be used. The process continues, "After being stabilized and upon release from custody into the community, there is a transition phase, including a plan to address the risks and needs, two-weeks of medication, initial appointments with mental health professionals, and where to get refill medications" (Zezima). This program provides legitimate opportunities and resources to help reduce incarceration and recidivism rates. Zezima reports that after two years of the program's launch "the recidivism rate for misdemeanants dropped from about 72% to 20%." These positive results could encourage using this alternative solution that could create hope and a call to action in other states and counties. Getting ahead of the situation and diverting offenders from long-term incarceration could have successful outcomes in efforts to reduce incarceration rates as well as the proportion of the mentally ill within correctional institutions.

Some people may argue that caring for mentally ill inmates in jails is too expensive. They argue that housing and treating mentally ill persons is too costly for taxpaying citizens. Riley reports, "Nationwide, jails spend 2 to 3 times more on inmates who require mental health care than on inmates who don't have those needs, the National Association of Counties estimates." This demonstrates a high expense rate of the mentally ill compared to others. However, as mentioned above, crisis stabilization is one way to avoid long-term incarceration for offenders. Additionally, research establishes that mental health courts (MHC) are "voluntary specialty/problem-solving courts (similar to the drug court model) that divert the offender from incarceration and into mental health treatment. A large number of studies have found that these courts reduce recidivism rates in mentally ill criminal offenders" (Gottfried and Christopher 340). As research suggests, MHC can help focus on treating mental illnesses rather than simply being punished. It is possible that certain mental issues could be related to law violations, which should put priority on treatment. Consequently, it would cut the costs of housing mentally inmates in jails.

Many solutions could be used to treat mentally ill offenders, which would help reintegrate them into the community and reduce recidivism. There appears to be a significant correlation between inmates' poor mental health and higher misconduct rates. In addition, co-occurring health conditions and solitary confinement seem to strain mental health even further, potentially putting the mentally ill in danger, as well as others. Addressing the issue and finding alternative approaches like making timely and professional diagnoses, improving training support staff, and reducing the proportion of mentally ill inmates can improve mental health care in jails and prisons. Programs that avert offenders from incarceration and redirect them to mental health treatment can be very effective and beneficial. Researchers and workers need to raise awareness about the issue of poor mental health in correctional institutions. Consequently, more efforts and proper actions must be taken in order to resolve this issue and improve the situation for mentally ill inmates. These implementations can help the entire country and beyond if done properly and efficiently.

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How Genetics Shape a Cyclist's Physical Abilities
By
Jonas Walton

The discussion of talent versus dedication is always a delicate subject. Everyone wants to be the best, but only some are willing to do the work. Some are willing to do the work, but their talent level may not be enough. While you can get extremely far with dedication alone; usually, the top cyclists have a high talent level in combination with extreme tenacity. Three main factors determine a cyclist's physical ability. First is their aerobic capacity. This is measured with a VO2 max test, determining how much oxygen their body can take in. Second is their lactate threshold. This is measured with a lactate threshold test, which determines their muscles' efficiency. The last is the cyclist's rate of metabolism. This is much harder to measure but determines how efficiently and quickly their bodies can turn food into usable energy. Many studies show how exercise can naturally increase all of these factors. However, some genes make certain cyclists far more capable than others. In the world of Professional Cycling, genetics and, therefore, talent plays the biggest role in your physical ability.

Perhaps the most important genes for professional cyclists to have are iron-metabolizing genes. Research shows that they have a particularly strong correlation to VO2 max capabilities. Iron is a crucial substance for athletes to obtain. That is because "the leading role of iron is to transport oxygen into the red blood cells and tissues … The normal level of iron is crucial [for] … mitochondrial energy production,

which [is a] primary [factor] determining exercise performance" (Semenova et al., 2020). Specific genes have been linked to maximizing the amount of iron, thus allowing for more oxygen to be transported. One example is the H63D polymorphism, a rare G Allele and "has been shown to reduce the ability of the HFE protein to bind to its ligand … resulting in increased transport of iron into circulation and cells" (Semenova et al., 2020). Interestingly, in studies, more top-level athletes have these rare genes than the control population. For example, a recent 2020 study cited that "a higher frequency in the 'optimal' Genotype was found in [endurance athletes] (G/G 6.51%) vs. non-athletes (G/G 0.00%)" (Delgado et al., 2020). Even though not all athletes had this rare optimal Genotype, far more had it than the control population. Thus showing how people with this gene are more likely to reach the professional level.

