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From the Editor

Editing *Popular Culture Review* for the last 27 years has been a labor of love. I would like to acknowledge the support of UNLV's College of Liberal Arts and Department of English as well as PCA/ACA and, most recently Policy Studies Organization.

Thank you all,
Felicia F. Campbell
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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From the Editor's Desk

This issue marks the end of the first nineteen years of *Popular Culture Review*. The journal is a year younger than its parent FWPCA/ACA, which celebrated its twentieth anniversary in January of this year. I'm sure you will enjoy it in all its diversity.

I urge you all to check out the Call for Papers for the 2009 conference that can be found at the back of this issue. We will be in a shiny new venue with a new format that I am sure you will enjoy. For details, go to our website at <www.farwestpca.blogspot.com>.

We are now screening articles for PCR's twentieth anniversary edition which will contain a bibliography of all previous PCR articles. All articles are rigorously refereed and we look forward to hearing from many of you.

Have a wonderful year and send us those articles.

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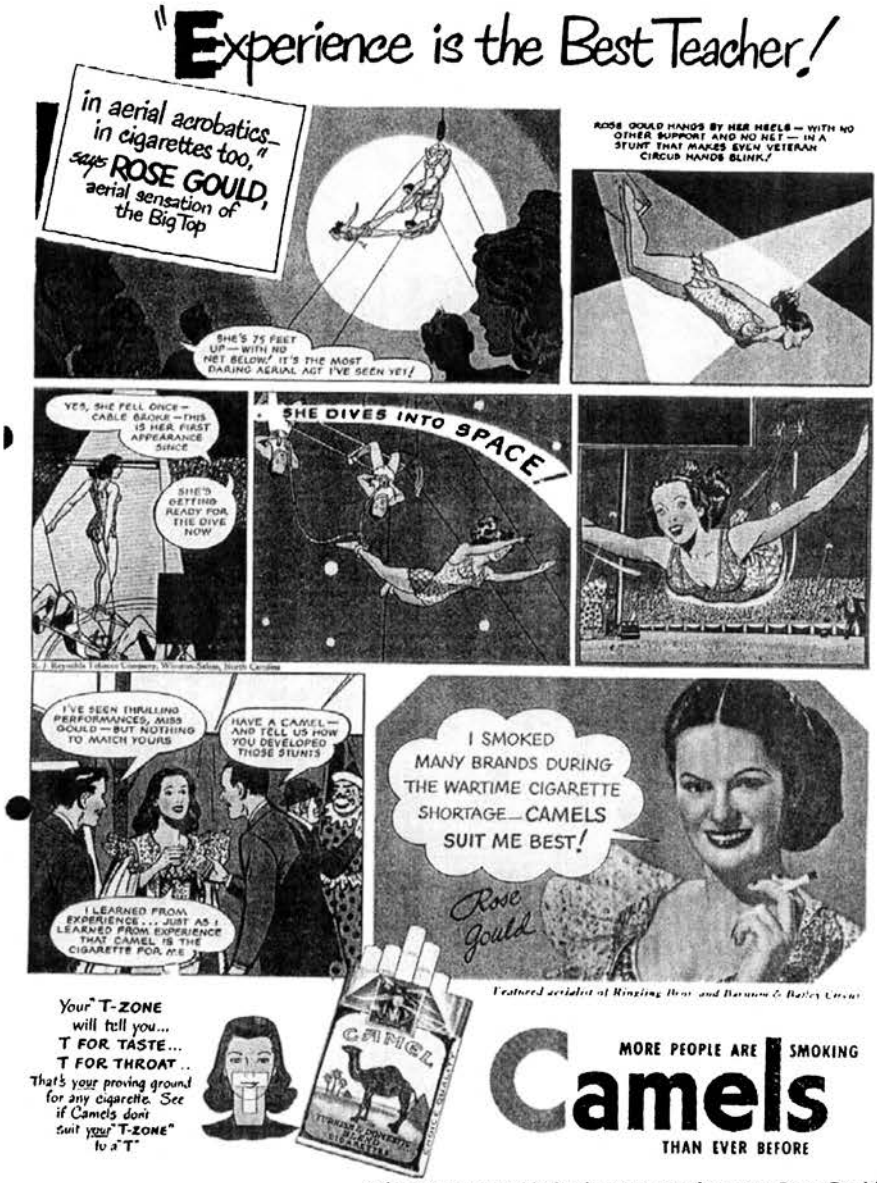
Flying and Smoking: Sensory Bodies, Identity and Circus Cigarette Advertisements

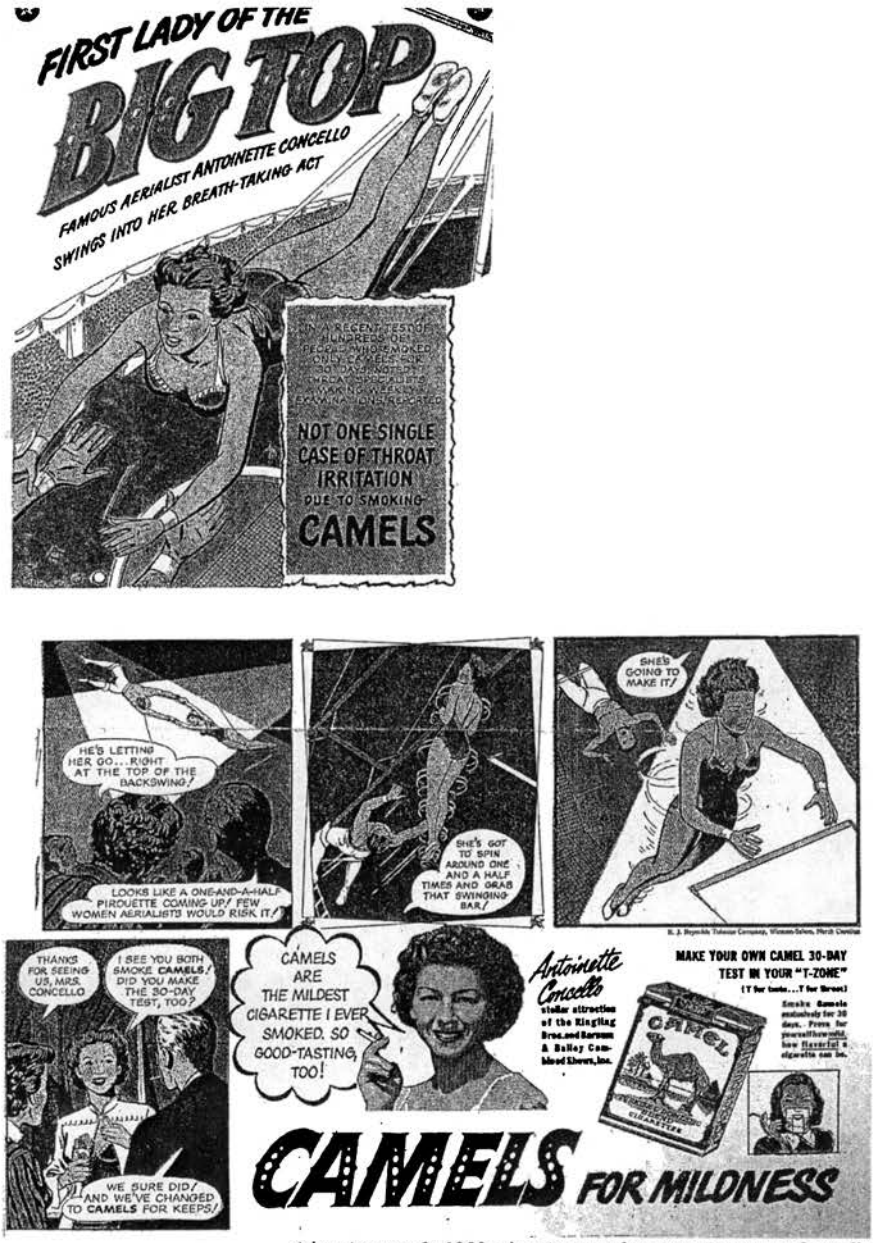
Abstract

This article analyses three examples of cigarette advertisements for the Camel brand published in the annual programs of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus: The Greatest Show on Earth® with aerialists Rose Gould in 1948, Antoinette Concello in 1950, and Norma Fox in 1951. It describes the acts of the three aerialists and considers the ways in which these particular program advertisements engage circus spectators with images of female aerialists doing extreme feats on the flying trapeze and then smoking after the act. If athletic circus performers could make smoking seem alluring, as both physically daring and socially adventurous, these advertisements reiterate how the act of smoking signals female emancipation and potentially also sexual availability (Tinkler 2006). This article explores the co-option of images of health and glamour—the body's social surface. Simone Dennis (2006) argues that the action of smoking is a bodily experienced phenomenon, and these Camel cigarette advertisements can be said to surreptitiously align smoking with the felt bodily thrills of viewing the circus. The larger point is that responses to popular entertainment are not only about the targeted appeal of words and images but also a conjunction of these with a sensory body phenomenology. Three images courtesy of Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin with permission from Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey®.

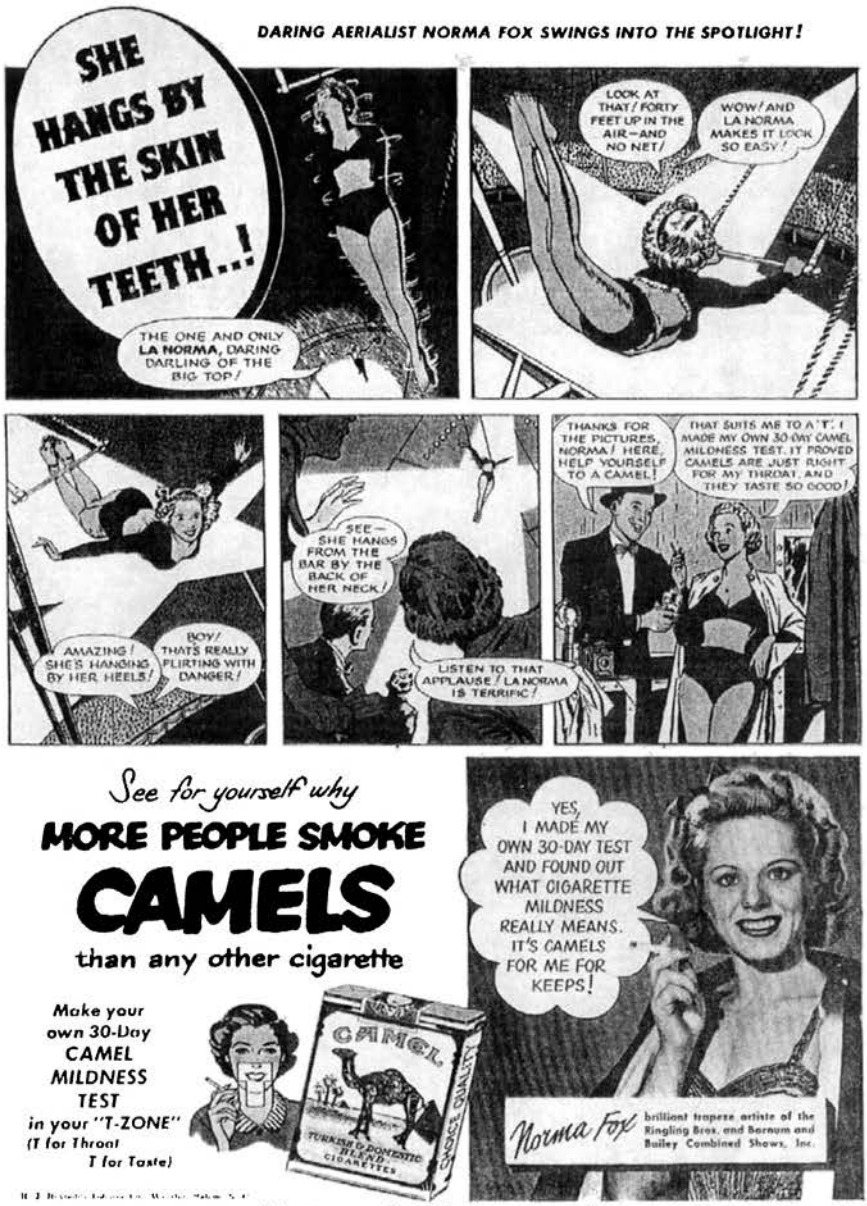
Cigarette advertisements depicted world-leading female trapeze performers in the mid-twentieth century in a fascinating convergence of smoking and athleticism, and sexualised social and physical daring. These advertisements bring together at least two forms of popular entertainment—circus and print comic strips—smoking might be considered a third form.[1] This article contextualises and analyses three examples of cigarette advertisements for the Camel brand published in the annual programs of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus: The Greatest Show on Earth® (RBBBC): a 1948 advertisement featuring Rose Gould (advertisement 1, p. 6), a 1950 advertisement featuring Antoinette Concello (advertisement 2, p. 7), and a 1951 advertisement featuring La Norma (Norma Fox) (advertisement 3, p. 8).[2] In the mid-twentieth century, these female trapeze performers were celebrity performers comparable to film stars, with acts seen live by a mass audience in the USA and which set artistic precedents world-wide. In what ways did these particular program advertisements engage circus spectators? In these



Advertisement 1: 1948 advertisement featuring Rose Gould



Advertisement 2: 1950 advertisement featuring Antoinette Concello



Advertisement 3: 1951 advertisement featuring La Norma (Norma Fox)

advertisements, pleasurable risk-taking in the circus becomes clearly associated with consuming cigarettes. Penny Tinkler identifies how the "feminization of smoking" was largely "a visual phenomenon" and one replayed through representation (2006: 2). If athletic circus performers could make smoking seem alluring, as both physically daring and socially adventurous, these advertisements reiterate how the act of smoking signals female emancipation and potentially also sexual availability (Tinkler 2006). They co-opt images of health and glamour—the body's social surface.

An association of the bodily activity of smoking with the physical action of the circus produces further significance. As argued elsewhere, flying trapeze performers in kinesthetic motion can provoke visceral responses in circus spectators as they watch the performers doing mid-air leaps and jumps (Tait 2005: 141–151). Simone Dennis (2006) argues that the action of smoking is a bodily experienced phenomenon that advertising appropriates, so that these Camel cigarette advertisements can be said to surreptitiously align the bodily experience of smoking with the felt bodily thrills of viewing circus. This conceptual framing is discussed later in the article and implicates the lived body in relation to the seen movement of other bodies, through bodily engagement with and in the world (Merleau-Ponty 1996). The article's larger point is that responses to popular entertainment are not only about the targeted appeal of associated words and images but also the conjunction of these with bodily sensations. These three Camel advertisements evoke a sensory body phenomenology of overlapping responses to flying and smoking.

Visible Traces

Recent cultural analysis of the circus has identified how promotional advertising was an integral part of the institution of the circus and its business and providing a precedent for entertainment industry marketing such as that of cinema (Stoddart 2000: 56; Davis 2002: 42–6). But in turn, advertisers benefited from the social spaces created by the mass audiences for the circus and its widely disseminated programs and magazines. Of special interest to an analysis of the circus is how the three Camel advertisements depict circus performance and offer unusually detailed information about an act that captures the performance history of a specific performer with, importantly, guidance about how spectators might respond. These are not simply functioning one-way in marketing cigarettes to consumers but they also promote the performance to spectators.

Aerial performance is a particularly ephemeral art form and the verification of its achievements claimed in circus annals, including knowledge about the repertoire of a record-breaking act, is dependent on traces retrieved from print archives inclusive of performance trade advertisements. Therefore these Camel advertisements are useful historical sources. Print sources can be supplemented with the cinematic record after the 1920s, and usefully with films in which aerialists did the physical stunt work—both Concello and Fox perform aerial action in Cecil B. de Mille's film, *The Greatest Show on Earth* (1952). An aerial

act is comprised of a sequence of feats or tricks of graduated difficulty, each trick with an established pattern of movements passed down through generations of performers; solo trapeze action was invented in 1859 and has an identifiable international history (Gossard 1994; Tait 2005). Allowing for apparatus innovations and advances in technique, most tricks can still be viewed in circus performance today.

Twentieth-century circus programs advertise everything from ointment for muscular pain to rope and tyres: "Sloan's Liniment" names wire-walker Con Colleano and aerialists Ernest Clarke and Patricia Cartier; Plymouth rope names solo aerialist, Lalage; and "Firestone tyres" names the gorilla, Gargantua (RBBBC Program and magazines in 1946: 61, 65; in 1950: 36). Cigarette advertisements were common in 1930s American circus programs and in the British circus programs of Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia, but mostly without direct links to the actual performance or performers. Camel was an annual advertiser with RBBBC, the world's biggest circus, alternating a drawn strip with performers and more conventional promotional photographic images such as a sophisticated woman smoking in the 1941 program, and topically, uniformed servicemen in 1943 and 1944. As indicated, the Camel advertisements featured RBBBC's leading performers of each annual season so that the male high wire performer, Harold Alzana (Coxe 1980: 164; Fawcett 1949: 97), was featured in two photographs in the 1949 Camel advertisement working with a skipping rope and walking a 45 degree incline. Subsequent to the 1951 advertisement with Fox, however, Camel RBBBC advertisements used photographs of major male movie stars like Charlton Heston, a star of *The Greatest Show on Earth,* and Dick Powell (RBBBC program and magazine 1953: 17; 1954: 17).

Norma Fox remembers that the RBBBC management arranged the advertisements, and although the performers received a small amount of money, they also received a year's supply of cigarettes.[3] She actually smoked the Old Gold brand at the time.[4]

Unlike most of these advertisements, the Gould, Concello, and Fox Camel advertisements usefully show key movements in the major feats or tricks which created the legendary reputations of these female performers. Framed by spectators' comments, the advertisements also offer a perspective on performance reception. The tricks are named and have comments about their degree of difficulty, so these advertisements in the circus program also would have informed readers/spectators—who planned on attending the live event—prior to watching that particular female aerialist in action. The comments appear as captions in bubbles and these present informative descriptions of what is to happen and what to look for during the approximately ten-minute nonverbal act, which would have been competing for attention in the three-ring spectacle of RBBBC. An extreme feat is often executed with speed, so spectators might be unaware of its significance and/or miss its execution unless forewarned by a ring master. The comments reinforce the performers' star status. As Helen Stoddart

explains, "part of the selling of the circus as an entertainment has always involved the selling of the people who are its performers: in other words the creation of stars" (2000: 55). Female trapeze performers became central to the selling of the circus at least until 1951.