The ACTN3 Genotype (also called the TT Genotype) is a distinct gene that allows for more muscle contractions during endurance exercise. In 2014 researchers tested the effects of this Genotype by having mice exercise for four weeks and recording the results. The study found "that calcineurin activity was increased in ACTN3-deficient muscles (Actn3 KO mice), which [enchanced] the response to endurance training" (Wolfarth et al., 2014). The researchers then tested humans with the calcineurin-regulating ACTN3 gene and found similar results. They stated that this

study "provided highly suggestive evidence that an ACTN3-deficient muscle has an enhanced adaptive response to endurance training because of its increased calcineurin activity" (Wolfarth et al., 2014). Increased calcineurin activity leads to a high response to endurance training because this gene affects the muscle's ability to generate rapid contractions (Konopka et al., 2022). This Genotype essentially allows the muscles to become more efficient with repeated muscle contractions, which is essential over 5+ hour-long bicycle races. In fact, "(inter)national competing runners and cyclists have a significantly higher prevalence of the TT genotype" (Konopka et al., 2022), showing the effectiveness of this Genotype.

Some genes permit faster metabolic rates; this allows professional cyclists to recover more quickly from continuous efforts. Some essential genes regarding metabolic rates are liver metabolizing genes. As people exercise, their bodies produce toxic byproducts in response to their muscles making repeated contractions. "The liver is the main organ of cleaning these harmful endogenous products, and one of the most striking features that characterize endurance athletes is their faster systemic recovery from continuous efforts, improving their performance" (Delgado et al., 2019). So ultimately, a more powerful liver can allow cyclists to recover faster from repeated efforts. This is essential because cyclists must be able to make maximal efforts over climbs, cobbles, or crosswinds, then recover only to make another maximal effort a few minutes later. This process can repeat itself over a hundred times in a 250-kilometer race. Some specific genes that allow certain people to have an advantage are the CYP2D6 and GSTT polymorphisms. These genes have a higher "frequency in elite endurance athletes different from the

non-athlete population; it is associated with a higher metabolic activity of proteins, a fact that predisposes this group to a better metabolic capacity" (Delgado et al., 2019). The benefits of these genes are substantial. No wonder the 'optimal' Genotype was found in athletes 93.2% of the time compared to the non-athlete population, where it was just 61.1% (Delgado et al., 2022).

Many researchers have found that the ACE Genotype strongly correlates to a robust cardiovascular system. This gene is interesting because researchers are still trying to determine precisely what it controls. However, it has been shown that "endurance athletes possess a higher prevalence of the [ACE variant] compared with sedentary controls" (Konopka et al., 2022), and other researchers said how they "observed the excess of the ACE gene I allele in athletes" (Shahmoradi et al., 2014). The 2014 study stated how this gene is likely "related to a healthier cardiovascular system, improved aerobic capacity, or enhanced muscle efficiency" (Shahmoradi et al., 2014). However, the more recent 2022 study went a step further and cited how "Individuals carrying the I allele … demonstrate increased capillary perfusion whereas DD individuals show decreased capillary perfusion" (Konopka et al., 2022). While researchers are still not 100% certain what this gene controls, it has been shown to benefit the cardiovascular system. Since so many professional endurance athletes have this gene, individuals with the ACE I gene variant are better off than those without it.

Some individuals may be lucky enough to have the rare EPOR genotype mutation, which significantly increases the concentration of red blood cells in one's blood. Thus allowing for much higher oxygen concentrations in muscles. It has

been seen that "individuals with ECYT-1 have variant EPORs that are effectively hypersensitive to EPO; thus they have an increased red blood cell count and the oxygen-carrying capacity of their blood can be increased by up to 50%" (Moran & Pitsiladis, 2017). Another study explains how this is actually considered a disease. However, it explains how it is "potentially advantageous for endurance sports" (Pickering et al., 2019). For example, the Finnish cross-country skiing champion Eero Mantyranta is known to possess [the EPOR gene], and he has amassed seven Olympic medals, five World Championship medals, and nine domestic championship medals (Moran & Pitsiladis, 2017; Pickering et al., 2019). Not many people have been studied to see whether they have this gene, but the few lucky endurance athletes that possess it are likely to see its profound effects.

Some people argue that through exercise alone, you are able to increase your VO2 max and metabolism. Although people can naturally increase their VO2 max and metabolism simply through exercise, most of the population lack the specific genes to take them to the next level. For example, one study showed how "VO2max was significantly higher in [professional athletes] than [moderately active individuals] (74.1 ± 4.7 vs. 49.6 ± 5.8 ml kg-1 min-1, p\0.01)" (San-Millan & Brooks, 2018). This shows how even the mean value of active individuals' VO2 max is only 66% of the mean VO2 max for professional athletes. The same study cited how "[fat oxidation] was remarkably higher in the [professional athletes] group compared with … the [moderately active individuals]." The reason fat oxidation is so essential is that studying "[fat oxidation] is … a way to indirectly assess mitochondrial function and metabolic flexibility" (San-Millan & Brooks, 2018). So greater metabolic flexibility allows

people to react faster to changes in energy demands. So once again, professional athletes preformed remarkably better than even active individuals, showing how they likely possess certain genes that make them more capable than most of the population.

The biggest determiner of a cyclist's ability is their genetics. The genes cyclists possess can significantly influence their aerobic capacity, lactate threshold, and rate of metabolism. Genes that allow for a greater aerobic capacity increase one's VO2 Max; this allows for more oxygen to reach the cells. Genes affecting lactate threshold impact the muscles' efficiency. Greater efficiency allows for more rapid muscle contractions before exhaustion. Lastly, genes that affect one's rate of metabolism impact how quickly the body can flush byproducts of exercise. This allows cyclings to recover more quickly from continuous efforts. Studies have shown that professional endurance athletes are more likely than the average person to have the optimal genotypes. This should not dishearten aspiring athletes. Instead, it should spark intrigue and excitement. Not everyone can be a star, but maybe you possess the secret formula to winning the most prominent races like Paris-Roubaix and the Tour De France.

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The Use of Fashion Marketing Through Social Media
By
Reagan Cullen

How often while watching tv do you see advertisements for your favorite fashion brands appear during commercial break? The answer is probably little to never. How often do you receive a catalog for your favorite fashion brands in the mail? The answer, once again, is probably little to never. This is due to the increased shift of fashion promotion being done through social media. Fashion marketers should use social media to advertise their brands in order to attract their targeted consumers.

Social media influencers are a successful marketing tool, as they both attract and persuade consumers. When the use of social media is brought up, one most likely associates it with teenagers. This common connection is due to the increased use of media sites by millennials, as it has been "Found that the millennials are considered to be the generation that spends most of their time online" (Bandara 476). Something that is valued as equally as social media amongst teens is fashion. Nowadays, fashion and social media go hand in hand, as teens and young adults often find fashion inspiration whilst scrolling through Instagram or Tik Tok. Fashion marketers have begun to recognize this connection, and used it to their advantage by creating social media influencers. As it has been found that fashion brands have been able to "Improve their results through using opinion SMFI [Social Media Fashion Influencers] to assist fashion consumers in purchasing decisions" (Quelhas-Brito, et al.). These influencers are paid media users who have a high count of followers that use their platform to encourage their followers to buy products that they have partnered with. The use of influencers helps persuade media users to purchase more as it has been recorded that "71% of the social media users prefer to make purchases based on social media accounts" (Bandara 476). With more consumers using social media for online purchases based on the persuasion of influencers, all parties that are involved are benefitted. Influencers benefit by gaining more followers, free items from fashion companies, and financial gain from working as a sales person. Consumers benefit as they can easily purchase products that they see their idols wearing, allowing them to fit in with fashion trends and norms. And most importantly, demand for fashion brands items will increase, bringing in more funds for the company.

Influencers work as a median between fashion brands and consumers. Considering influencers are often the same age as their followers, and they have a high sense of style, "People trust influencers more than any brand for the promotion of a product" (Sudha and Sheena 17). And with the help of influencers, "Social media has become one of the most popular fashionable tools which creates [a] link between brand and the consumer" (Ahmad et al. 2). Influencers have allowed marketing through media sites to flourish, as they not only promote products, but can offer advice and answers for consumers. Influencers also use other sources such as youtube or blogs that answer consumers' questions, and provide their own