While circus athleticism preceded other forms of publicly acceptable physical training for women, it would only openly advertise its physical culture benefits from the 1920s once physical activity became socially acceptable.[5] What might now be recognised as a contradiction, that a highly trained athletic and therefore recognisably healthy body promotes cigarettes, was not so apparent in the late 1940s era of these three Camel advertisements. Increased social acceptance of female participation in physical activities like gymnastics, with its capacity for social empowerment through the body's "motor activity" (Hargreaves and Vertinsky 2007: 2), and circus belongs with sporting culture (Carmeli 1996), also coincides with the rise in female smokers in developed societies.

In arguing that mass marketing encourages consumers to value image over other qualities, Michael Schudson reveals how North American women from the 1920s used smoking to "display their modernity" (1984: 196). In her exploration of the history of women smoking in the UK, Tinkler writes that, in the UK, from a number of female smokers too small to record, "By 1949, 41 per cent of women aged sixteen years and over, from across the social-class spectrum, were smokers" (2006: 2). Tinkler shows how women were seen to smoke and visual images of women smokers in the media proliferated during the twentieth century. Tinkler writes, "Smoking was, however, more than just a sign of modernity, the practice of smoking actually contributed to the making of modern women" (2006: 12). Similarly, displays of athletic females on trapeze were a creation of modernism.

The Camel brand was promoted nationally in the USA by the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company with a series of four camel images in a $1,500,000 campaign, and by 1919 it was the biggest selling brand with 50 percent of the market (Webb Smith 1990: 31). From the 1920s Camel print advertisements in the USA, often showing female smokers, had deployed ideas of smoking as indicative of wealth and success, and of American nationalism, and even curative of nerves and the associated ills of modernity (Marchand 1985: 197, 274, 341). As Richard Klein points out, cigarettes are perceived to relieve tension and anxiety, and this was especially significant in wartime (1993: xi). If women's integration into the work force during World War II may have hastened the breakdown of social restraints around respectable women smoking, then after the war, cigarette promotion may have maintained its association with an exciting but dangerous life through the circus.

The anti-smoking public health campaigns after the 1960–70s in England, North America, and Australia have undermined the promotion of cigarettes in association with athletic activity[6]—the campaigns against the visible brands of sponsoring cigarette companies on sports fields come to mind. From the 1920s–

60s, cigarette advertisers in the USA targeted women but sales increased after the 1970 television ban as advertisers concentrated on print and sports and cultural sponsorship (Webb Smith 1990: 36 [Fox]). As public warnings against smoking eventually gained momentum, so too did warnings to performers about the dangers of circus performance, and safety regimes and apparatus for circus performers began to be used widely. Nonetheless even in a more health and safety conscious and risk-averse society (Beck 1999), circus and cigarettes still carry impressions of personal risk-taking.

Advertising Female Daring

The most famous female aerialist of the twentieth century, Antoinette Concello, who was one of the three women to master the triple somersault prior to 1980 (Tait 2005: 101–3), features like a soloist in Camel program advertisements in 1937, 1939, 1942, and 1950[7] although she actually worked as a member of a flying troupe of usually three world-leading male performers. During her career she worked with and/or trained the 20th century's leading male aerialists of mid-air somersault and pirouette tricks. Certainly Concello was a long-time smoker, so there is some veracity to her promotion of cigarettes.

In the first illustration of the 1950 Camel advertisement considered in detail, the fictionalised Concello is drawn as she is about to reach the grasp of her male catcher, from a perspective at the top of the tent looking down on her and on the spectators drawn as dots far below her. The full trick involves leaving the mid-air pedestal holding the flying trapeze bar apparatus and the illustration picks up the action as Concello lets go of the bar to fly towards a partner-catcher in mid-air action. She is no longer performing the triple but she is still doing difficult feats, and is billed as "First Lady of the Big Top," "Famous Aerialist Antoinette Concello Swings into her Breath-taking Act" (RBBBC program magazine 1950, 9). The word play across this image is a quite literal oscillation between an idea of a breath-holding response to viewing her action and holding the breath in smoking. The caption in the other corner of this drawing claims that a test of hundreds of smokers found no cases of throat irritation with Camels.

In the second illustration of Concello's flying action, the male and female fans in the audience, who the reader sees only from behind, comment in bubble captions. Looking up, the woman explains how the male catcher lets go of Concello's hands "at the top of the backswing" then the man replies, "a one-and-a-half pirouette coming up! Few women aerialists would risk it" (ibid). Concello is shown on her flying return action, and in the third and fourth drawings spinning around in a vertical position, mid-air, before grabbing the swinging trapeze bar.

If the first illustration contains all the implied significance of the coming together of male and female bodies in dangerous action, the innuendo is undercut by medical associations created by the inserted photographic image of an anonymous throat specialist advising Camel cigarettes. Evidently, this period was about the competition between brands and the claim by Camel cigarettes for

mildness is also a claim about their suitability for female smokers. Concello claims that these are the mildest cigarettes she has smoked, alongside an image of her meeting a male and a female fan who both presumably smoke Camel. A final illustration of a glamorous "Mrs Concello," relaxing after athletic action with a cigarette, conveys that the male and the female fan are simply thrilled to meet this famous woman (ibid). The advertisements showing a physically strong but attractive woman impressing spectators seem intended to appeal to both male and female smokers. Smoking a Camel cigarette implicitly provides a substitute for meeting the aerialist in person.

In 1939 Concello shares the Camel advertisement with wild animal trainer Terrell Jacobs, and the depiction of a male journalist in the first image allows the commentary to come from the two performers responding to his question. Concello is depicted undertaking the triple somersault in the 1939 and 1942 advertisements, and as the first woman to do so. Although, importantly, she did sustain the execution of the triple from 1937 over several years—a feat in itself—circus history now acknowledges that Lena Jordan pioneered the triple somersault in 1897 as its first performer (Couderc 1965; Culhane 1990; Gossard 1994; Tait 2005; 57–9, 100–3). The fictionalised Concello in the advertisement says: ". . . the stunt requires great increased speed, I had to depend almost entirely on automatic timing." "But as I whirled out into space . . . once . . . twice. For a split-second I practically lost consciousness [. . .] three times . . . and . . . I **made it**! My timing was perfect and another 'first performance' left me thrilled and safe." (Joys 1983: 180 [bold in original]). The 1939 advertisement therefore contains the sensationalist but disputed claim that a performer loses consciousness undertaking the triple, which the legendary master of the triple, Alfredo Codona, promoted (1930: 36; Culhane 1990: 86). As someone able to excel at physical feats that are anxiety-provoking to even watch, Concello is made to claim that cigarettes soothe tension and alleviate nervousness. This is the central idea promoted through the use of circus daring in these advertisements. The 1942 advertisement claiming 28 percent less nicotine features only Concello doing her "breath-taking triple," with fellow performers commenting on it and a soldier spectator enjoying a cigarette with her afterwards.

These advertisement depictions of women excelling at difficult athletic action may be indicative of social norms for women during the 1940s, but nonetheless there were contradictory social values around women smoking or undertaking trapeze performance. The three Camel advertisements are presented in a newspaper comic strip format. These contain two or three rows with two or three illustrations in each row, and a head and shoulders photograph at the end shows that smiling aerialist smoking a cigarette with enjoyment. Tinkler explains, "smoking was presented as a sign of a woman's right to pleasure" (2006: 78), but it was criticised for allowing women to intrude on male space (ibid: 80). By implication, the aerialist is relaxing after the physical exertion, which invariably also carries the innuendo of a post-coital act. Although aerial

space had become decidedly feminised because of the majority of performers working in female choruses, elite female aerialists in flying troupes were struggling to hold their position and maintain the right to train and execute difficult tricks against social expectations that these were done by their male counterparts.

In colloquial speech rather than technical accuracy, Norma Fox in the 1951 Camel advertisement is observed to hang "by the skin of her teeth" in her solo act (RBBBC program magazine 1951: 9).[8] It shows how Fox spins with a dental or mouth apparatus, her whole body suspended off the trapeze bar by this mouth hold in the first illustration, followed by comments from the dots of spectators below about how easy she makes it look to swing on the trapeze "forty feet up in the air—and no net" (ibid). There is loud applause, "La Norma is terrific" (ibid). The third illustration shows Fox hanging by her heels. This was a trick headlined at RBBBC during the 1920s–30s by Australian indigenous performer, Winnie Colleano, sister of Con Colleano the world-leading low-wire artist (St Leon 1993). Fox also did a knee and ankle hangs in her solo trapeze act. In the final illustration of the advertisement, Fox hangs by her neck in a second difficult trick, one mastered to full effect and made famous by Luisita Leers, Winnie Colleano's contemporary at RBBBC in the 1920s. These are a series of exceptional feats executed by Fox at the limit of what can be done on solo trapeze. They were particularly risky at this time because the use of safety apparatus was not expected at RBBBC and there were fatal accidents.[9]

Born in Randers, Denmark, née Inga Nielson, Fox trained in ballet, and at thirteen joined a family of touring trapeze artists, and worked with Belli's Circus in Denmark, the Blackpool Tower Circus in England, and in venues in Paris. There, she married André Fox. She moved to the USA at John Ringling North's invitation to work with RBBBC 1949–51, and subsequently with the Beatty Cole Circus and Polack Bros. in 1953, and for Shrine Circus during the 1960s, retiring from aerial work after performing at the Goodings Million Dollar Midway in 1973.

The 1951 advertisement with Fox is in a RBBBC program that also has trick bicycle riders and two aerialists advertising "New Mum Deodorant," perhaps with a product with a more direct connection to female athleticism (RBBBC program magazine 1951: 31). Advertisements for deodorant probably needed to convey an impression of healthy cleanliness and therefore uncomplicated morality.

The Camel advertisement, however, takes social risks with its promotion. The performer is described as "flirting with danger" in a phrase that aligns sexual engagement with physical daring (RBBBC program magazine 1951, 9). The circus promotes La Norma as a blonde trapeze performer in a generalised European-Scandinavian association, and a subsequent Camel caption is interesting because it shows a male in the dressing room with a fictionalised Fox, lighting her cigarette. The advertisement trades on a reader's/spectator's wish to share the activity afforded by a cigarette together with the fictionalised

performer who is a socially and, no doubt, a physically attractive companion. The idealised male is drawn wearing a suit, bow tie, and hat, in the convention of the 1950s while a fictionalised Fox wears her two-piece performance costume. The male is given a pretext for being there by the detail of a camera propped up in the foreground. The illustration continues a spectatorial fantasy of sharing intimate space that might arise out of the performance and be imagined to carry over into the private offstage dressing room.

The Camel advertisements exemplify what Tinkler discerns is the "sexual promise" carried by images of women smoking (2006: 105–31), one that enhances their sexual appeal, which is also part of the appeal of circus. The final photograph of smoking and the highlighted T-zone of the mouth become implicitly fetishistic links whereby the oral eroticism of smoking becomes associated with the mouth apparatus used in solo trapeze performance.

The 1948 advertisement featuring Rose Gould (also spelt Gold) shows her working in a trio with two unnamed male performers.[10] "Experience is the Best Teacher! In aerial acrobatics—in cigarettes too" (RBBBC program and magazine 1948 no pagination). Perhaps the reader ponders what else experience teaches. "She dives into space" in a trick designed to give the impression that Gould is in a dangerous free-fall (ibid). The caption bubbles have the spectator below explain how she works 75 feet in the air without a net, hanging from the trapeze by her feet, before diving into space in a breakaway trick. This trick was pioneered by Jennie and Eddie Ward, a brother and sister partnership, and Eddie founded the Ward-trained group of aerialists that included Concello and dominated trapeze and aerial work in the USA in the first half of the 20th century (Gossard 1986: 5–6). Gould's main trick involved working with the two males catching her. The trick would have involved Gould appearing to simply fall from the perch and being pulled up by cords on her ankles just short of the ground. Gould also did a heel catch (1949: 104).[11] A spectator comments that Gould had fallen when a cable broke and she is appearing for the first time at RBBBC after this fall in a feat that has risks because of its reliance on equipment and this enhances her bravery in the act—a claim of first is standard procedure in circus promotion.

The scene with the cigarette after the act has two males offering her a Camel explaining how thrilling they find her act; there are two clowns in the background. Here is a depiction of the "sociality" associated with cigarette smoking (Dennis 2006: 50 [Borthwick]). There is a direct social reference to remind readers of recent events as Gould explains that the cigarette shortage during the war meant she smoked any available brand and therefore could gauge if Camel was a good one. The physical risks for the act collapse into the risks of the recent war.

The cartoon drawing style used between 1948 and 1951—when Camel featured Gould, Concello, and Fox—is distinctive and particularly well developed for its depiction of unfolding physical action enhanced by the device of spectators making comments. Earlier drawn advertisements using a similar

strategy have a somewhat less proficient drawing style and framing narration. The three RBBBC Camel advertisements unfold as narratives of physical and social action and female prowess that are reminiscent of an action-based comic book. The display of circus action mimics animated cartoons, which Norman Klein finds "are a record of consumer rituals" over decades in North American society (1993: 3). Comic books became a medium of heroic action and superheroes in popular culture and capture a sense of movement as well as narrative development. Of comic book precedents, Joseph Witek explains that there are powerful social "fantasies embodied in Superman and Batman" (1989: 7). Aerialists can appear like superheroes in their upper body muscular development and seem superhuman in their flying action.

In these advertisements, cigarette smoking is also linked to a combination of social risk-taking in defiance of gender identity difference, and the physical risk-taking exemplified by circus. Perhaps these associations were inadvertent and not intended by the advertisers. Nonetheless circus performance, if not circus life, conveyed adventurous physical behaviour and taking risks with social identity as women excelled at feats requiring courage and muscular strength commonly associated with masculinity.

The reputations of female circus stars such as Gould, Fox, and especially Concello, with her execution of the exceptional triple somersault, had been made prior to the post-war 1950s society that encouraged women's withdrawal from the work force. If female aerialists were the embodiment of daring by the turn of the twentieth century, the post-World War II decades of trapeze performance displayed a gendered pattern of activity with female performers as decorative additions in choruses or in supporting roles in flying trapeze troupes (Tait 2005: 90–1). For three decades (from the 1950s) female aerialists were no longer expected to train for the very difficult tricks expected of predecessors like Gould, Fox, and Concello.

Sensory Body Phenomenology

As indicated, the Camel advertisements were intended to be read in conjunction with attendance at the circus, so that the brand became associated with the excitement of viewing the circus. The sights, sounds and smells of the circus, the sensory responses, are distinctive and through branding aerial action with the nomenclature of Camel, the cigarettes co-opted the sensations of circus viewing, its viscerality. After the event, the brand potentially evoked memories of the circus, and thus rekindled felt bodily experience of this thrilling engagement. The habit of smoking is also a response to the arousal of felt bodily responses.

Dennis explains that smoking can be considered to extend the phenomenological body in the world, and that this understanding might also include literal ideas of escape (2006: 41 [Katz]). She outlines how cigarette advertising intertwines the body and the world, and while the body is grounded, the exhaled smoke can "offer an avenue of escape to sites located beyond the bounds of the sited body" (ibid: 42). At the beginning of the 21st century, Dennis

notes that the discourses of pleasure and danger in relation to inhaling and exhaling cigarette smoke, the function of the breath, continue to be apparent if re-interpreted through the prism of anti-smoking campaigns. Smoke is the visual aftermath of the bodily experience of smoking. Advertising makes use of visible reminders of the bodily sensations.

The smoke from a lit cigarette gradually dissipates in a visible act of disappearance, one that has parallels with the disappearance that Peggy Phelan finds to be the ontology of live performance (1993: 146–66). As well, the circus body in physical action compounds ideas of escape, as it defies the predictable limits of physicality, as it obliterates socially defined boundaries between male and female bodies for the duration of the live event. As explained elsewhere, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1996) ideas suggest how to understand that a performer's action might be received and perceived in the phenomenal field as and in a sensory body to body engagement.

The traditional circus provided a cultural metaphor of escape with the widely known cliché of running away to the circus. The circus sets up and traverses liminal spaces within culture. Through its performance, the traditional circus presented itself as a temporary escape from everyday routine, one that is based on the viewing of artistic bodies in extreme muscular action. Additionally, in its travelling way of life, the circus held the promise of escape from a regimented social order, if not realising this in practice because of its strict hierarchies (Davis 2002: 62–3). Ideas of physical and social escape arising from the circus contain dangers. Stoddart argues that "the demonstration and taunting of danger" is the "defining feature" of the circus (2000: 4). I would elaborate that because it is a heightened idea of danger, one delivered through the illusions of performance and performative identities within a form produced through the action of muscular bodies working with and on apparatus,[12] the dangers include those received and perceived by spectators through sensory visceral encounters. Cigarettes in circus echo back through what Sally Banes and André Lepecki call, "*a performative power of the senses*" that unfolds through performance (3).

The instabilities of the sensory responses of spectators in relation to embodied performances produce a complex mesh of possible intersections and interpretations. In the act of smoking, smoke visibly escapes from a smoker's body. The viewing of flying trapeze action involves seeing a performer's body in a line of flight. The female trapeze performer is part of the spectrum of cultural metaphors of flying that has come to represent a sublime aesthetic (Russo 1994). A spectator is potentially active in imagining the ascension action of performing bodies and therefore engages, momentarily, in a sensory defiance of bodily limitations. In viewing aerial bodies, therefore, the spectator imaginatively escapes his or her physical limits. Further, the response of a circus spectator to a perception of danger in performance may well be apparent in a sudden intake of breath. The ensuing release of breath from the tension of breath-holding is similar to breathing smoke out of the bounded body—it might be heard rather than seen.

In the three Camel advertisements, the cigarette promotion is integrated into the sexualised depiction of the trapeze act. Smoking is personified with the performance persona of the female performer in a narrative which depicts time passing in the act. The cigarette becomes the reward for undertaking these exceptional physical acts. But aerial feats look risky and so the cigarette is positioned in a continuum of risky activity that constitutes enjoyable entertainment. In an advertisement that highlights spectator responses, the pleasure of a cigarette is collapsed into the pleasure of viewing trapeze acts. The full sensory engagement of live circus is aligned with the smell, taste, and sight of cigarettes in what Dennis calls the "multisensual and intercorporeal smoking practice" (2006: 48). Perceptual sensory engagement with the trapeze performance unfolds in similar ways. Flying and smoking are depicted as embodied activities to evoke and engage with the sensory body responses of the reader/spectator.

Trapeze performance suggests a sublime experience arising out of evocative sensory encounters that also arouse anxiety about a sudden fall. What Richard Klein writes about cigarettes could equally apply to flying trapeze action. He says, "That beauty has never been understood or represented as unequivocally positive; the smoking of cigarettes has always been understood [. . .] has always been associated with distaste transgression, and death. Kant calls 'sublime' that aesthetic satisfaction which includes as one of its moments a negative experience, a shock, a blockage" (Klein 1993: xi).

A spectator's breath-holding in response to the risk of a trapeze flyer falling may be akin to the physical shock of inhaling smoke. Such physical reactions can arise concurrently with the sensory awareness of the beauty of a body in flying action or seeing beauty in cigarette smoke rising in the air. Additionally there is relief and/or satisfaction with completion of an act of smoking or flying. Although the action comes from a socially defined, material body, the aesthetics of flying or smoking evoke phenomenological extremes through the senses so that the beauty of rising, floating, lightness, also prefigure a notion of death through transcendence.

La Trobe University Peta Tait

Notes

[1] For a discussion of advertising as popular culture and linked to entertainment, see Fowles (1996: 11, 43–8). For an example of cigarette advertising as an entertaining social history, see Webb Smith (1990).

[2] The author viewed 20th century RBBBC Programs and Bertram Mills Circus programs most recently at the Joe E. Ward Circus Collection, Boxes 31–7, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, 30 July to 5 August 2007.

[3] Author's interview with Norma Fox, 23 July 2007, Sarasota Florida, and subsequent biographical information comes from this interview.

[4] The Old Gold cigarette brand is advertised with one image of the wire-artist Herbert Castle in the RBBBC program 1951: 57.

[5] Solo trapeze performer Luisita Leers, who was noticeably muscular, was promoted

literally by RBBBC as "The Physical Culture girl," and entertainment journalism at the time outlines how the whole circus show is "fairly glowing in its Achilles sturdiness, its healthy complexion and its vigorous strength" (*The Billboard*, 14 April 1928: 85, 1).

[6] In the UK the first ban on cigarette advertising was imposed in 1964 on television advertisements before 9pm and bans were subsequently extended (Cronin 2004: 48-9). See Tate (1999) for 20th century reform campaigns in the USA.

[7] Circus World Museum, Robert Parkinson Library, Baraboo, USA, Scrapbook on aerialists. A further undated strip advertisement shows Antoinette Concello in a conversation with performer Dolly Copeland. Copeland says, "I changed to Camels after I made the thirty day test. I'm a Camels fan for keeps." Concello replies, "I changed to Camels years ago, Dolly." There may be some variation in the advertisements cited in this article in relation to pagination and the edition of the annual program.

[8] Photographs of La Norma can be found in the photograph collection at Circus World Museum, Robert Parkinson Library, Baraboo, USA; La Norma hanging of one foot (AE N45), and holding a trapeze outdoors (AE N45 4). There are photographs in the Photograph boxes, Special Collections, Milner Library, Illinois State University; La Norma in heel hold bent up and in one foot hang (Box 12). The National Educational Television Network first broadcast, 1 April 1964, a series of 10 programs produced by Jim Salter and Lane Slate, and Brice Howard, and Program 4 "High in the Air" presents La Norma.

[9] For example, see reporting on a fatal tragedy in 1945 in the popular press: Fowler, Bee. "She Laughed at Death." *The National Police Gazette*, August 1945, 3. This is the last interview with Victoria Torrence before her death. She died in a fall at Madison Square Garden, New York, in the RBBBC show two days after her interview for this article. She slipped from her partner Frank's grip and fell from 65 feet to cement floor and died. The act involved spinning 180 revolutions a minute holding a rope by the teeth, and she fainted twice.

[10] The author has located limited information on Gould and the trio. The Rose Gould or Gold trio, possibly of European background, worked in European circuses after World War II, and had at least two seasons at RBBBC in 1947 and 1948. Rose Gold Trio were at Tom Arnold's Harringay Circus from 20 December to 2 February 1951-2 as act 10, and billed Rose as "Europe's Queen of the Air" with a photograph showing her hanging from the Eiffel Tower suspended by rope held by two men in knee hangs (Boxes A to Z, Mander and Mitchenson Collection accessed in December, 2000 (collection in temporary accommodation). The trio is in the program of the Blackpool Tower Circus in 1952 performing over a water pool.

[11] Circus World Museum Scrapbook on aerialists has Rose Gould described in a double breakaway, diving headlong from a 60 foot perch for 25 feet and then falling again, caught just a foot from the ground. There are cables from the arms of a partner or two partners. She works barefoot to do a heel catch. In the photograph collection, see AE N45, Gould indoors with 2 males, and see R 4, 5, 6.

[12] Performers constantly work to minimise the actual dangers, which remain unseen by spectators, since the biggest risk is that of equipment failure in aerial performance. This claim is based on interviews conducted by the author with 24 male and female aerialists between 2000 and 2004.

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The President as Character: *The West Wing*'s Josiah Bartlet and *Commander in Chief*'s Mackenzie Allen

Introduction

The 2005 fall television season brought two fictional presidencies into American homes. The most well known was the second-term presidency of Josiah "Jed" Bartlet on NBC's *The West Wing*, which was in its seventh and final year. The newcomer to the air was the accidental presidency of Mackenzie Allen on ABC's *Commander in Chief*. The show, according to creator Rod Lurie, was an attempt to create a strong female voice in a political setting, but the experiment was short-lived. *Commander in Chief* got off to a strong start, drawing an average of 15.2 million viewers in its initial weeks ("ABC Impeaches"). Still, despite the unusual premise, viewership dropped and the show went on hiatus late in 2005. It resurfaced in mid-January, but continued to lose viewers, went on a second hiatus and underwent several staffing changes. By April 2006, viewership was averaging 7.5 million, leading ABC to pull the plug on May 2, with talk of possibly doing a made-for-television movie to tie up the show's loose ends ("ABC Impeaches").

The show's centerpiece was Geena Davis, who played Mackenzie Allen, an independent who apparently was added as the vice presidential candidate to the ticket of Republican Teddy Bridges to help court women voters. As the premiere episode opens, Allen—now the vice president—is in France trying to enlist international support to save a Nigerian woman who is under a death sentence for adultery. As she sits at a concert listening to a children's choir, an aide comes in to pull her outside, where she gets word that the president has suffered a stroke and will be unable to resume his duties for at least a year. Melanie Blackston, the U.S. Attorney general, tells Allen that the 25th Amendment to the Constitution would kick in—Allen would become acting president. Allen, despite her two years in the vice presidency, her tenure as a university chancellor and her two terms in Congress, seems flummoxed by the notion, and says, haltingly, "Okay, um, Melanie, um, what happens now? Do I take the oath or what?"

This is a stark contrast to the first appearance of Jed Bartlet, played by Martin Sheen, in the opening season of *The West Wing* in the fall of 1999. He is an absent, but formidable presence through the first three-fourths of the pilot episode. He is referred to only as POTUS for the first few minutes of the program, and just before the opening credits roll, he is finally fully identified as the President of the United States. When he makes his first appearance in the program, which isn't until the final act of the program, it is as a voice of authority thundering from the doorway as he walks into a meeting between

several White House staffers and some members of a conservative Christian coalition. As Bartlet enters the room, Toby Ziegler, his communications director, and one of the Christian coalition members are arguing about the First Commandment. The coalition member, John Van Dyke, has said it is "Honor thy father." Ziegler says it's not.

> VAN DYKE: Then what's the First Commandment?
> BARTLET (*speaking loudly as he walks through the door into the room*): "I am the Lord your God. Thou shalt worship no other God before me." Boy, those were the days, huh?

Bartlet is a president who takes over a room, not simply because of his title, but because he commands attention. Allen, on the other hand, is a quieter presence who, even when she does take charge, does so without the force or passion that Bartlet seems to bring to the job. This study, which focuses on the first season of *The West Wing* and the first and only season of *Commander in Chief*, examines the differences in the portrayals of these two fictional presidents and at the role that gender plays in the way the characters were written.

A Woman in the White House

When ABC announced that the United States would have a woman president—albeit a fictional one—critics flocked to the show. *New York Times* writer Alessandra Stanley called *Commander in Chief* "a feminist twist on '*The West Wing*,'" (B1) and then said the show was well written with a playful premise. John Fund, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, said that the new series would pit "Academy Award-winner Geena Davis against the patriarchal world of national politics until her 'You Go, Girl!' attitude puts to rest the doubts of her many detractors" (1). The idea of a woman president became fodder for reviews, tabloids, and countless columns, and even landed Davis a spot—alongside President George W. Bush—as one of *Time* magazine's "People Who Mattered" in 2005 (148). What is especially notable in the media coverage of the show, though, is that Davis's physical appearance often got top play. Kristen Lombardi, writing for the *Village Voice*, noted Davis's "power-flip hairdo and ruby lips" in her story on the program (1). And Tom Shales, a *Washington Post* writer, used his lead to focus on her appearance above all else. He wrote:

> Geena Davis can veto my legislation anytime. Starring as the first woman to hold the highest office in the land, Davis reminds us what we have missed in most of our past, real-life presidents: cuteness. She's got a twinkle in her eye, a twinkle in her smile, a twinkle everywhere. She's President Twinkle—just what we need to tame the extreme, charm the militant, inspire the troops (C1).

James Poniewozik, writing for *Time* magazine, noted that the first female president was, well, "very tall" (90):

> That's fair enough. Given the prejudice she would face, the nation might feel safer with a female leader possessed of great height, athleticism (Davis nearly represented the U.S. in Olympic archery) and robust, bee-stung lips. I look forward avidly to the Jolie Administration (90).

Much like the focus of real-world media coverage on women candidates and politicians, the critics writing about Davis's portrayal of a president focused first and foremost on her appearance and personal attributes. But given the nature and focus of the show—which is less on politics and the presidency and more on the problems of being a mom and a president—perhaps that's to be expected.

As president, Mackenzie Allen spends as much time focusing on her family—fretting about a missed dinner and taking time out from a national crisis to talk about *Robinson Crusoe* with her youngest daughter—as she does on the affairs of state. It's an intentional focus, according to the show's creator, Rod Lurie, who said in one interview that he wanted to show the personal problems that came with being a woman in the White House and that he wanted a character who could be strong and soft. It's why he named the character Mackenzie, he said, "because it's powerful sounding. There's something very feminine about Mackenzie and very masculine about Mac," which is the character's nickname (Seibel 17). The problem, of course, is that in creating a character who lets her personal problems and family issues take center stage, Lurie created a show that managed to reify the idea that a woman in the White House is first and foremost a woman—that running the country often may come in second to any personal obligations. She'll tackle an international crisis, but only after her children are safely tucked into bed. Given the role that television now plays in telling us who we are as a society and what to value, *Commander in Chief* did little to present a radically different or fresh role model for women.

Entertainment's Ability to Shape Attitudes

In the average home, television is on for more than seven hours a day and individuals in that home average three hours a day spent watching (Gerbner 178; see also Gerbner et al. 45). As George Gerbner et al., write:

> Transcending historic barriers of literacy and mobility, television has become the primary common source of socialization and everyday information (usually cloaked in the form of entertainment) of otherwise heterogeneous populations. We have now reached an unprecedented juncture at which television brings virtually everyone into a shared national culture. . . . As with religion, the social function of television lies in the continual repetition of stories (myths, "facts," lessons, and so on) that serve to define the world and legitimize a particular social order (44).

Given its presence and prominence in the home, it's not much of a leap to say that television shapes our lives. Through television, we see how relationships are negotiated, how people interact, and how we are supposed to behave.

Cultivation theory, as developed by Gerbner and his colleagues, suggests that the more we watch television, the more we have a "TV view" of the world. Through a series of Cultural Indicators studies, Gerbner and his colleagues have shown that heavy viewers of television tend to believe in the world they see on television, even when the real world may be very different based on other indicators of reality (Gerbner et al. 51). For instance, heavy viewers see the world as a meaner place in which to live than light viewers, which can be attributed to the fact that television programs involve more crime and more crime victims than the real world (Signorielli 96; see also Gerbner et al. 52). The researchers found similar effects when they considered heavy television viewing and its impact on views of gender (Gerbner et al. 45–46): Those who watch more television are "cultivated" to think that women are happiest when they're at home because television moms are happy and that men are more ambitious than women. Moreover, the attitudes held by heavier viewers were stronger since the repeated viewing of television made the attitudes more accessible (Shrum 15).

The concern in cultivation theory is not the specific programming someone watches, since programming is highly homogenous across outlets. Despite the increasing number of stations and the presence of recording devices in most American homes, the programming that people turn to is much the same (Comstock and Scharrer 104). This is because viewing itself is a function of available time for most people. Rather than selecting a program and setting aside time to watch it, most viewing is ritualistic in nature—it occurs because someone has time to spend and because he or she wants to spend it on an activity that is not particularly challenging (Comstock and Scharrer 106). But because it is a relatively easy way to spend time, a lot of time is spent in the company of television. The volume of content, therefore, matters more for cultivation than the specifics of what is on at any given point in time. As Signorielli and Morgan point out, "from the point of view of the cultivation of relatively stable and common images, what counts is the total pattern of programming to which entire communities are regularly exposed over long periods of time" (116). This consistent exposure, then, is what colors our view and makes us see the world as television presents it, rather than how it really is. And in an era where people spend large amounts of time with television and less time with other socializing agents, the images on television play an important role. As Signorielli and Bacue note:

> Television's role in society is one of common storyteller—it is the mainstream of our popular culture. Its world shows and tells us about life—people, places, striving, power and fate. It lets us know who is good and who is bad, who wins and who

> loses, what works and what doesn't, and what it means to be a man or a woman (528).

For the viewers of *Commander in Chief*, what it means to be a woman—even a woman who is the leader of the free world—is to put family first. In fact, in the opening episode of *Commander in Chief*, Allen's family—including teenage twins Horace and Rebecca and 10-year-old Amy—have a say in whether she decides to take the job as president or to resign and let Nathan Templeton move into the Oval Office. On *The West Wing*, Bartlet's family appears very infrequently throughout the first season and the critical decisions that he makes—even the decision in the third season about whether to run for re-election given the fact that he has multiple sclerosis and is under investigation for hiding that during his first presidential run—are more the result of his discussions with his staff or of his own internal sense of what's right than they are of family considerations. Jed Bartlet is a decisive president; Mackenzie Allen is conflicted. His family exists on the margins of the show; hers is front and center. The result is a character who does little to challenge the dominant female paradigms on television.

Gender Frames in the Media

What cultivation theory tells us is that the frames that television and other forms of media use to portray men and women—and fictional presidents—can have lasting effects on public perception about women, and particularly about women in leadership roles. Frames, which are the narratives that the mass media use to organize events and make sense of them, are the persistent patterns that show up in news coverage and other media portrayals (Reese 11–12). As Robert Entman wrote:

> To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating a text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation (52).

Too often these frames are very grounded in stereotypical perceptions of gender roles. Hillary Clinton, when she was first lady and was trying to redefine that role for women, was maligned in the media for comments she made about choosing to work as an attorney rather than staying home to bake cookies. And media coverage of her often focused on her changing hairstyles and wardrobe (Garrett 182–83). In her 2008 presidential run, news stories have talked about her choice of pantsuits, her wardrobe color choices, and her decision to wear a camisole under her suit jacket on July 18, 2007, which sparked a multi-day news story about Clinton's cleavage. When Elizabeth Dole ran for president in 2000, newspapers gave her less coverage on the issues and more on personal traits than they did the men running for the Republican nomination, and even in their focus on her personal traits, newspapers paid more attention to her appearance,

personality and family than to her qualifications for the job (Aday & Devitt 69). Other research shows that women running for political office generally garner less issue coverage than their male counterparts, are perceived as less likely to win than men, and have a harder time getting their issues on the media agenda (Aday & Devitt 55). For those who get past the election and hold political office, news coverage often pigeonholes them, typically covering women legislators in relation to women's issues (Carroll & Schreiber 145).

For women in fictional roles, the frames are no better. Women in television commercials, for instance, are typically seen in private settings, such as the home. They also are more likely to be shown in traditional gendered activities and roles than their male counterparts in commercials, particularly for those in the youngest and oldest age groups (Stern & Mastro 233). In television programming, female characters who are well received by audiences fall into four trait categories: determined, strong, and independent; professional, intelligent, and skilled; realistic, nonstereotypical, and equal to males; and traditional, caretaker, and feminine (Atwood, Zahn & Webber 97–98). The latter category, which shows women as nurturing and kind, accounted for nearly one-fourth of all of the positive portrayals of women. And even when a woman is portrayed as a strong, tough leading character, her authority "is diminished by the emphasis placed on her nurturing or maternal qualities" (Tolley 338). In fact, in news and in fictional representations, producers assume that women are more interested in personal relationships, home life, and emotions, which "continue to be socially constructed as women's responsibilities" (Aldridge 96). *Commander in Chief* and Mackenzie Allen did nothing to challenge those assumptions.