opinion on the clothes they are advertising. Influencers have been known to become so popularized by the public that they are classified as celebrities, and might even attend shows where they can be seen wearing a brand's clothing, selling it even more. Some examples of influencers that started out as youtubers and instagram stars include Liza Koshy and Emma Chamberlain. However, both Koshy and Chamberlain represent smaller fashion businesses, unlike a few bloggers, such as "Gala Darling, Tavi,Scott Schuman of the 'Sartorialist' and Garance Dore" who have worked as marketing influencers for "Renowned fashion brands and designer such as Dolce & Gabanna, Burberry, Alexander McQueen, along with foremost fashion magazines such as Vogue and Elle, [whom have all] acknowledged [these] brilliant fashion blogger[s work]" (Ahmad et al. 3). This suggests that Influencers are beneficial for consumer choices and fashion merchandising for brands.

Fashion companies that create a page on a social media site helps to build a platform for fashion brands. More and more companies and "Fashion retailers use social media to build awareness towards their brands," by starting their own account (Bandara 476). By creating their own feed that includes updates about sales, new products, and even a direct link to their online website. For example, Instagram and Tik Tok specifically have updated their feeds so that users will stumble across advertisements while scrolling through their social media, as "Many of the largest fashion brands in Indonesia use Instagram as a means to direct traffic to their site" (Artha et al 400). This makes it easier for consumers to distractedly click on the ad, as it takes them directly to the fashion brands instagram page, hence why "Retailers want to use or are using social media because it

enhances their brand recognition as most of the millennials are using these" (Bukhari). From there, users can then click on the link that directs them to a company's online store, where they can continue online shopping. This media update makes it so much easier for consumers to get distracted and online shop more than they would have previous to social media being used as a marketing tool, causing clothing companies to make more profit. Company's fashion marketers can also make profit by having their influencers tag their brand's instagram page in posts that include their products, causing viewers to click the tag, taking them to the exact item on the online store. This makes it easier for consumers to buy a company's products without second thought, increasing the business for fashion brands.

Social media influencers can really benefit a fashion company's marketing, however they can also create complications. It is so easy for an influencer to put a good word out and post media that promotes a company's brand. However, it is just as easy for an influencer to bash or put out a negative opinion on a brand as well. As some companies have had a troublesome partnership and "Paid the price by using social media influencers who, in some way, have dented their brand" (Naylor). One specific example in which a company suffered from an influencer post occurred between British model Naomi Campbell, and Adidas. Whether or not Campbell meant to harm Adidas' image, she included the exact message she received from the brand on how to properly promote their newest shoes, causing "Adidas [to lose] a ton of credibility with its audience" (Naylor). Consumers lose trust in both the influencer's opinion and the brand's advertising when seeing the behind the scenes of how fashion marketing is truly done through social media, as it reminds them that the

advertising is truly a business deal between the brand and influencer. Fashion brands also might decide to partner with an influencer that doesn't coincide with their statement or products. This takes away from the credibility of both the influencer and fashion company.

Another negative aspect of using an influencer to represent and promote your brand is the risk that the influencer could behave poorly outside of promoting your products, that could come back to the fashion company. If an influencer were to post a controversial message on a media site, or get in trouble with the law, their connection to a particular fashion brand could end up denting the brand's name. However, both these problems can be avoided if a fashion brand does their research and find's an influencer that has respectable behavior and represents their company's name well. Fashion brands must remember that "It's not about how big your influencer is, it's about the genuine passion and commitment that the influencer has for your products and services" (Naylor). Finding an influencer that supports your claim and has a genuine connection with your brand creates a good partnership, and almost all troubles caused by social media influencers can be avoided.

While fashion marketing can be done through catalogs, runway, or tv commercials, fashion marketers should turn to social media for fashion marketing. Social media as a marketing tool offers influencers who help promote a brand's products, mediate between consumers and sellers, and also allows for fashion brands to build their name. Overall, social media offers a new and innovative way to reach fashion companies targeted consumers.