The Contrast Between Jed Bartlet and Mackenzie Allen

In fact, the character created by Rod Lurie—the one who was supposed to break new ground in television and in American homes—is undermined as an authoritative and strong woman in the first minutes of the very first episode of *Commander in Chief*, even before the opening credits roll. After Allen is told that the president is gravely ill, Blackston, the attorney general, and James Gardner, the White House chief of staff, ask for her resignation. Again, she is hesitant at first:

> ALLEN: This is coming from the president?
> GARDNER: This is the president's intent.
> ALLEN: I have no idea what that means. Did the president tell you this directly?
> BLACKSTON: There was no major discussion. He was being wheeled into brain surgery.
> GARDNER: Look, we've got hell on earth afoot. We've got Korea, Syria, Iran. Things are too unstable. We don't need the world . . .

ALLEN: The world to see a soft, indecisive woman commanding the troops as opposed to Nathan "Bloody Hell" Templeton?

In fact, it's not until Gardner gets in her face that she finally sparks, and even then, she backs off of her anger quickly.

GARNDER: Madam Vice President, I really must insist that you strongly . . .
ALLEN (*interrupting, spoken tersely*): Jim, you're not in a position to insist how I take my coffee. (*Pause*). That said, how would this work?

What is interesting in this exchange is that Allen is very uncertain and has more questions than answers. In fact, the only time she makes a declarative statement is in retort to a perceived challenge from the president's chief of staff, which she then follows with yet another question about the process of resigning the vice presidency.

In contrast, Jed Bartlet's first appearance in *The West Wing* is marked by his moral outrage at a pro-life group sending a Raggedy Ann doll with a knife in its throat to his granddaughter, who had talked about her pro-choice views in an interview with a teen magazine. After he thunders into the meeting between his staff and the Christian coalition, he smiles and shakes hands, then tells them, in a very narrative fashion, about the doll and about the fact that he was so angry that he had a bicycling accident. As he tells this story, his voice shows his increasing anger and he walks to within inches of the coalition members, saying:

BARTLET: Now I love my family and I've read my Bible from cover to cover so I want you to tell me: From what part of Holy Scripture do you suppose the Lambs of God drew their divine inspiration when they sent my 12-year-old granddaughter a Raggedy Ann doll with a knife stuck through its throat? (*Pauses, looks at leader of group*). You'll denounce these people, Al. You'll do it publicly. And until you do, you can all get your fat asses out of my White House.

In these first appearances, Bartlet is shown taking charge and even bringing the room to a stunned silence. In *Commander in Chief*, it is Allen who is stunned into silence before she regroups. He is strong and confrontational, while she is almost acquiescent to the members of the president's staff. Even then, as a woman, she doesn't let her anger get the best of her—not until she's faced, later in the pilot episode, with the egregiously sexist comments of the speaker of the house, Nathan Templeton, who would become president if she chooses to resign.

In that scene, which comes right after the president suffers complications and dies, Allen is sitting passively in a side chair in the vice president's home—

her home—and Templeton is standing, pacing the room as he tells her she should resign. Templeton is more active and more dominating in the scene, while Allen mostly listens. As Templeton speaks, Allen has her resignation letter, scrawled on yellow legal paper, in her hand.

> TEMPLETON: The world is in turmoil, Mac, it could go any which way. This is not the time for social advances made for the sake of social advances.
> ALLEN: Meaning a woman in the Oval Office?
> TEMPLETON: No, meaning a woman as leader of the free world. How many Islamic states do you think would follow the edicts of a woman? Very few, I fear.
> ALLEN: Well not only that, Nathan, but we'd have that whole once-a-month-will-she-or-won't-she-press-the-button thing.
> TEMPLETON (*chuckles*): Well in a couple of years, you're not going to have to worry about that any more.

As Templeton speaks that line, Allen starts to shift in her chair and her eyes flash, but she stays seated and listens as he continues talking and then raises the case of a Nigerian woman, Oria Madula, who is going to be stoned to death for having a child out of wedlock. The case is an important one for Allen, who has been trying to secure to the woman's release, but Templeton calls it a "piece of theater" and chides Allen for trying to get help from France for the woman.

> TEMPLETON: C'mon, Mac. We're going to end up looking silly and ineffectual because you're never going to be able to save her and we're going to lose face. And for whom? A lady who couldn't keep her legs together?

It's in that moment that Allen decides to take the presidency—perhaps to keep Templeton from getting it, or perhaps because she's angry about being belittled by Templeton. In either case, it's not the righteous indignation shown by Bartlet that spurs her to act, it's the insult. It's an emotional response rather than a reasoned one. Allen folds up the letter, places it on the table next to her chair, and stands face-to-face with Templeton.

> ALLEN: Nate, I am going to take the oath of office. I am going to run the government. And if some Islamic nations can't tolerate a female president, I promise you, it will be more their problem than mine.

Allen is portrayed as an idealistic president—someone who sees the duty of the office, but is not interested in the power—and as someone who is intelligent and thoughtful. But in her idealism, she also comes across as naïve. As a woman who has been vice president for two years, she seems to know little about the ways that politics work and little about the fishbowl that will define her life and

the lives of her husband and children. She also makes the issue of Oria Madula her first presidential issue—reinforcing the notion that motherhood, nurturing, and emotions are a woman's primary responsibility.

That theme is represented throughout *Commander in Chief*. Right after the opening credits of the pilot episode, as Allen is leaving France on Air Force Two, she's talking about the Madula case with her husband and vice presidential chief of staff, Rod Calloway. In the middle of her conversation about foreign policy, she stops and asks Calloway if the Secret Service is picking up her twins—Horace and Rebecca—and bringing them home. Allen, the good mother and president, makes sure that her children eat a healthy breakfast while she also tends to finding a new vice president. She takes a break in her schedule to call Rebecca and Horace to ask about the first day of school. But the defining moment of the president-as-mother comes shortly after Allen has taken the oath of office and is on her way to Congress in the presidential limousine to give her first speech to a joint session of the House and Senate. The scene starts with Allen and her speechwriter, Kelly Ludlow, making some final revisions to the text. Amy, the youngest daughter, is sitting next to Allen in the limousine, and Gardner and Calloway are across from her. As Allen and Ludlow are talking, Amy interrupts:

> AMY: Mommy, when you were young, did you ever get a time out?
> ALLEN: Only about a hundred-million times.
> AMY: What did you get a time out for?
> CALLOWAY: Okay, honey, mommy has to concentrate now. She's got a very important speech to give tonight.
> ALLEN (*answering Amy's question*): Interrupting my parents.

At this point in the scene, the limousine hits a pothole in the street and Amy, who for some reason has been drinking fruit juice from a glass during the ride, gets jostled. The juice flies, landing all over the front of Allen's white blouse. Despite the fact that she's still fine-tuning her speech, and despite the fact that it's her first speech as president, and despite the fact that it comes at a time when many powerful people have asked her to resign instead of taking the oath of office, Allen stays calm, blotting the spill from her blouse and from Amy's coat, making sure that Amy's okay and assuring her that everything is alright. Calloway is the one who gets angry and snaps at his daughter, but Allen—once again being the good mother—plays down the situation and intrepidly borrows Ludlow's scarf to tuck into her suit jacket in lieu of the stained blouse.

Motherhood and Allen's attempts to juggle her new job and her family are repeated throughout the show's episodes. In the second episode, "First Choice," Allen manages to find a vice president—her opponent during the election two years earlier—and, while negotiating the politics of that choice, she also finds time to ease the concerns of her older daughter, Becca, when she loses her diary.

When the Secret Service is asking Becca about the diary's contents, she hesitates and looks down. Allen—again, despite the fact that she's been blindsided by Templeton as she's selecting a vice presidential nominee—sits down beside her daughter, places an arm around her, and soothingly says:

> ALLEN: Sweetie, I want you to tell the Secret Service everything you remember about that diary. I want you to be completely honest and (*looking at Joan Greer, Becca's assigned agent*) not a word of it gets back to me. Okay?
> GREER: Yes ma'am.

Although Allen misses an occasional family meal, she breaks away from a staff meeting late at night to tuck Amy in as she's drifting off to sleep and she makes sure to say goodnight to her son, Horace. She's even a good "mother" to Tommy, the son of the late President Teddy Bridges, who's temporarily staying on as a guest in the White House with his mother.

In a later episode, "First Dance," as Allen is in the middle of determining a course of action to deal with the murders of several U.S. drug agents, she takes a break and storms into the White House press room to confront the reporters there after she sees a tape of Becca being peppered with questions from reporters as she walks from the limousine into her school.

> ALLEN: Look, I get the appeal of covering the children of the president. It's fun, it's endearing, it's marketable. The one thing it's not is news.
> REPORTER: Ma'am, don't you think the press should determine what is and isn't news?
> ALLEN: Yes, I do. Still, some of you are parents, and I assume you have the same rule number one that I do. And by the way, this is not Mac the president talking. This is Mac the mother. *Don't* mess with my kids.

Even in the midst of a potential international crisis as she's trying to coordinate the ouster of a dictator of another nation, Allen fiercely protects her children.

This is a sharp contrast to the Bartlet White House, where the president's family is almost nonexistent. His wife, Abbey Bartlet, makes an occasional appearance during the first season, as does his youngest daughter. But the action stays focused on the political workings of the White House, and even though Bartlet tells the story about his granddaughter in his first scene, it is to illustrate a political point and to show him as a man of passion and power. When he does have discussions with Abbey Bartlet, a physician who has walked away from her career to help him pursue his ambitions, they typically are about political issues with Abbey being cast in the role of the feminist conscience (Garrett 183).

Despite their gender differences, the Bartlet and Allen characters are remarkably similar in some ways. Both have strong academic backgrounds, both

have prior governmental service, and neither has served in the military. As commander in chief of the nation's military, each character is faced with a global crisis early in their first seasons. For Bartlet, it is the downing of an Air Force plane carrying 13 doctors, including Bartlet's personal physician, 42 support staff, and five crew members to a teaching hospital in Amman, Jordan. For Allen, it is the murders of nine U.S. drug enforcement agents in a fictional South American country, San Pasquale.

When Allen is told about the killings, her first response is to ask for the names of the agents—again emphasizing the human connection and the nurturing characteristics of a woman in order to make her, even during an international crisis, still very female. Then, not satisfied with the idea of economic sanctions, Allen calls for the removal of General Sanchez, the dictator running the country. She demands a plan for removing Sanchez and getting him into an American court. Later, when the attorney general tells her there's no way that can happen, Allen (working with the Joint Chiefs of Staff) devises a plan to threaten San Pasquale with the total eradication of its coca crop—some of which is used for drug production and some of which is used for legitimate purposes. As U.S. jets head towards San Pasquale, the people in that country descend on the country's capital and successfully demand Sanchez's removal.

But Allen's victory comes quietly and behind the scenes. It lacks the power of Bartlet's loss or his anger when he wants a military strategy to deal with the downing of the Air Force plane. On *The West Wing*, Bartlet is told he must settle for a "proportional response" to the loss of the doctors, support staff, and crew on the plane. What he wants is something much more. When he's first told by Leo McGarry, his chief of staff, that the plane was shot down, he pauses, and then tells McGarry: "I'm not afraid. I'm going to blow them off the face of the earth with the fury of God's own thunder." Later, in the situation room when the options for a proportional response—including hitting several military targets—are being outlined for Bartlet, he asks Admiral Fitzwallace to tell him what's virtuous about a proportional response. Bartlet is told it's not virtuous, but it is what the U.S. does. Bartlet bristles. He tells the officers gathered in the situation room that he wants another alternative.

> FITZWALLACE: . . . Mr. President, just what else is there?
> BARTLET: The *disproportional* response. Let the word ring forth, from this time and this place, gentlemen, you kill an American, any American, we don't come back with a proportional response, we come back with total disaster.
> GENERAL: Mr. President, are you suggesting we carpet-bomb Damascus?
> BARTLET (*voice raised*): I am suggesting, General that you and Admiral Fitzwallace and Secretary Hutchinson and the rest of the national security team take the next 60 minutes and put together an American

> response scenario that doesn't make me think we are just docking someone's damn allowance.

The difference is that Bartlet is allowed to be visibly angry, to be visibly frustrated, and even to shout at the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And while he later settles for a proportional response, he wins the battle of perception because he is angry, just as the viewers are, at the injustice of it. Even during his compromise in accepting the proportional response that the Joint Chiefs recommended, Bartlet is a president who commands the room and commands respect. Allen, on the other hand, is all business when she demands a response strategy from her advisers that is stronger than economic sanctions—also in an hour—but in her dealings with the Joint Chiefs she doesn't show anger or frustration, just sympathy for the murdered drug agents, which is a soft and feminine response, and satisfaction when Sanchez is ousted by his own countrymen. Her "strength" is in her professionalism and quiet manner; Bartlet's is in his passion and his anger.

Conclusion

In setting out to give viewers a glimpse behind the scenes in the White House, Aaron Sorkin created a noble vision of the presidency embodied in Jed Bartlet. He is smart, he speaks Latin, he is issue-oriented, and he often leaves family events or discussions in the hands of others while he tends to the affairs of state. Rod Lurie created a very different presidency for Mackenzie Allen. Hers is a presidency defined by its happenstance nature, by her keen focus on trying to maintain a meaningful family life, and by her status as an independent politician. "The problem is that by giving her no party, no positions, no platform, it ends up defining her—like many strong women on TV—mainly by her gender" (Poniewozik 90).

Commander in Chief also, despite the attempts to show Allen as a strong woman, too often places her in roles that require her to be compassionate and patient and understanding of all of those around her—husband, children, and staff members—while few of those around her seem to be concerned about how she's doing in her job and how she's holding up under the pressures of running a nation and tending to her family. While Bartlet lives in the public sphere, Allen is forced to dance between a full public and a full private life—to do it all and to do it all very well. With existing research that shows that viewers learn about gender-appropriate behavior from television portrayals, it is telling that Allen's presidency is one that still holds women up to a higher standard and one that requires them to be feminine and nurturing, even while holding the highest office in the land. Bartlet's presidency does not hold him to the same standard, and it even allows him to fail at times.

Rod Lurie set out to create a groundbreaking show when he envisioned the character of Mackenzie Allen and the concept for *Commander in Chief.* And while he managed to come up with an innovative concept, the show did little in

terms of breaking down the traditional gendered nature of a woman's responsibilities.

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The (Not So) Good Old Days: Race and Sexuality on Old-Style Talk Shows

The hybrid format of the talk show makes it a difficult genre for television scholars to analyze. It's a vehicle for both information and entertainment, which means it combines goals and methods that are often contradictory. One can focus on the talk show's chaotic form and amorality, painting a picture of the genre as entertaining spectacle.[1] Contrary to all this chaos, the talk show can also be discussed as a genre with a coherent form and message, which is designed to convey information, invoking populist images of the debate, the town hall, the neighborhood, and the coffeehouse (all in Munson). So talk shows are a bit of a paradox. If they are both entertaining spectacle and informational vehicle, both exploitative and useful, both amoral and highly moralistic, both chaotic and highly controlled, what conclusions can we draw about the impact of these contradictions?

One solution most talk show critics have adopted is a chronological model that describes the genre as devolving, from a golden era of liberal dialogue to a current debased era of conflict-driven performances. Virtually all talk show scholars describe an earlier period in which talk shows were fairly seriously administered and focused on social issues, followed by a period in which they devolved into spectacle, yelling, and violence, although they all locate this shift in different time periods (as early as the mid-1980s and as late as the mid-1990s) and blame different shows for bringing it about (usually *Oprah Winfrey*, *Ricki Lake*, or *Jerry Springer*). In my view, this chronology minimizes the important fact that talk shows have always contained both sides of the chaos/coffeehouse binary. With the exception of violence, which was a later phenomenon, in earlier shows there was always a contradiction of purpose. Providing both information and entertainment, talk shows were always part discourse, part spectacle; and while the exploitative and sensational elements may have been less extreme, they were nevertheless centrally and structurally present.

Because the shows became so horrible in the 1990s, critics like to forget that even Donahue, who is often invoked as the saintly founding father of talk shows, was not above cross-dressing for a show on transvestites, pitting the Klan against the Jewish Defense League, or exploiting personal tragedy for ratings. While he was clearly more comfortable with the journalistic/political discussions than the personal/sensational ones, he recognized that his show essentially tried to "sandwich the Persian Gulf in between the male strippers" (Munson 5). Given the complexity inherent in the genre, then, apart from its evolution over the years, any claim that talk shows are either purely chaotic or purely informative requires a selective emphasis on only some elements from its very large pool of characteristics. What the newer-style shows highlight, to this

viewer, is not so much how talk shows have evolved but rather the extent to which they have always been highly performative.

Another important dynamic that the chronology narrative doesn't always capture is that the cultural anxiety surrounding talk shows (especially newer ones, but older ones as well), seems directly related to their overrepresentation of the socially, economically, racially, sexually, and (trans)gendered margins of society. With the exception of Joshua Gamson, most critics of the genre have overlooked the importance of queer issues to talk shows and talk show criticism. Concerns about sexual- and gender-nonconformity, particularly as they intersect with economic and racial marginality, often lay just beneath the surface of both popular and academic criticism of talk shows and their viewers, where to varying degrees the assertion that contemporary talk shows are "trash" is directly linked to their inclusion of the working-class and poor guests and audiences, particularly racial minorities.[2] The chronology narrative isn't always particularly careful in teasing apart what might be "trashy" about the exploitation of recent talk show styles versus the "trashiness" assigned by our culture to the racially-, sexually-, economically-, and gender-marginalized people who inhabit it. This shift in the demographics of those who participate in talk shows on-stage, as well as a corresponding shift in the *style* of representation, make the newer version of talk show seem an alien species from the older one, when it's more like a kissing cousin.

The following discussion of older talk shows on racism and lesbian and gay issues is based on my viewing of 70 videotapes recorded between 1985 and 1995, which include several hundred episodes of U.S. daytime talk shows from the critical period in which the genre drifted from an "old-style" to a "new-style." Old-style shows were based on current events, and tended to be more information-oriented. Best exemplified by *Donahue*, under this style, topics were culled from the news and then guests were sought afterward (Grindstaff 172). Most 1980s hosts used variations of this style, tended to be older, and had backgrounds in journalism (Shattuc 25). New-style talk shows tend to be based on personal conflicts between friends and family members, and are more entertainment-oriented. Best exemplified by *Jerry Springer*, under this style, shows are formed around colorful guests, not news events. Most of the hosts from the mid-1990s to the present have used variations of this style, have tended to be younger, and have had backgrounds in acting or stand-up comedy.

What I found was that discussions of racism and lesbian and gay issues on old-style talk shows were structured around two forms of discourse—liberalism and therapy—that were prohibitive to the kinds of understanding of inequality required for social change. The examples that follow illustrate the contradictions of the genre's mixed format, as well as the difficulties faced by racial and sexual minorities when taking part in the public debate about equality, when the parameters of that debate have already been defined in ways that work against them.

STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY: LIBERAL DISCOURSE

In discussions of both racism and lesbian and gay issues, the liberalism inherent in the structure of the old style, while allowing for relatively civil dialogue, appeared to impede counter-normative understandings of related forms of inequality. Liberalism focuses on the individual and, correspondingly, tends to define oppression not as the struggle of one class to dominate another, but the struggle of individuals to achieve privacy, independence, and understanding. It is rooted in the belief that all individuals are essentially the same at the core, and that this core is rational and well meaning. Therefore oppression would be the result of perceiving others to be inherently different, and could be undone by education and dialogue. The focus on individuals rather than classes means inequality becomes naturalized, and only the most overt instances of oppression are recognized. Struggle against inequality is represented as an individual endeavor, through the modification of individual lives, not the social environment that produced them. Liberalism's strengths are its emphasis on equality for individuals, on the right to live freely, and on rational debate rather than violence as a way of resolving conflict. Liberalism goes much farther than many political and cultural systems in protecting civil rights, yet it doesn't go far enough in ensuring current freedoms, and often impedes the possibility of creating greater freedom in the future by misdiagnosing the causes of inequality. Liberal accounts of inequality dominate the TV talk show world.

Because liberalism minimizes the role social structures play in inequality, the tolerance it requires is one that cannot explain competing positions, other than to say, isn't it wonderful that we all can agree to disagree? Donal Carbaugh argues that the discourse of old-style shows like *Donahue* draws on a particular rhetorical pattern that assumes everyone has a right to speak, as long as their speech is individualized, referring only to their own experience, without offering an opinion on anyone else's (30). While the talk show may appear at first to be an open forum, Carbaugh sees its dialogue as being fairly restricted. This is because the worldview which the talk show endorses is one which fails to distinguish "nonjudgmental and tolerant" speech from "respectful" speech, which asserts respect for persons and their right to speak, then criticizes their opinions. The liberal version of tolerance implies that one should respect all opinions, as a way of respecting the people who voice them, with the result that "substantive issues therefore were not resolved, but avoided" (38). Differences of opinion are viewed as being inherently irreconcilable, because no mechanism is recognized with which differences could be evaluated. What begins, then, as a very public demonstration of the public's right to openly debate important social issues, ends up being an empty ritual, an anti-conversation, where points of view can be articulated but don't quite interact.

The liberal norms of public speech on old-style shows like *Donahue* also require that speech be individualized. The basis for the right to speak is individual experience, rather than experience as a member of a class or cultural group, or one's beliefs about groups or social structures. Any kind of theorizing

or generalizing is seen as a "as a kind of slavery" which disrespects the sanctity of individual experience (110). This narrow frame of interpretation suggests that the apparent moral relativism of talk shows conceals an inflexible understanding of the rules of dialogue. The paradox of liberalism is that it appears to welcome all positions, while it silences those that are incompatible with its assumptions. Liberalism is, in the sense it is being used here, less a specific ideological position and more a system of organizing ideological positions, and as the following example illustrates, this system structures the dialogue about racism in ways that are less than helpful.

TALK SHOW TREATMENTS OF RACISM

Amid the endless stream of mother-daughter conflicts, unhappy marriages, and makeovers there were very few explicit discussions of racism on old-style talk show television. Unlike the new-style shows, on old-style shows people of color were rarely seen at all, except as occasional, topical subjects for debate. Liberalism was the most notable feature that shaped those occasional debates that did occur. Because these talk shows adopted the style of personal conversation, and because they utilized liberal discourse, racism was often discussed in terms of individual prejudice. Confusing negative feelings with the social power to enact them, this line of reasoning locates racism only in those who overtly hate others. On old-style talk shows, the scapegoating could go in either direction, as African-American figures like Louis Farrakhan and Sister Souljah were the focus of frequent accusations of reverse racism. When only the most flamboyantly hateful people are implicated, racism is falsely contained and conceptualized as an easily manageable problem.

For example, a 1991 episode of *Jenny Jones* crosses the makeover with a discussion of bullying. The result, "I Was a Geek, but Look at Me Now," represents racism as a beauty issue. A young African-American woman talks about being teased as a girl for being ugly. She was picked on mercilessly in her predominantly white school. All the former bullies brought on the show are white, and the focus of their teasing, as it is reenacted and recounted in the show, is her Afro. When the studio audience and the former bullies are shown an enlarged photo of how the woman used to look in school, they laugh loudly at her. After a makeover, the woman parades around the stage self-consciously, with straightened hair and a skin-tight dress. The audience and the former bullies whistle and applaud, presumably to build her self-esteem. The solution to racism, then, appears to be a makeover. Now that *Jenny Jones* has made her pretty enough, people will no longer be mean to her. The implication is, of course, that she was in fact "ugly" before, and is now fixed. Perhaps this kind of oversimplification is unavoidable in a genre that was aimed in the mid-1980s toward a mainstream audience, and therefore needed to ratchet down the argument to a level that the audience might feel comfortable with. On old-style shows, there were confrontational individuals, but rarely was there outright confrontation of systemic racial inequality. It must be said that, relative to new-style shows that rarely discuss any social issue seriously, old-style shows at least

attempted to address an issue. But because the discussion was for and most often by white people, the analysis never went very deep.

A 1987 *Donahue* episode on white supremacist home-schooling perfectly illustrates the trends I've outlined above, and in its treatment of racism, it is typical of most other old-style talk shows that I observed. It focuses on parents who have removed their children from public schools that either celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday, or teach black history. The panel is comprised of Stephanie, a young KKK mother and her daughter, a white couple and their daughter, J.D. Alder (a Grand Dragon of the Klan), Johnny Lee Clary (a former Klansman), and Rev. Wade Watts (former president of the NAACP and the only person of color on stage.)

One of the most distinct elements of the episode's dynamic is the way it attempts to contain racism within the panel of guests. Repeatedly, Donahue and audience members project racism onto the racist members of the panel, as if to absolve the studio audience and the viewing audience of their own racism. For example, Donahue tells the audience at one point, "I know this upsets you. I know you don't want to hear it, but these [racist] ideas are out there, and it's important to look at them." The "you" and the "out there" imply a broad chasm between the overtly racist views of the panelists and any potential (but less self-evident) racism in the audience. The solution implied by this definition of the problem comes from a white woman in the audience: "Then stay out of the public schools! Good! We don't need you!" The public schools are constructed as a place free from racism, and all "we" need is to get rid of the small number of "them" who are causing a problem.

Another gesture toward separating the audience from the racist guests is the repeated characterization of the racists as lower-class and uneducated. This is interesting, not only because it reflects the belief that racism is the prejudice of working-class, less-educated whites (especially Southern whites), but also because almost all of the panelists seem college-educated and middle-class! The racist guests assert this several times, despite being taunted by former Klansman Clary, with remarks like, "So, you want to teach your daughters? You better teach them how to say, 'Welcome to McDonald's, can I help you?' and 'You went to college? What did you learn in college, how to be a janitor?'" These statements, which generate large amounts of laughter and applause from the audience, indicate how Clary maps racism onto the working-class. When faced with the fact that, with the exception of Stephanie, all the panelists did in fact go to college, Clary says they did not get the right kind of education while there. By displacing racism onto the attitudes of the white working-class, the show absolves the predominately middle-class and white audience of any responsibility. By displacing racism onto the Southern white working-class (through repeated references to "Bubba" and "poor white trash," and the fact that all the racist panel members are from the South), the rest of the white viewing audience might very well leave the conversation thinking they have clean hands.

One final aspect of the episode that I find to be fairly typical of other old-style talk shows is its construction of racism as a moral and emotional issue—in other words, racism is hate, which is immoral in and of itself. In this episode, the hateful, angry Stephanie (KKK mom) is contrasted with the endlessly patient and loving Rev. Watts. Donahue keeps prompting him to testify that he does not hate Stephanie, despite her hate for him. Donahue constructs a hypothetical scenario: a house is burning. Stephanie's child is inside. He asks the Reverend, "Would you give your life to save her child?" The Reverend says he would. Donahue then asks for an example from the Reverend's life of the kind of suffering he has faced from people like Stephanie. We learn that, despite the bombing of the Birmingham church, despite even the fact that his child died due to willful neglect by racist white nurses, he does not hate racists. The Reverend says his religious beliefs explain this. He cannot hate Stephanie because he is a Christian, and she is "sick." There is an extended debate about the immorality of hatred, based on Christian teachings. Several members of the audience assert that the racist panelists are not true Christians, citing Biblical references to support this. The panelists in turn assert that they are the ones being truly Christian by teaching pride in white culture and Christian heritage, and they cite their own passages. The audience applauds wildly when someone shouts, "There's only one race, the human race!" Despite all these protestations of love, the solution to the problem of racism can't be simply to love each other. If it were, we'd have racism licked. You can almost sense this contradiction in the unhappy hesitance of a white woman in the audience who gets the final word as the credits roll down, "I hope every one can get along. This is terrible."

STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY: THERAPEUTIC DISCOURSE

Another concern about the structure of old-style talk shows is that the discourse of liberalism dovetails tightly with therapeutic discourse. Celia Kitzinger has studied the relationship of liberalism to the psychological understandings of homosexuality, arguing that the "gay-positive" psychology research of the 1970s, while an improvement on the older, pathologizing model, continues to assert an essentialized understanding of homosexuality that hinders rather than helps gay and lesbian political progress. What's missing from most psychological accounts of lesbianism, Kitzinger argues, is an understanding of the extent to which the social meaning of sexuality is culturally defined and regulated rather than biologically emanating, unadulterated, from our bodies. An essentialized understanding does nothing to dismantle these cultural processes by which sexuality is organized and maintained.

Now the psychological model has shifted from a "pathologic" to a "gay affirmative" one in which disturbed individuals who do not approve of gay people suffer from a mental disease that has been variously defined over the years as: homoerotophobia, homophiliaphobia, antihomosexualism, gayism, homosexism, and homophobia (154). (Similarly, the racist guests on the *Donahue* episode are also frequently characterized as insane, mostly by Donahue and former Klansman Clary, who repeatedly refer to them as

"irrational," a "cult," or "possessed.") While gay affirmative accounts of homophobia are decidedly preferable to the old pathological accounts, they fail to account for the significant role society plays in encouraging homophobia through its construction of heterosexuality and homosexuality. The apparent solution to homophobia and heterosexism, according to therapeutic discourse, would be therapy for individual homophobes.

This strong connection between liberalism and therapeutic discourse helps explain why the two are so strongly present on talk shows. According to White, the main discourse/narrative strategy of U.S. television is the therapeutic. She argues that therapeutic discourse easily resonates in American culture; its trajectory of problem-confession-cure is both familiar and comforting (177). While other television genres share this narrative strategy, the talk show is archetypical. While one function of talk shows is to provide us with information that will take away our problems, another significant cultural function is its definition of problems. While therapeutic discourse individualizes problems, through its focus on individual change and its denial of socialization, it also locates the ability to define the nature of the problem in medical authority—in the therapist.

As Foucault has noted, the use of therapeutic discourse to define and regulate social conflict has had a long history in the United States and Europe, with the rise of the social sciences in the Victorian era, which established the principle of a scientia sexualis (*History of Sexuality* 58). In this historical moment, "sex was constituted as a problem of truth" (56), one that could be answered by the newly developing scientific disciplines of anthropology and psychoanalysis. The project of these "human sciences" is to articulate and represent the inner workings of the individual. The anthropologist and the psychologist examine others in hopes of understanding, ultimately, themselves: "An unveiling of the same . . . Identity separated from itself by a distance" (Foucault, *The Order of Things* 340). The abject and the deviant are dissected in the name of truth—a truth that is often driven by a will to power. Similarly, Patricia Morton has documented the deluge of racist and sexist research produced at the turn of the 19th century that served to quell anxiety about social upheaval and to defend the social order. Sociologists, historians, geneticists, phrenologists, and other authorities used biological and environmental arguments to pathologize African-Americans as a way of justifying racial inequality (18). From their foundation, these professions have participated in a racist tradition, whose legacy may be the tendency to explain inequality by examining essentialized characteristics of the marginalized, rather than the conditions of oppression that create them—as the continued circulation of the "culture of poverty" thesis suggests.

Talk shows play directly into this therapeutic dynamic, investigating individuals as a means of investigating marginalized groups. The investigation is not neutral, however. Because the dominance of some classes over others is naturalized, the examination is highly unilateral, based on the perspectives of the

"normal," "healthy," and "average." For example, there were no discussions on the shows I viewed about why women are heterosexual, as it's not deemed necessary to interrogate what is dominant in the culture. Because only those aspects of the culture that differ from dominant assumptions are studied, what appears at first to be curious investigation might best be described as the reification of dominant beliefs. Individuals whose identities and values are seen to be deviant or marginal end up serving as evidence of that deviance and marginality, which helps explain why gays and lesbians were so frequently the subject of old-style shows.

TALK SHOW TREATMENTS OF LESBIAN AND GAY ISSUES

A good illustration of these larger trends occurs in a 1991 *Maury Povich* episode on lipstick lesbians that aired during the height of lesbian chic, when the intense if short-lived curiosity of the mainstream was sated by a slew of quasi-anthropological investigations of lesbianism—as if the (feminine) lesbian was a new species that had only recently been discovered. In this episode, graphics appear under the images of guests that reduce their identities to one half of a constructed problem: the lipstick lesbian couple wears the title "Attracted to Feminine Women," while the title of soft butch Donna Minkowitz (a widely-known journalist in the queer press at the time) reads "Attracted to Masculine Women." We learn from this taxonomy that there are these two kinds of lesbians, with no acknowledgment of any middle position, no commentary on the assumptions behind the terms "masculine" and "feminine," no discussion of the role of culture in constructing gender and sexuality, and no discussion of lesbianism as anything other than this one particular facet of gender/sexuality.

It is no coincidence that the aspect of lesbianism selected for the show is one viewers are probably already interested in and accustomed to: the sexiness (or lack of sexiness) of women. The somewhat unusual figure of the lesbian is revamped along lines most viewers will respond to and be comfortable with. We are all used to evaluating women's physical beauty. Most television viewers are probably not used to complex, unsexy discussions of lesbian communities, inequality in the workplace, violence against lesbians, etc. The social implications of lesbianism are submerged beneath the spectacle of sexuality, but we're led to believe all aspects of the issue have been represented.

Old-style talk shows construct a fairly consistent image of the-lesbian-as-representative-of-her-type. This lesbian is almost always: white, middle-class, femme to soft butch, apolitical or liberal, not feminist, in her teens to late thirties, fairly assimilationist, and someone who believes she was born gay. There is also a canon of lesbian issues that are frequently debated on the shows, including: lesbians and motherhood, the origins of lesbianism (with a special focus on lesbian sisters and lesbian twins), lesbians' relationships with and feelings about men, the gender and physical appearance of lesbians, and lesbians' coming out. And while each "side" of each issue is usually represented, an implicit hierarchy is present that values the sides differently. Not surprisingly, the hierarchy values those aspects of lesbians' lives that are most

familiar and acceptable to heterosexuals, and a large part of this acceptability is related to gender. In the episode on lipstick lesbians, the audience is much less hostile toward the lesbians who are traditionally feminine. On talk shows, as in everyday life, lesbians are most acceptable when they are properly gendered—the more lipstick, the better.

This is in fact one significant difference between old- and new-style shows: the importance of propriety to the former. In the rash of newer-style shows that were in circulation by the mid-1990s, the genre drifted away from its more informational aspects, as its more performative ones came into the foreground. As a result, two recurring motifs on new-style shows were the inscrutability and the spectacularity of their sexually, racially, and economically marginalized guests. The less propriety the better, as an emphasis on blurring and crossing boundaries developed across many episodes, especially those on favorite new-style subjects: interracial relationships; the intersections of queer and straight relationships via the closet and late-life conversions and seductions; and the many episodes that ask the audience to guess who among a panel of guests is really gay, or who is the "real" woman vs. who is transgendered. Yet the earlier-style shows and the later ones both contained the twin drives toward information and entertainment. There is no doubt that the later style shows were even more performative and irrational in style than earlier ones, but the central dynamic remained: of exploring the intersections of the cultural center and its margins through the lens of liberal, therapeutic discourse.

For example, a common topic on old-style shows is the origin of homosexuality. The emphasis on therapeutic understandings of cultural difference often leads to a biologizing of homosexuality that tends to obscure lesbian experience. Lesbian guests who seemed more acceptable to studio audiences were those who presented accounts of lesbianism that were devoid of any structural analysis of the institutionalization of heterosexuality and who stated that they were born lesbian. The origin story was almost exclusively told through the narrative of coming out. The closet has become a metaphor for all kinds of secrets, but as Eve Sedgwick has noted, the gay and lesbian closet is the quintessential closet. A central component of gay and lesbian representation on these old-style talk shows was the motif of coming out. Coming-out is typically based around a therapeutic narrative exemplified in Richard Troiden's "The Formation of Homosexual Identities," which describes gay and lesbian identity development as beginning in pre-puberty, with gender nonconformity and a vague sense of feeling different; at puberty, one feels confusing sexual attractions for the same sex; at late adolescence one takes on but struggles with a gay or lesbian identity; and by early adulthood, one has accepted and fully committed to a gay or lesbian identity as a central feature of one's life (50–63).