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The Power of Art Therapy
By
Joy Dygowski

What does the familiar phrase "you need to go to therapy" bring to mind? When most people contemplate traditional therapy they often picture the stereotypical shrink sitting behind a large mahogany desk analyzing and dissecting their patients thoughts, actions, and personality. This couldn't be farther from the truth when it comes to art therapy. Art Therapy is a specialized area of mental health treatment that uses art materials and the creative process to explore emotions, reduce anxiety, increase self-esteem, and resolve other psychological conflicts. Art Therapy should be a required part of college wellness programs because it can help students cope with anxiety, stress, and depression, help individuals experiencing symptoms of PTSD, and can be an effective and less intimidating way to manage various addictions that many college students struggle with today

Art Therapy should be a required part of college wellness programs because it can help students cope with anxiety, stress, and depression. For the majority of young adults venturing into college can be one of the most stressful times of their lives. As a new college student you're always short on sleep, have a ridiculous amount of homework, and are readjusting to an entirely new environment and social life (or lack thereof) that comes with living on campus. These physiological stressors can definitely result in worsening mental health.

Unfortunately despite researchers finding that "the prevalence of mental health problems among the college student population is on the rise" (Holland 16), nearly all of the people "who experience psychological stress do not seek mental health counseling" (Holland 16). This is a very sad but true fact. Just to put the high level of reported college student stress in perspective "91% of Gen Z respondents saying they have experienced at least one physical or emotional symptom due to stress in the last month compared to 74% of adults overall" (Theresa 1). This means that on average a young adult enrolled full-time in college is experiencing more stress induced mental or physical symptoms than most adults working 40 hours a week.

Part of the problem with mental health interventions is that "greater levels of stigma were associated with lower counseling service use" (Holland 18). The alternative approach of art therapy can help to alleviate some of this stigma because it is not as intimidating to paint a picture about what you're feeling then it is to talk for hours to someone you hardly know about the inner workings of your mind. Recent studies have shown that "college students in Generation Z are among the most stressed of our time" (Theresa et al. 1). Considering this fact something must be done to help alleviate the mental health crisis on college campuses today.

Traditional therapies are great, but they do not work for everyone and "the majority of mental health problems are non-psychotic (e.g., depression, anxiety, phobias)" (Uttley

et al. 1). And that is why "for some people, art therapy may be a more acceptable alternative form of psychological therapy than standard forms of treatment, such as talking therapies" (Uttley et al. 1). This alternative approach could be extremely helpful for college aged students because art therapy "has the capacity to elicit anxiety-reducing benefits and may produce a trained biofeedback response for combating stress, offering a feasible strategy for addressing the mental health crisis on college campuses" (Beerse et al. 1). Because of this proven biofeedback response to art therapy, it should be a readily available part of every college campuses health resources for students. Art therapies have also been found to "induce relaxation; [and] gain access to unconscious traumatic memories" (Abbing et al. 1), which is yet another reason why this alternative method of therapy has proven to be so useful in reducing stress and anxiety among college students.

Art Therapy should be a required part of college wellness programs because it can help individuals experiencing symptoms of PTSD. Not only has art therapy been proven to significantly decrease stress and anxiety among college students, but it has also been widely recognized as a valid way to alleviate and cope with PTSD. Researcher have found that "creative art therapies offer a nonthreatening way for clients to access and express their trauma, creating a corrective experience in the brain" (Perryman et al. 80).

Trauma in the brain can manifest in many ways that may not necessarily be obviously caused by buried trauma. Some examples of this could be exhaustion, general agitation, confusion, depression, and eating disorders. Many college students could be experiencing the effects of trauma without

realizing it and art therapy is one of the best ways to work through this.

Whether the trauma is a known event or perhaps something that happened years ago that the student has not had a chance to work through yet, "activities that incorporate body movement can be particularly helpful by providing a corrective emotional experience for those clients with an immobilized response to a traumatic event" (Perryman et al. 80). Art therapy should be a required part of every college wellness program because it can help students experiencing general psychological disturbances or PTSD to work through the trauma that is underneath the problematic behaviors.

Art Therapy should be a required part of college wellness programs because it can be an effective and less intimidating way to manage various addictions that many college students struggle with today. Substance abuse is a very serious issue which can be exasperated by the added stress of attending college. And although some people may "consider the 12-step method of Alcoholics Anonymous to be the treatment of choice for people struggling with substance abuse, differing approaches have been developed within the area of addictions" (Horay 14). One of the main differing approaches that has been researched in recent years is art therapy.

The reason art therapy could be so effective in helping college students struggling with an addiction is because "treatment through art therapy process lowers stress levels, relaxes, people communicate more freely, and this particular treatment affects the people addicted to alcohol" (Haluzan 99). The efficacy of art therapy in helping people cope with an addiction does not just apply to alcohol, it could apply to any substance. College campuses could benefit greatly with having "psychosocial nurses trained in

group processes [who] can use art expression as part of addiction recovery and relapse prevention" (Liggett 11). Having art therapists who are specialized in addiction treatment as a readily available resource for students on college campuses would be revolutionary in changing the drug abuse epidemic in college aged individuals.