This model's quasi-scientific structure implies more stability than may often be present, and it presumes that identity stems largely from a biological source, and that identity development occurs only once. The end result of these presumptions is that other experiences and understandings of gay and lesbian

identity are obscured. By necessity, all models are oversimplified, but the dominant coming out narrative is problematic not only because it generalizes, but because its generalizations are often based on experiences that only correspond closely to the socially dominant segment of the lesbian and gay population—that is, gay men. Researchers who focus carefully on the lesbian experience have found that it frequently does not match the dominant coming-out model. Whether described as "primary" and "elective" (Golden), "born" and "chosen" (Ettore), or "exclusive" and "bisexual" (Burch), many studies have noted two paths by which women come to see themselves as lesbian.

The first ("primary"/"born"/"exclusive") is similar to the gay male model in that these women are aware of their homosexual attractions by puberty, and as adults tend to have fairly solidified lesbian identities. The second ("elective"/"chosen"/"bisexual") describes women who had heterosexual attractions or identities during puberty, and as adults tend to have more fluid, problematized, and sometimes bisexual identities. In many cases, contact with feminist or lesbian communities plays a direct role in the elective lesbian's development of sexual identity. This stands in direct opposition to the notion of sexuality as an immutable, biological drive implicit in the dominant coming-out model. For example, in an influential study of "new gay" lesbians (women who came out through the second wave feminist movement), Lillian Faderman stands Troiden's identity model on its head. While he describes homosexual identity formation as a long and difficult struggle from self-hatred toward eventual acceptance of one's sexual attractions, Faderman describes the experiences of many new gay lesbians as a sudden, discontinuous, and relatively painless shift whereby women learn about lesbianism through contact with lesbians or feminists, come to value it, and then take on the label, and only then "become" lesbians (86).

One result of the continued dominance of an essentialized coming-out narrative is that it judges many women's experiences3 according to male standards of development, so that the fluidity of elective lesbians' identification process looks immature or fickle in comparison (Esterberg 63). Because elective lesbians' social identities are consolidated before their personal identities (Stein 57), and because they often report that, for them, identity preceded desire (Faderman 86; Stein 78; Whisman 63), one result of the dominance of the biological coming-out model is that elective lesbians are often derided as "fake" lesbians (Whisman 26). Given the asymmetry with which boys and girls are encouraged to explore, discuss, and recognize their sexuality, it seems particularly unfair to presume that women who assume a lesbian identity upon adulthood somehow possess less integrity, bravery, or intelligence than those who arrived there earlier.4

The biologizing understanding of homosexuality is extremely prevalent on talk shows, and is so strongly presumed that it often overrides alternative understandings. For example, an early episode of *Ricki Lake*, called "My Family Hates That I'm Gay . . . Too Bad!," illustrates the rhetorical work necessary to

match the guests' experiences with the dominant narrative. A man who claims to be "ex-gay" speaks from the audience. He says the reason he is gay is that his mother was an alcoholic and he often saw her lying around drunk and naked when he was a child. The audience rightly rejects this homophobic (and illogical) explanation of homosexuality. Ricki chastises him for implying that people can choose to be gay. The next guest, however, is a woman who has been married three times to men, and then left her latest husband for a woman. She says she didn't want men in her life ever again because of their drug abuse and physical violence toward her. She decisively describes her evolution as a conscious one: "I decided I didn't want any more men in my life." Ricki is not satisfied, and challenges her, "Well, are you sure you're really gay, or are you just fed up with men?" The woman replies, "I'm fed up with men and I'm totally committed to her, so if that means I'm gay, then I guess I'm gay." The audience seems dissatisfied, but after some momentary rumbling, their attention turns to the next guest, a man who's distraught because his sister broke off all contact with him when she found out he's gay. Ricki explains how he should educate his sister: "There's a lot of misconceptions out there, like that you choose to be gay." The man responds with the obligatory, "I wouldn't choose ridicule."

This episode exemplifies how talk shows operate on a system of logic that is unable to deal with any understanding of sexuality other than a biological one. Unsure how to deal with a non-biological account of lesbianism, the audience and the host simply gloss it over. The woman didn't recite any of the usual childhood explanations or give any evidence whatsoever of past attractions to women, so her experience stands out as somewhat of an anomaly. That her description of her experience is discounted just moments after its expression is evidence of the strength of the essentialist coming-out narrative, and its appeal to both gay and straight people as a narrative of containment. Because the host and audience completely discount this challenge to beliefs about sexuality, no questions are asked about her sexual satisfaction, how she knew she was lesbian, how they got together, whether she thinks she was always lesbian, or why she didn't come out sooner. No analysis can be provided of the psychological, cultural, and economic enforcement of heterosexism, the role of homophobia in identity formation, or the fluidity of sexuality. We will never know if this woman's taking a woman lover was a temporary phase or a permanent shift in identity, as only time would tell. That her story is left dangling in the air illustrates the extent to which many lesbians have a story that society does not want to hear, one that cannot build into any kind of dialogue because it's outside the realm of reason. That a woman could choose to be a lesbian is an idea that can get no purchase.

Because most talk show discussions of lesbianism are framed through therapeutic narratives and individualized liberalism, an opportunity is lost to challenge normative explanations of lesbianism and women's sexuality. The elective lesbian presents a peculiar set of experiences that appear to directly contradict the dominant construction of heterosexual relations as being based

solely in biology. The very elements of lesbianism that are resistant to dominant ideological beliefs about women cannot be effectively explored through individualized, therapeutic talk show discourse. This is the most common way that lesbianism was discussed on old-style talk shows—as something peculiar to a subgroup, and unrelated to the (naturalized) heterosexual viewing audience.

CONCLUSIONS

Because talk shows are constructed upon liberal and therapeutic discourses, with their psychologizing, individualizing impulse, they contain built-in filters that structure their discussions of lesbianism and racism in counter-productive ways. While they might seem to be innocent, entertaining investigations, they help maintain inequality, by reinforcing understandings that are antithetical to its dismantling. Their emphasis on emotion translates inequality into a universally shared experience in which, as a *Night Talk* audience member put it, "There's no such thing as a wrong emotion." Discussions often became relativistic, with therapeutic, confessional turn-taking appearing to be the only goal. This emphasis on sharing, while unquestionably creating a less raucous and ostensibly more respectful atmosphere than on new-style shows (where understanding is anything but the goal) often caused the discussion to leave the realm of history, and enter one where intentions, not actions, are all-important. While the sensationalism and conflict of the new-style talk show make it fall very far short of serving as a useful vehicle for the examination of racism and homophobia,[5] the good old days of the old-style show left much to be desired as well.

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Notes

[1] For images of the talk show as carnival or freak show, see Gamson and Priest. For the talk show as game show, see Abt and Mustazza, Munson, and Rapping. For the talk show as Mardi Gras, see Priest; and for the talk show as pornography, see Abt and Mustazza.

[2] For particularly egregious examples of racial and class bias, see Abt and Mustazza, which is rife with statements like:

> [Talk shows] showcase . . . the hallmarks of what is sometimes referred to as low class behavior—not to mention cognitive and linguistic errors that so tellingly distinguish certain people . . . By watching, participating in, and enjoying these talk-show spectacles, people effectively become low class. (22)

[3] For studies that describe the elective model as representing the majority of lesbians' experience (with the primary model representing a strong minority), see Diamond and Savin-Williams, Esterberg, Golden, Rust, Stein, and Whisman. In addition to the common cultural convention of men's experiences being viewed as universal, the obscurity of the elective model in the scholarship may be due to researchers' oversampling of community-affiliated lesbians (Diamond and Savin-Williams 315; Esterberg 178), who might be more likely to identify with a primary model than unaffiliated women, especially given the stigmatization of bisexuality within many

lesbian communities (Whisman 28).

[4] For example, consider these remarks about elective lesbianism from ethnographic respondents:

> I should probably tell you that I'm not one of those people who knew they were gay from when they were very little. I'm probably not a very good example of a gay person, and I don't want to mess up your study or anything, so it's okay if you don't want to interview me (Diamond and Savin-Williams 300).

The people who come out later, are kind of, I don't want to say dumb, but they were just sort of people who were always doing what people told them to do (Whisman 111).

[5] For an insightful analysis of the problematic politics of new-style talk shows, see Gamson.

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Evil in the Worlds of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian* (2005)

This paper examines evil in the worlds of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian* (2005). Specifically, these two long popular novels are contrasted on the basis of (1) the nature of evil, (2) the reach of evil, and (3) the opposition to evil. While the evil in Stoker's earlier Gothic novel seems to be contained with the powerful vampire's death, the evil in Kostova's later Gothic novel lives on after Dracula's death (actually, his two deaths) and even finds expression in various terrorist activities of the twenty-first century.

Before moving on to discuss evil in the worlds of these two novels, I need to place my study within a larger context that philosophers usually label as "the problem of evil." To paraphrase philosopher Michael Tooley, the problem of evil is the difficulty of reconciling the existence of evil or suffering in the world with the existence of a god (1).

After offering various definitions for "God," philosopher Nick Trakakis attempts to distinguish between the terms "good" and "evil" (2–3). Trakakis lists six conditions that may make an event evil: (a) some harm done to the physical or psychological well-being of a sentient creature; (b) the unjust treatment of a sentient creature; (c) loss of opportunity resulting from premature death; (d) anything preventing an individual from leading a fulfilling and virtuous life; (e) a person doing that which is morally wrong; and (f) the privation of good (3–4). Examples of these six conditions connected with evil will occur frequently in the following discussion of the novels by Stoker and Kostova.

Although space does not permit a fuller discussion of the problem-of-evil topic, one special category of evil—beyond the traditional varieties of moral evil and natural evil—is the so-called "horrendous evil" (Trakakis 5). Examples of such extreme evil are physical mutilation and mental torture (Trakakis 5). As we will see, numerous examples of horrendous evil will be noted in the following discussion of the novels by Stoker and Kostova.

The Nature of Evil in Stoker's *Dracula*

Three characters deserve special attention when reviewing the nature of evil in Stoker's *Dracula*. First is Jonathan Harker, the young British lawyer whose narrative voice both begins and ends this complex novel that is told from multiple points of view. Young Lucy Westerna, who is courted by several suitors as well as by Count Dracula himself, comes next. Last is Mina Murray Harker, Jonathan's fiancée and then wife, who also falls under the spell of Dracula.

The chilling opening of Stoker's novel finds Jonathan traveling from London to Transylvania to meet with Dracula about the Count's pending purchase of property in the London area. The howling wolves, the unnatural blue flame, and other strange elements contribute to Jonathan's "dreadful fear" (23). Once in the castle, Dracula discusses with Jonathan the previous night's uncanny happenings, when "all evil spirits are supposed to have unchecked sway" (32). Here Dracula is starting to terrorize Jonathan. In addition, Dracula explains his ancient warlike ancestry of over four hundred years ago and the role of blood in that history. The famous shaving scene in which Jonathan cuts himself reveals that Dracula detests mirrors and crucifixes—and that, according to Jonathan, "The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!" (37).

Dracula forces Jonathan to stay at the castle, and he even limits Jonathan's freedom within the castle walls. From his window, Jonathan sees Dracula crawl down the castle wall face down, like a lizard. The evil manifest here is unnatural. Within the castle, Jonathan encounters three young female vampires whose sharp teeth are ready to suck his blood. But Dracula returns and prevents this physical evil from befalling Jonathan, while at the same time giving the three women a "half-smothered child" for the night's feeding (51).

Further on, Jonathan witnesses the horrible violence of Dracula's wolves tearing apart the woman who comes to the castle seeking her stolen child. In a plan of "diabolical wickedness," one night Dracula offers to set Jonathan free, but the wolves are outside waiting for Jonathan if he decides to take this offer from "the monster" Dracula (62, 64). As Jonathan writes in his journal, his plan is to try to escape from "this cursed spot . . . this cursed land, where the devil and his children still walk with earthly feet," now that Dracula has left with his boxes of earth on a journey (66).

Back in England, young Lucy Westerna has started sleepwalking again. At about the same time, the sea is upset, apparently from the evil Dracula approaching. The Russian schooner from Varna has arrived, with the crew dead, with its cargo of boxes of earth intact, and with a dog that escapes ashore (here is Dracula shape-shifting). Stoker connects the arrival of this "great dog" with Lucy's being "restless all night" (103). While Jonathan was not bitten in Transylvania, now Stoker notches up the horrendous evil by having Lucy's throat pierced while sleep-walking and portraying a "thing" hovering above her (109). Dracula continues to haunt Lucy. Her neck bites make her delirious; her mother is dying; and her friend Mina Murray is worried about her missing fiancé, Jonathan. According to Mina's journal, "Some sort of shadowy pall seems to be coming over our happiness" (113).

Harmed in mind and body, Lucy is treated by Dr. John Seward for her "disease" (134). Seward calls in his mentor Professor Abraham Van Helsing from Amsterdam. Van Helsing is a physician, scientist, philosopher, and metaphysician. He finds Lucy's blood loss an interesting disease. In all, four blood transfusions are given to Lucy, but still she is failing. Dracula, whether in animal form or through a mist, is able to get to Lucy and drain her blood.

Gradually, she is changing into a vampire before her friends' eyes. Van Helsing wonders "God! God! God!"; why are they so beset by such evil (156).

Near death, Lucy attempts to bestow the vampire's kiss on her beloved Arthur, thus spreading this blood disease. But Van Helsing prevents the kiss. After she is buried, Lucy walks at night as one of the undead, seducing small children for their blood. Later, we will discuss how Van Helsing and Lucy's friends use Christian artifacts finally to release her from this vampiric horror. In a letter to Van Helsing, Mina exclaims "what terrible things there are in the world, and what an awful thing if that man [Dracula], that monster, be really in London" (213). Through these words, Stoker has Mina voice the philosophical problem of evil.

While sad about her friend Lucy, Mina is happy to hear that her fiancé Jonathan has escaped from his imprisonment and is recovering in the hospital from "a violent brain fever." She travels to Budapest where they are married and then return to London. The second half of Stoker's novel, therefore, deals with the Mina-Dracula conflict. One day, Jonathan and Mina see a youthful-looking Dracula in London, causing Jonathan to have a "slight relapse of his malady" (198). Mina later dreams that she is encountering a face in the mist; this is actually the evil Dracula coming after her in one of his shapes. Then we read from Dr. Seward's diary that Dracula is caught by Van Helsing actually drinking from Mina in her room. Mina calls herself "Unclean! unclean!" (321). The rest of the Mina-Dracula conflict—a conflict of good versus evil—takes us from London back to Transylvania.

The Reach of Evil in Stoker's *Dracula*

The reach of evil in Stoker's *Dracula* is a function both of time and of geography. Although geography receives the most focus, time receives some coverage.

To begin, Jonathan has traveled from London to the Carpathians, called there by Dracula to explain the count's recent London estate purchase. In the castle's library, Jonathan sees many reference works on English life that Dracula is studying, apparently as he transitions to the London area to spread his vampiric evil. Dracula has maps of London, Exeter, Whitby, and the Yorkshire coast. Significantly, Jonathan writes in his journal that the monstrous undead Dracula, sleeping in the midst of his earth-filled boxes under the castle, is "the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless" (64). Before his reach widens, the imprisoned Jonathan desires to "rid the world of such a monster" (64).

Dracula's evil has already reached the mental patient Renfield in England. Lucy and Mina will be touched by this evil in Whitby. The bats flapping against Lucy's window indicate the arrival of Dracula's evil in England. Even after her seeming death, the undead Lucy can spread the vampiric disease to the children she feeds upon. According to Van Helsing, from ancient times, there have been

vampires. These immortals "must go on age after age adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world" (243).

Moreover, Dracula has cunningly distributed the many boxes of earth from Transylvania that can serve as his lairs over several parts of the London area—again, the motif of space or extension is used by Stoker. Once the pure Mina drinks Dracula's blood, he knows she will come to him when he calls her, even over great distances.

Over hundreds of years, Dracula's brain powers survived his physical death, and he is "growing," explains Van Helsing. If not stopped, Dracula may be "the father . . . of a new order of beings, whose road must lead through Death, not Life" (342). Dracula's own words confirm this assessment: "My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side" (347). Dracula can live for centuries, but Mina, with his mark upon her throat, is mortal. Mina's protectors have chased Dracula from London. He can afford to wait, but Mina will die unless her friends kill the vampire.

The Opposition to Evil in Stoker's *Dracula*

The opposition to evil in Stoker's *Dracula* falls into three main categories: science, religion, and love. We have already mentioned the blood transfusions that Drs. Seward and Van Helsing perform on Lucy. But even when using science, Van Helsing praises one blood donor, saying that "God sends us men when we want them," to oppose the devil's work (172). Nevertheless, science has its limits, as Van Helsing realizes. He returns to Amsterdam, and now his research centers on Christian religious artifacts and superstitions that may oppose the evil they face.

In the religious category, the crucifix is offered to Jonathan before he enters the Borgo Pass near Castle Dracula. Garlic, wild rose, and mountain ash are also folk remedies that may oppose vampires. In a sense, Van Helsing is working a spell with the garlic he places on Lucy and around her room. The method of finally killing the undead Lucy is to open her tomb and then cut off her head, put garlic in her mouth, and stake her through the heart. This procedure frees Lucy and stops her nighttime prowling.

The plan to save Mina from the vampire's disease is more complex, for Mina, her husband, and her male protectors must chase Dracula who is heading back to the Carpathians. Van Helsing uses the sacred wafer and a holy circle near the Borgo Pass to ward off the three vampire women that Dracula created. For the chase after Dracula, Van Helsing gives each man a silver crucifix, garlic blossoms, the sacred wafer, a revolver, and a knife.

Yet in the end, it is love, faith in one's fellow human, and goodness that saves Mina. Once he has come to London, Mina and Jonathan recognize "a solemn duty" to fight Dracula (205). Van Helsing characterizes Mina as "one of God's women" who shows us "that there is a heaven where we can enter, and that its light can be here on earth" (214–215). The journey to the Carpathians is a great quest to kill the author of so much pain and sorrow, "so that the world may rest from [Dracula]" (231).