Art therapy should be a required part of every college wellness program. This alternative form of therapy has been proven to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression in college students. Art therapy can also help with alleviating and coping with symptoms of PTSD which is especially important since this disorder can manifest itself in many unexpected ways including exhaustion, general agitation, and depression. Art therapy can also be an effective and less intimidating way to manage various substance addictions that many college students struggle with today.

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The Difference Between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Adulterous Woman in the Gospel
By
Whitley Buchanan

The New Testament is comprised of several accounts of Jesus Christ who is the son of God. According to these accounts, Jesus came to Earth as a human being and ministered to the people in his area. His mother, Mary, played an important role in the accounts of Jesus' life on earth as she was the one who gave birth to him originally. Additionally, the woman caught in adultery played a significant role in Jesus' ministry because she was forgiven by him. But who is Mary, and who is the woman caught in adultery? What are the stories of these women? What can scholars learn from them? This paper will answer these questions by first analyzing and giving context to these two figures, and then ascertaining the link between the two.

Mary was the daughter of Joachim and Anne. She was born without the original sin that all inherit by birth from Adam and Eve known as the immaculate conception. Mary was born sinless so that her son, Jesus, would be too. The immaculate conception was part of God's plan for the Messiah to be born and redeem the world. Around the time of Jesus' birth, she lived in Nazareth, a city in Galilee, and was betrothed to marry Joseph. During her betrothal, Mary had a vision from an angel named Gabriel who told her that she was chosen to give birth to the prophesied Messiah. At first, she was unsure of how this was to come to pass seeing as how she was unmarried at the time of her vision. It is revealed in the Gospel of Matthew that Joseph wanted to divorce her

after learning of her pregnancy. However, one night, Joseph dreamed that an angel came to him and told him not to hesitate about marrying her. The angel explained to him that her child in the womb is "from the Holy Spirit." Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to be married, and Mary gave birth to Jesus in a stable since the inn was full. She had him circumcised and named Jesus eight days after his birth in accordance with Jewish tradition. Throughout her life she raised and nurtured Jesus and remained faithful to him even at his death (Mary (Mother of Jesus) - New World Encyclopedia, n.d.).

The story behind the woman caught in adultery is a brilliant example of Jesus' ministry on Earth. While Jesus was teaching at the temple, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and other government officials brought forth a woman who was caught acting in adultery. The officials pointedly reminded Jesus of the law stating that supposedly women caught in adultery were to be stoned and asked Jesus for his input on the issue. Jesus knew the officials were trying to trick him, so he diffused the situation by staying silent and doodling on the ground. After persistent questioning from the officials, Jesus finally said that whoever lived without sin should be the first to cast a stone at the woman. The crowd dissipated after hearing this and the woman and Jesus were left alone. Jesus asked the woman who had condemned her and where her condemners were, and she said they were gone. He then told her that she was forgiven and to go

and exit her sinful life (The Woman Caught in Adultery Bible Story Study Guide, 2019).

These two stories are blooming with several messages. Mary's story reveals her relationship with God and how faithful she was to him. Mary was only a teenager when she was told to give birth to Jesus Christ. In her country during this time, it was highly discouraged to conceive at such a young age especially out of marriage. However, societal norms and worldly traditions never stopped Mary from carrying forth God's will and God from sending Jesus Christ to Earth. The birth of Jesus shows God's complete fidelity and trust in Mary, and Mary's complete fidelity and trust in God despite the opposition she encountered while carrying out his will. Additionally, lessons of forgiveness and hypocrisy arise from the story of the woman in adultery. A series of actions took place after the woman was condemned. First, Jesus called the crowd out for being such hypocrites; even though the accusers had sinned plenty in their life, they were still quick to condemn this woman and want her stoned. Jesus called them out for being such hypocrites, and the accusers soon left the scene reminded of their own sins. Jesus recognized that the woman had sinned but forgave her and told her to leave her sinful life. This story teaches the concept of forgiveness and repentance and how important these are for growth in life here on Earth.