Speaking of her friend Dr. Seward, Mina says, "How good and thoughtful he is; the world seems full of good men—even if there are monsters in it" (254). Her words well express the main theme of Stoker's novel. Even though Mina is diseased from Dracula's bites, she can still ask her friends to take some pity on the Count. He has to be destroyed so that "his better part may have spiritual immortality" (349). Mina's belief that "perhaps we are the instruments of ultimate good" and Jonathan's exclamation that "We are in the hands of God!" are just two examples of how Stoker sets up the opposition to evil in this fictional world (357, 401). At the end of the wild race to Castle Dracula, the Count is killed by a slash through the throat and a knife thrust to the heart. Before he crumbles into dust, Mina tells us in her journal that "there was in [his] face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there" (424).

The curse passes from Mina, who is now released from Dracula's spell and the blood disease. The novel concludes with Jonathan's "Note" written seven years later. He and Mina are living happily and have a son. Love, friendship, and faith in the good triumph over Dracula's horrendous evil and his plan to spread that evil. Stoker's novel allows the reader to believe that the threat of the vampire is gone from the world with Dracula's death, but such is not the case at the conclusion of Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*, the novel to which we now turn.

The Nature of Evil in Kostova's *The Historian*

Kostova's debut novel took about ten years to research and write, and it has been published in over thirty languages. According to commentator Jessica Treadway, *The Historian* is "intriguing for its thorough examination of what constitutes evil and why it exists" (ii). Her novel is inspired by Stoker's *Dracula*, yet it surpasses that earlier work in scope and theme. Like *Dracula*, *The Historian* is told through letters, postcards, oral accounts, excerpts from printed sources, and other documents, using the method of gradual release of the story's elements and the method of multiple points of view. However, Kostova surpasses Stoker in her skillful creation of a complex series of boxed narratives.

The Historian is set in four main time periods—the early 1930s, the early 1950s, the early 1970s, and the unnamed narrator's present day of 2008. The novel tells the interweaving stories of a young girl's quest throughout Europe to find out about her father's travels in the 1950s and beyond, in addition to those of his mentor (Professor Rossi) in the 1930s; to unravel the secrets her father and Professor Rossi have discovered; and in the 1970s, to find her father who has disappeared while searching for her missing mother ("Elizabeth Kostova").

The 52-year-old writer/narrator, who in 2008 is an Oxford professor, looks back to 1972 when she was a young girl of 16 living with her father, Paul, in Amsterdam. Kostova's unnamed female narrator finds in her father's study a letter that begins "My dear and unfortunate successor" as well as an antique dragon book. The writer of the 1930 letter, Professor Rossi, is sorry to bequeath "to another human being my own, perhaps unbelievable, experience of evil" (5).

What follows is a sampling of the various kinds of evil that appear in the novel. In 1930, Professor Rossi sees a vampire servant, complete with neck wounds, in a library in Istanbul. Twenty-plus years later, Rossi explains the dangerous dragon book legacy to his American graduate student Paul, adding that "human history is full of evil deeds" (35). Moreover, once Rossi, and Paul, and later on Paul's daughter (the unnamed narrator) learn that Dracula lives on, they cannot stop themselves from pursuing Dracula.

In 1930 at Oxford University, Professor Rossi's friend and older colleague Hedges is brutally attacked by a vampire as a warning to the younger Rossi not to pursue Dracula research. A characteristic juxtaposition occurs when, only a few pages later, we read about how, in 1972, the young female narrator is in an Amsterdam library reading about the atrocities committed by Vlad the Impaler in 1456 when he was appointed Lord in Wallachia. This is Kostova's method of connecting evils throughout the novel.

Instances of evil and menace abound in *The Historian*. In 1972, Paul and his daughter are being watched as they travel throughout Europe and as Paul gradually tells her the Professor Rossi story. A particularly bloody death awaits Johan Binnerts, the Amsterdam librarian who helps Paul's daughter learn more about vampires. Several times in the novel, whenever a character speaks aloud the name of Dracula, a vampire appears and threatens the person who dares to speak the magic "word" (111).

A person who receives three vampire bites is doomed to become one of the undead. Professor Rossi will eventually receive three bites; his daughter Helen will receive two bites and thus escape undead status. Helen and Paul eventually marry, and their daughter is the unnamed narrator who, when sixteen, is accosted on a train in France by Dracula himself. She escapes unbitten.

In 1930, Rossi is trying to track down Dracula's tomb in Transylvania. He meets evil along the way, as a stranger gives Rossi a drink called "amnesia" to make him stop his search and forget his discoveries. But 20 years later, Rossi resumes his research, and Dracula violently kidnaps Rossi from his office in an American university.

At one point, we read about the "Little Plague" of 1477 that swept the Carpathians in the year after the human Dracula's first death. We are meant to connect this disease to the evil vampirism of Dracula. We also read about how the human head of Dracula was separated from his body after his death in 1476, as a way to prevent Dracula from becoming undead. But his followers eventually retrieved the head, and so Dracula lives on as an immortal.

Finally, Helen—we recall that she is Rossi's daughter, later Paul's wife, and later the young narrator's mother—tells Paul that the two of them must destroy the preternatural Dracula to help prevent evil from spreading. For instance, Dracula's undead, vampiric evil is associated with Stalin who admired Ivan the Terrible who admired Dracula. "Can you imagine a world in which Stalin could live for five hundred years? . . . Or perhaps forever?" wonders Helen.

The Reach of Evil in Kostova's *The Historian*

Elizabeth Kostova's recent comment about Bram Stoker's "insistence that the evils of history can reach forward into modern life" applies to her own novel as well (Kostova, Foreword xi). As the unnamed (older) female narrator of *The Historian* writes at the story's beginning in Oxford in 2008, not only can reaching back into history endanger us, but "sometimes history itself reaches inexorably forward for us with its shadowy claw" (xv). This section, therefore, examines several examples of the reach of evil in the 2005 novel.

First, the young narrator's father Paul discovers a dragon book in 1952; his mentor Professor Rossi discovers his dragon book in 1930, and numerous copies of this antique book are scattered throughout the world. In other words, the evil of Dracula as the son of the dragon is passed on to harm people. Rossi tells Paul in 1952 that vampires are real, that Dracula still lives in the 20th century, and that Paul "might have inherited a curse" through Rossi's research (48). Although Dracula died in 1476, he found a secret way to live on and promote evil in the world.

Moreover, even in the 20th century, Dracula still has many descendants. Dr. Turgut Bora, a professor at Istanbul University, notices that Helen Rossi somewhat resembles a portrait of Dracula that he keeps in his house to remind him of the evil that he seeks to destroy. In fact, Helen's Romanian mother is mysteriously descended from the Dracula line. This, in turn, makes Helen's daughter (the young narrator) also connected to Dracula. Of course, these are all good women who oppose the evil of Dracula, but with her two neck bites, Helen is worried that she may yet become undead. Symbolically, both Helen and her mother in Transylvania are marked with "a small dark green dragon" imprinted on the shoulder blade (376). In a later letter, Paul describes this "tiny curling dragon" as Helen's "single blemish" (434).

Kostova's use of the boxed narrative allows the characters to discover the evil of the past even as that evil springs forward to endanger them. Thus, some of Rossi's 1930 letters are transmitted from Helen's Romanian mother to Paul and Helen in 1952; and later in 1973, these letters are studied by Paul's daughter and her young boyfriend Stephen Barley. One of the items discovered in Rossi's 1930 letters is a foreshadowing of the Holocaust. In Romania, Rossi and his gypsy guide cross paths with the Iron Guard, who are sweeping through the villages, picking up young men and converting them to hatred. According to the guide, "They hate the Jews, in particular, and want to rid the world of them. . . . We Gypsies know that where Jews are killed, Gypsies are always murdered, too" (415). Once again, Kostova subtly juxtaposes the Dracula legacy with modern evils.

By May 1954, Dracula has imprisoned Professor Rossi in his underground lair somewhere in Europe. Rossi will become a vampire and also serve as the librarian to catalog Dracula's great book collection. Dracula likes the modern world; he promulgates his evil in it; in fact, the modern world is Dracula's "prize, my favorite work" (604). Dracula has plans to increase his domain. Soon,

he plans to go to a new level. He wants to change the world for the worse. "Perhaps soon I will not need this form," he says.

In short, Dracula in the early 1950s has servants around the globe. He vows to make history. A special feature of the 20th century that he likes is the possibility of wreaking havoc through mass terror. Instead of killing one person at a time as in the 15th century, Dracula now sees great possibilities for mayhem in modern weapons, especially the "divine fire" of the atomic bomb dropped on Japan (617). To Rossi, Dracula asserts that "the nature of man is evil," but this thesis is opposed by the forces of good in the novel.

The Opposition to Evil in Kostova's *The Historian*

The opposition to evil in Kostova's *The Historian* falls into two main categories: historical research and love.

First, we recognize that the unnamed narrator herself is the actual historian of the novel's title. Of course, her father Paul and his mentor Professor Rossi are also historians. Working on the other side, however, is Dracula, and he is a serious historian, as evidenced by his great book collection and his study of evil throughout the ages.

The quest for truth about Dracula is one of the novel's main themes. The three parallel searches for knowledge are Rossi's journey in the early 1930s, Paul and Helen's journey in the early 1950s, and Paul's daughter and Stephen Barley's journey in the early 1970s. The setting is often a library and its collection of documents about vampires and Dracula. Librarians are, for the most part, working for the good, although a few have been corrupted and work for Dracula's evil ends. Little is made of "peasant remedies" that might ward off the undead (115). But as a precaution, some characters do carry silver stakes, garlic flowers, crucifixes, and silver bullets. In Istanbul, Professor Turgut Bora maintains "an authentic vampire-hunting kit" that is around 100 years old (249). The researcher Paul believes that, to a degree, we "must deal with evil on its own terms" (176). Helen believes that "we are going to find the source of this plague" (278). Even the long oral history provided by Helen's Romanian mother adds the helpful information that a vampire "can change his shape . . . can come to you in many forms" (388).

Second, as in Stoker's novel, love, faith in one's fellow human, and goodness all successfully oppose the evil legacy of Dracula. But, unlike Stoker, Kostova does not allow the reader to think that Dracula's evil is gone from the world after Helen kills Dracula with a silver bullet and he turns to dust.

In addition to the three intertwined love stories—Professor Rossi and Helen's mother, Helen and Paul, and Barley and Paul's daughter—there are many close friendships in the novel. In a rare scene of graphic violence, Professor Bora must stake his librarian friend Mr. Erozan because he has been bitten a third time, but it pains him to do so, even though Erozan will now have peace in real death. In a parallel scene later, Paul and Helen must also stake Professor Rossi, whom they have found in Bulgaria, to save both him and themselves.

The years between the three journeys of the early 1930s, 1950s, and 1970s provide some peace for the main characters. After two miscarriages, Helen is finally able to give birth to a daughter. Paul, Helen, and (much later) their daughter all earn doctorates and teach or do non-Dracula research. Paul founds the Center for Peace and Democracy. Yet evil, in the form of a dragon book or a vampire, always returns to mar the happiness. Over the centuries, Dracula has been gaining strength, so that he can now sometimes go out in daylight. With his second death late in the novel, the world is seemingly safer. But here we come to the final irony that Kostova saves for the novel's "Epilogue."

The unnamed narrator resumes the frame with which this history began. She who was once 16 is now in her early 50s and a professor at Oxford. Her mother Helen has died of a "wasting disease" and her father Paul has been killed by a land mine in Sarajevo. In the "Epilogue," she recounts how she has recently attended a conference of medieval historians in Philadelphia. On a break from the conference, she visits a small library devoted to Bram Stoker. She reads some original documents about Dracula's crimes against humanity in the 1450s. Having left the library and out on the street, the narrator is pursued by the librarian with personal items the narrator has supposedly left behind. Among these items is a Dracula dragon book that now comes into the possession of the adult narrator. Her research has resulted in her receiving this menacing evil legacy. Dracula is dead, but his evil lives on. Moreover, just after she receives her copy of this antique book, she mentions that she can see the debris of the federal building that was bombed the month before. This surprising juxtaposition indicates that, although Dracula is dead in his bodily form, his evil lives on in the shape of twenty-first century terrorism.

The Historian concludes with the narrator's imagining a scene in 1476, a few months before Dracula's human death. Dracula visits the monastery on an island in Lake Snagov that he has been generously supporting for years. He brings the abbot great wealth from Turkish conquests. His enemies will soon catch up with him. But he is not worried about death or about saving his soul. He wants the monks to print multiple copies of his dragon book for future distribution. He tells the abbot how he wishes to be buried here. But, says Dracula, "I do not plan to subject myself long to death" (675). Dracula has found out that there is a monastery in Gaul where some of the Latin monks have outwitted death by secret means. The secrets are available in—what else—book form, and we are to surmise that Dracula gets this book and that the occult practices allow him to come back from his death in 1476. He does not come back from his second death by Helen's silver bullet. But in a sense he lives on in another evil form, namely, the terrorism and potential for mass destruction in the new millennium. The narrator's imagination pictures Dracula looking out over Lake Snagov in 1476 "as if all the world is before him" (676). This is why the narrator has told us this history—to warn us of Dracula's legacy.

In conclusion, Kostova's novel is so much more complex than is Stoker's, and it reveals that while good may often triumph, evil always returns to

challenge people and society. As humans adapt to new forms of evil, so too does evil adapt to the good that opposes it. Thus we return to the vexing philosophical problem of evil with which this paper began..

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The Naturalized Redneck: Performing Citizenship Through Patriotic Submission

When Natalie Maines spoke into her microphone in the spring of 2003, the crowd at London's Shepherds Bush Theatre responded with cheers. Said Maines: "Just so you know, we're on the good side with y'all. We do not want this war, this violence. And we're ashamed that the president of the United States is from Texas" ("Shut up and Sing"). The result—perhaps inevitable in the build-up to the Iraq War and its concurrent patriotic swell—struck Maines's group, the Dixie Chicks, from the top of the country music charts, drove them from the good graces of country music fans across the United States, and lingered for years in the form of reduced attendance and weaker album sales. Opponents were incensed that Maines—and by extension, the full trio of the Dixie Chicks—would openly criticize a wartime president and saw the comment as nearly an act of treason, particularly since the words were uttered abroad to an audience who likely needed little encouragement to disagree with the policies of George W. Bush.

Within the dominant conservative element of country music, such a stance lay in stark contrast to the implied common values of that culture, and the Dixie Chicks were villainized for failing to adhere to those standards. At stake, for the vocal opponents who effectively barred the Dixie Chicks from country music radio and who discarded or destroyed old albums en masse, was the nation itself. This chink in the thematic armor of patriotic country music suggested a weakness within the resolve of the citizenry that demanded immediate and sure response. Thus, the Dixie Chicks were figuratively cast out of the nation of country music, were stripped of their citizenship and recast as dangerous outlaws—but not the good kind that popularized country music in the '70s. In fact, though the Dixie Chicks recently swept the Grammy Awards in 2007—winning in five categories, including Album of the Year and Best Country Album—it is notable that their success did not come within their "home" community of the Country Music Awards. The outlaw Chicks were not with the president, and were therefore against America; worse, they were not with country music, and were therefore against a culture that has increasingly become an insistent site of American identity in contemporary America. Call it Redneck America, a version of the United States that defines itself through self-identification as rural, country, working class, simple, true, patriotic. It is through this identification that a large portion of the U.S. sees itself or, more importantly, how the U.S. can define itself in the face of a globalizing force that threatens to undermine the previously unchallenged dominance of an America predicated on "traditional" values of home, hearth, heterosexuality, whiteness, and patriarchy. Country music, then, becomes an anthem for this America, as the form celebrates and shares these common ideals. There are scripts to country

music, which the Dixie Chicks failed to follow, just as there are scripts for this idealized Redneck America. It is by following these scripts that individuals enact citizenship and prove their fidelity to the nation, and it is through these scripts that the U.S. sees itself, or perhaps how the U.S. can separate its citizenry into categories of proper and suspect. Under this system of classification the Dixie Chicks, of course, are suspect.

The division inherent within this Redneck Nation is more than mere classification, as it serves to establish a baseline of normalcy for the broader American culture. That is to say, in the Redneck Nation model I'm employing, "Redneck" ceases to be a pejorative classification of the rural, southern, white working class, and instead becomes a new mode of the mainstream, one that is simultaneously unbound by the very real pressures of class and status that defined the "traditional" redneck or hillbilly even as it seeks to reify certain social situations inherent within a white, hetero, masculine America. As a theoretical construct, the Redneck Nation is certainly much broader than the Dixie Chicks and their criticism of war, broader than country music, even broader than the concept of scripts I am examining here. In fact, the modern iteration of the Redneck, as a socio-political construct of self-assignation, spreads throughout American literature and culture, with the roots of the Redneck Ideal in early American frontier literature, then continuing though modern and contemporary Southern literature and, now, a broader popular culture. In the current state of our Redneck Nation, individuals may choose to claim membership as a means to establish an incontrovertible American citizenship. Based in American ideals of self-reliance (consider Emerson and Jefferson as proto-Rednecks) and anti-elitism, the ethos of the modern Redneck identification evokes a distinctly American sense that can be defined by what it is not: not elite or high-falutin', not overly intellectual, not overly-socialized and, perhaps most crucially, not not-American.