Mary's mission on Earth reflects many similarities and differences to the adulterous woman. A long time before the story of the adulterous woman, Mary was in a similar situation when she was told to give birth to Jesus Christ. She was a teenager and unmarried at the time, which was highly discouraged by society. The law that women caught in adultery should be stoned was still in effect during Mary's pregnancy. Mary could have been stoned, but God saved her by sending Joseph to take her in. This shows the love and protection of God because he knew that the concept of the immaculate conception was an idea too advanced for society at the time.
When the woman was presented to Jesus, some speculate that Jesus saw his own mother in the woman's eyes. Acting as his father did to his mother, Jesus stood up for this woman and silenced her offenders (Shadows of Mother Mary in the Bible (Transcript) - Divine UK, n.d.).
Additionally, even though Mary was born sinless, and the adulterous woman led a sinful life, both women were subject to being stoned to death according to the Law of Moses. However, both lives of the women were saved thanks to God's wisdom and divine plan. The only difference in these stories is that the woman caught in adultery was circumstantial, while Mary's mission was premeditated by God himself. Even though the context is slightly different, the stories of Mary and the woman caught in adultery relate to each other. It is through divine providence that these stories came together. Without God's interference by sending Joseph to her, Mary would have been stoned and unable to give birth to the Savior of the world. If Mary had led a sinful life instead of being born sinless, she would never have qualified to give birth to Jesus Christ. Moreover, if Mary had never given birth to Jesus, a Savior would never have existed to forgive the woman in adultery and teach the concept of forgiveness. He also would never have been able to remind the accusers of their own sins. By Mary answering yes to the call of God, her response saved the life of the woman caught in adultery.

Jesus Christ, the son of the virgin Mary, is the link that connects these two women in

the New Testament. Without the interference of Jesus Christ, both women would be dead. God's intervention by sending Joseph to Mary saved her life. In turn, Jesus' intercession with the adulterous woman saved the woman's life as well. There is a lot to be learned from these two stories including the significance of forgiveness, especially when someone's life is hanging in the balance. God's ultimate mission to send his son to earth paid off because Jesus was able to teach the concept of forgiveness and redeem the lives of many.

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2ⁿᵈ Annual Undergraduate Research Conference Abstracts

April 21, 2023

Christopher Ahern	Individual Difference in Responses to Racist Humor
Megan Baker	The Benefits of Peer Tutors and Students for the Writing Center
Eunjae Benson	The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children with Autism
Sarah Blankenship	Raising Teachers' Salaries
Hailey Boda	On Higher Dimensions
Paige D'Agostin	The Influence of Age and Political Ideology on the Justifiability of the Death Penalty
Christopher Duarte	Promoting Equity in Compensation Across all Collegiate Sports
William Duffy	Concealed Carry and Economic Success
Renzo Fassioli	The Effect of Crime Victimhood and Attendance of Religious Services on American's Views of the Justifiability of the Death Penalty
Jada Foster	Football Team Proposal
Ruby Foster	Football Team Proposal
John (Patrick) Gallagher	
	The Advantages of Philosophy and Liberal Arts in Business
Isabela Gallardo	Human Impact on Marine Life
Michelle Guppy	The Type of Colorectal Screening Effect on Death Rate per State
Robert Hill	Russian Military Logistical Shortcomings and Failure to Modernize
Tucker Hoeniges	Higher Education: Counting the Costs, Maximizing the Benefits
Sarah Holley	The Role of Phonological and Visual Processing Deficiencies in Developmental Dyslexia
Trevor Humphries	The Power of a Search: Staying Safe on World Wide Web
Mariah Jones	Child Maltreatment and Adult Criminality
Amanda Johnson	The Role of Attachment in Treating Partner-Violent Men
Adonis Johnson	Edge Coloring Disjoint Edges on Geometric Complete Graphs
Kendra Kerr	Belmont Abbey New Parking Ideas
Anthony Klein	'The Prodigal Son: The Sequel; An Exploration of the Devious Townsfolk in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux"
Jackson Korta	Concussion Prevention
Peyton Lilley	Belmont Abbey Football Team Proposal
Seve Leoni	The Impact of Positive Coaching
Rorisang Lesenyego	
	Computers are an Important Part of the Society
Anna Li	Mental Health Treatment in Correctional Institutions
Youthan Love	With an Increase in Age, and Perceptions of Corruption in the Country, Does it Tend to Cause People to Favor Private Ownership Over Government Ownership of Businesses