Here I turn back to the Dixie Chicks and their violation of the American Redneck scripts. In this context, the issue of Patriotism looms largest, both overtly as a mechanism for displaying ones allegiance to a national power (and, here, Maines violated Patriotism by choosing to be "not-with" the nation) and covertly as a sign of acceptance of the ideals of the less-tangible Redneck Nation that defines contemporary American political/patriotic discourse. The two go hand in hand, of course, as the scripts I'm suggesting require fidelity to the national power as evidence of membership in the ideological Nation, just as full citizenship in the Redneck discourse predicates unwavering allegiance to the U.S. government. In the wake of 9/11, several country stars released hyper-patriotic songs that tapped in to the general American sentiment of shock, anger, even war-readiness: Clint Black's "Iraq and Roll," Alan Jackson's "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)", Darryl Worley's "Have You Forgotten," Chely Wright's "Bumper of my SUV," and of course Toby Keith's aggressive "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue"[1]. Each of these, in its own way, followed the accepted guidelines of the Redneck Nation, as each song

displayed a reaction that expressed emotions and reactions proper for the idealized American citizen. The shock, anger, and latent (or less-than-latent) desire for retribution fit the national zeitgeist perfectly, just as it fit the acceptable conservative parameters of the Redneck scripts in operation. Keith, in fact, became an anthem-writer for the American troops themselves, as his melodic desire to stick a boot in the collective terrorist ass was soon adopted as an unofficial fight song for the nation. Keith himself seemed plenty willing to wave the flag, support the troops, and act the part of the ideal, masculine, aggressive, hetero citizen—an angry white man ready to do battle for the good of the nation. And, even as support of the ongoing war in Iraq declines, the determination for "true" Americans to support the troops, to display fidelity to the homeland, to emphasize and defend good old-fashioned American values, remains steadfast. Put another way, Chevy truck commercials are still on the air.

Enter the Dixie Chicks, who must be considered as tangential citizens of contemporary America, as defined by the scripts of the Redneck Nation, because of their failure to fit the masculine ideal. Still, before the 2003 uproar, the Dixie Chicks fit the scripts just fine, singing their way to the top of country music, even if their brand of country might be a little too bluegrass for the usual mainstream. But so long as the Chicks acted within the accepted parameters of their scripts—as pretty girls singing pretty songs, raising pretty children—they were acceptable citizens. But in going off-book, so to speak, by criticizing the president and his desire to go to war, the Dixie Chicks exposed themselves as deviants from the Redneck Nation. Their resistance, then, immediately called into question their status as citizens. And, in fact, with their lack of maleness already working against them, they were quickly condemned as poseurs to the Redneck Nation and were summarily evicted. That their status could be no more than tangential pre-Shepherds Bush is revealed in the way that criticism against the Dixie Chicks quickly took an ugly gendered turn. Maines was called "The Dixie Bitch," and at least one country music listener called in to a station to offer this advice: "They should send Natalie over to Iraq, strap her to a bomb, and just drop her over Baghdad" (*Shut Up and Sing*). Similarly, the band was re-labeled as the "Dixie Sluts" or "Ditzy Twits," who Pat Buchanan suggested were "the dumbest, dumbest bimbos, with due respect" (*Shut Up and Sing*). That a patriotic snafu could so quickly result in the assignation of status as Bitches, Sluts, Ditzes, and Bimbos displays how tenuous the band's citizenship in the nation had been prior to the flap. Further, that such gendered epithets were so close at hand displays the inherent masculinity and anti-feminism within the script of the Redneck Nation. Any woman who breaks from the standard line is instantly cast as sexualized and empty-headed, removing her ability to offer intelligent debate (after all, she's just a bimbo ditz!) and reaffirming the woman's role as sexual object. Following the script allows temporary relief from or, at least, sublimated patriarchal dominance. Citizenship can only be won, though, by strict submission to the ideals of the Nation; deviance risks banishment and loss of protection.

Most importantly, here, are the scripts themselves, not the authenticity of the actors nor even presidential opposition itself—at least not exactly. The trick of the Redneck Ideal is that it does not require actual membership of social class. As I mentioned before, the phenomena that strikes me most is how individuals assume the role of Redneck despite socio-economic positions that would seem to nullify their inclusion. George Bush, obviously, fits this bill, as his personal image depends heavily on his role as self-acclaimed Redneck. But as Country Music Television chief Brian Philips has said: "There's a real dichotomy between the raising of the son, George W., and the way most of our audience has been raised. But God bless Karl Rove if he was able to connect those two and make people feel like he *was* one of us" (Willman 111). The function of the scripts, then, might be best explained as a sort of Althusserian hailing, where self-assignation as Redneck comes about because of the interpellation enacted by ideological state apparatuses, which creates an "imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (693). So, individuals who are *not* of the marginalized working class recast themselves as such and, more, themselves convert into an apparatus that demands others who are conceived as part of the imagined class act along the lines of the scripts that govern properly inclusive behavior. George Bush, here, might be considered as equally hailed as other individuals, as his presidential policy is restricted by the ideology of the Redneck Ideal: he must follow the guidelines of white, Christian, masculine America. To prove his validity as leader of the United States, he must act within the ideal, thereby offering both model and defense of citizenship. The Dixie Chicks, then, threatened the solidarity of the Ideal, acting from within the culture in opposition to the leader of that culture. Martie Maguire of the Dixie Chicks read it best: "It had to be somebody or some group that seemed like the All-American girls. It was perfect. It had to be the unlikely voice from what looked like the conservative heart of America saying it. That was perfect" (*Shut Up and Sing*). Their greatest threat to the Redneck Ideal was to disrupt the ideological image, to prove that the so-called "conservative heart of America" was a constructed heart, to reveal just how the nation hails its citizens and dictates a particular way of being. That an All-American girl group *could*, in fact, break from the script showed the scripts to be impermanent, which in turn called into question the accepted parameters of citizenship. Interestingly, even as the Dixie Chicks create that disruption, they cannot help but be bound by certain scripts. The documentary *Shut Up and Sing*, which chronicles the group's actions following their controversy, and which is clearly intended as a remediation of their image or, more, as defense of their position, places the women in the group within a clearly feminine ideal. Each is portrayed as mother, as wife, with many family scenes prominently featured. The point seems to be that the Chicks were unduly cast as rabble-rousers, that they actually fit the American ideal. Such is the power of the script: even those who break free from it find themselves inescapably written in.

All of which leads me to WWE wrestling.

And, more specifically, to Jimmy Wang Yang, a character who first appeared on *Friday Night Smackdown* in September of 2006. Jimmy Wang Yang's first appearances were not in the ring, beginning instead with a series of short promo clips that introduced the wrestler to fans. Jimmy—who at first was called Jimmy Wayne Yang, before settling into a more fully-Korean name—serves as what the WWE probably considers a race-bending figure: a Korean-American man who speaks with a southern nasal drawl and proclaims himself to be fully redneck. In his first introductory clip, when he announced himself to the world, he engages his ethnicity, but suggests that he isn't what he seems:

> Howdy. I know what you're all thinkin'. Now I reckon you're all a little confused out there. But I'm not what you think I am. [He pauses to put on his black cowboy hat] I ain't no foreigner. I ain't your stereotype. I ain't no Kung Fu fighter. And to me, chopsticks are just a piece of wood. Mattera fact, there ain't no yeller about me. But there's one color about me. A little red. That's right. I'm a redneck. My name's Jimmy Wang Yang. And I'm your boy. Giddyup. Yee haw (WWE website).

The message is unmistakable, substituting one stereotype for another, but clearly aligning the wrestler with the Redneck Ideal instead of the foreign suspect. He marks himself visually as part of the culture, dressed in the videos in jeans, with the hat, standing in front of a pickup truck. He wears a black leather vest emblazoned on the back with the confederate battle flag. In the ring, he wrestles in a white tank top and blue jean-like trousers and wears a Fu Manchu mustache that presents an odd duality. Historically, such facial hair marks the ethnicity of the Far East, calling to mind stereotyped images of the Mongol warriors or Chinese Kung-Fu masters that Yang denies as his heritage in the video. Yet, at the same time, the Fu Manchu has more recently been adopted as a fairly typical marker of the good old boy. On Jimmy Wang Yang, the mustache could lend either way, reinforcing his Korean ancestry or helping to mark him as the redneck he claims to be. It is through scripting, however, that his appearance becomes unambiguous. He *is* a Redneck, as he proclaims, because he adheres to the expected, stereotypical parameters of the redneck. More, he substitutes—or, in the case of the Fu Manchu, transforms—the stereotypes of the Asian with the stereotypes of the white Southern good old boy, and in so doing eases anxieties that might appear because of his position as a minority within wrestling. In another video, he wonders why Asians are always thought to be good at math, why they are thought to set the curve. "Only curves I know is from my old lady," he says, etching a silhouette in the air with his hands. In twenty seconds, he abdicates his role as stereotypically intelligent Asian, substituting instead a persona of the stereotypically chauvinist redneck, thereby enacting the properly anti-intellectual strain of the Redneck Ideal and proving that he is *not* claiming citizenship as anything other than American.

As a visually obvious minority, Jimmy Wang Yang would not immediately fit the standards of the Redneck Ideal without these "credibility"-establishing establishing videos. Like the Dixie Chicks, Yang's status as minority places him in an always tangential citizenship. But unlike the Chicks, he ameliorates his position and guarantees his "naturalization" as American citizen through scripts that reinforce his desire to be American and proves through actions his willingness to be not not-American. Significantly, prior to assuming the identity of Jimmy Wang Yang, the man in the role wrestled on Smackdown as Akio, an "evil" Japanese wrestler whose unmediated Asianness proved his outsider status and guaranteed his situation as bad guy. He also used to wrestle as part of a trio of Elvis impersonators: there's surely grand significance there, even if it presently escapes me.

Certainly, race is strongly in play with the case of Jimmy Wang Yang, and just as certainly, race is one of the most crucial issues in play with the Redneck Ideal. While scholars like Lucy Jarosz and Victoria Lawson see the construction of the redneck stereotype as a means for middle and upper class whites to deflect the guilt of racism—white racism is explained as "redneck" racism (11)—the self-assignation of Redneck that is so readily apparent in the case of Jimmy Wang Yang serves instead as a way to manage racism, to allow for it without accepting guilt. That is, the Redneck script exacts a strategic move that furthers the agenda of white dominance without accepting blame. Characters like Jimmy Wang Yang don't so much reinforce stereotypes as maintain them, allowing whites to both feel distance from "real" rednecks—since it's Jimmy, after all, doing the stereotyping—and to feel part of the group. The Redneck script maintains the power and prominence of traditional white values. By adopting the stance of "minority," or by showing how a visually obvious minority can be included in the Redneck category, the Redneck can safely assume power without notice or critique. The Redneck becomes both an achieving "minority" and a permanent holder of power.[2]

The Confederate flag on the back of Jimmy Wang Yang's leather vest, then, becomes a visible marker of his acceptance of the Redneck Ideal and a crest of the power of the Ideal. It has literally applied itself to the body of Jimmy Wang Yang, marking him as part of the group and subject to the group's dominance. So just as the ideology hails whites and encourages them to follow the scripts of America, it hails outsiders and shows them the way to find membership in the nation. Only by adopting and accepting that which the Redneck Ideal demands can an individual be accepted into national citizenship. Whether president, country singer, or studio wrestler, proof of American identity is predicated on proof of Redneck participation. And increasingly in American culture, failing to demonstrate status as ideological Redneck means failing to demonstrate worthiness of full inclusion into national cultural citizenship.

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Notes

[1] See Chris Willman's *Rednecks and Bluenecks* for a more detailed explanation of these songs and their function in country music's patriotic reaction to 9/11.

[2] As the faces of the American South continue to change and continue to become more global—a reality commented on by many scholars working within the "New Southern Studies"—Jimmy Wang Yang might be contrasted to Southern immigrant fiction like Roberto Gonzalez's *Holy Radishes* or, more directly, Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge*, which itself explores the Southern reality of Vietnamese immigrants brought to the U.S. after the war. In the face of a growing foreign-born population in the South, it seems notable that the WWE adopted an Asian redneck as its new symbol of the normalized American.

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Gaelic Green and Gaelic Grey: Irish Casinos Not Today, Maybe Tomorrow

PART I: Gaelic Casinos Today: The Color is Grey

Introduction

The tour book said Ireland has 40 shades of green.[1] However, while the casinos of the Emerald Isle do make some money (multi-colored euros, as it were), they all are of one shade only: grey. Such is their legal status. Today.

In October 2007 I made my first venture to one of my ancestral homelands. I had not previously considered going to Ireland because I orient travels around studies of the casino industry. Ireland does not have casinos. Ireland is only one of two European Union countries without casinos—the other is Cyprus. This time I could be "just" a tourist and leave my scholar's notebook at home.

But then it hit me—what wonderful research questions I could ask: Just WHY doesn't Ireland have casinos? And, are there any efforts to bring casinos to Ireland?

In preparation I went to Google. Voila! I had been SO wrong. Entry after entry told me that Ireland DOES have casinos. Further digging revealed that the casinos are not authorized by law; however, they did operate openly as "private member clubs." A 1956 law was clear: houses where gambling games took place are illegal.[2] Slot machines are also illegal. But then the law is not all that clear. There are exceptions, loopholes. Amusement centers can have machines with small prizes, and owners of public houses can permit private games among friends. The games have to give even chances for all players, stakes or fees for playing had to be low, and the game operator could not realize any profits.[3] So the law was clear, yet not so clear.

For decades the spirit of law was followed with only a few card clubs—mostly for poker—operating on its margins, with some amusement halls having slot prizes not fully conforming to the law on prize limits. But the law had not fully accounted for changes in Irish currency from pounds to a decimal system to euros (€).

In the mid-1990s an effort to establish a large casino as part of a tourism-convention complex in Phoenix Park, Dublin, won local government zoning approval, but failed to win enough political support to get to a vote in the Dail (parliament).[4] Only after the turn of the century did serious entrepreneurs and operators seek to exploit the law's loopholes and open "casino clubs."

In 2000 a study report of the government urged that casinos remain illegal.[5] In 2003 the Minister of Justice of Ireland, Michael McDowell, indicated that the "clubs" were indeed illegal; however, because of the vagueness of the 1956 law, it would be difficult to win criminal (beyond a reasonable doubt) convictions. Hence, he indicated he would not seek prosecutions pending changes in the law.[6] His statement was an invitation for a proliferation in the number of clubs.

The expansion of the number of clubs coincided also with the booming popularity of poker gaming throughout Ireland and the world.

With a 180 degree turnabout, in 2006 the same Minister announced that he was going to raid the clubs and close them down. His announcement raised a political firestorm of protest as there were now some 46 clubs around Ireland. Within a week, he backed down and deferred judgment to a newly appointed government study group that would make a report about what should be done with casinos.[7] Their report was written, and it was given to the government in early 2007.[8] The Minister of Justice was defeated in his 2007 reelection bid (for a seat in the Dail), and a new minister, Brian Lenihan, is in his place. He has studied the report, and he has indicated that he will introduce legislation for limited-regulated casinos in 2008.

My Walking Tour of Central Dublin

Before arriving in Dublin, I purchased a city map from my local Barnes and Noble. I plotted addresses of several casino clubs (identified on Google) in Central Dublin. After my Aer Lingus flight landed, my trip began with a walking tour to the sites of eleven casinos.[9] There are an additional dozen casinos in greater Dublin that I missed. Walking Dublin is fun, but there are limits.

The facilities I saw had low-key operations. While they wanted customers, they did not want public attention, lest they might generate negative feelings that could activate new enforcement efforts by the Minister of Justice. Their manner of placement and size reminded me of the legal casino clubs of London. However, they did not meet the standards of ambience found in London clubs; rather they were more like down-market casinos found in hinterlands (the provinces) of England, Wales, and Scotland.

Several casinos were tucked into side streets. Others on major thoroughfares had barely recognizable signs near their doors. The Colossus and Jackpot casinos were on a "Montague" street that was not even on my tourist map. The nearby Mayfair Casino was on Harcourt, a major thoroughfare with government offices. I had to inquire more than one time at local businesses before I found its unnumbered location. It was marked by only a small non-lighted and faded neon sign above a single doorway. The same nondescript entry was found for the 78 Club on Aungier Street, although the casino's website claims that it is the largest table and machine casino in Dublin.[10]

Another "hidden" casino was seeking a more substantial role in the gaming scene. Google told me that the Sporting Emporium was near Grafton Street (a major pedestrian market street near Trinity College and Stephens Green) on Anne's Lane.[11] It took three tries and several inquiries (one resulting in my following directions to a sports wear store) before I found an Anne's Lane off of South Anne Street. There I found a three-story, 12,000 square foot building with a casino facility inside. The building interior is completely new and of a modern style. It has a golf theme with displays of 18th hole green flags signed by winners of tournaments such as the Master's and the British Open. The Sporting

Emporium had opened in October 2005. It represented a €5.5 million ($8 million US) investment of billionaire Dermot Desmond, reputedly the third richest man in Ireland. Desmond is well-plugged in to high government circles. When the facility opened, invited guests included movie personalities as well as Miss World.[12] It may be suggested that the facility was build with the idea that it would be permanent. Two upper floors feature thirty tables—six roulette, eight for blackjack, one each for punto banco and pai gow, and fourteen for poker. There are 112 employees.

The casino is open from 6 p.m. until 6 a.m. Poker tournaments are ongoing. There are no slot machines, nor will there be if the casino expands with legalization. Slots appeal to a market that the Sporting Emporium does not seek. Players must join the club: 33,702 have done so. The club receives about 150 players each week night and 400 each night on weekends. The players are screened for identification purposes, and they must register their identity and submit to a biometric fingerprint scan each time they enter to the casino area. Security cameras are linked directly into the local police department—quite a bold move for a casino without legal standing.[13] The Sporting Emporium does advertise in some major media, but for now they are happy just to be on a side street outside of general public view while they wait for changes in national legislation.[14]

While the Sporting Emporium and other upmarket casinos do not want to have slot machines, several casinos consist almost totally of slots. One is Amusement City on Westmorland Street, a block north of Trinity College. The casino has a large upstairs room with over 100 slot machines. Prizes exceed €1,000. A back downstairs room has five table games. Most of the dealers and players were of Asian background. Since the economic boom of the 1990s began, over 80,000 new Asians have immigrated to Ireland.[15] They are also players at Eden's Quay on the street of that name beside the Liffey River a block from O'Connell Street, the major street of north Dublin. The casino has an upstairs room with machines that is open in the daytime and evenings, and a lower room with tables that is open only in the evening.

The most interesting slot machine palace is Dr. Quirkey's Goodtimes Emporium. It is located on O'Connell Street just a few buildings north of the post office (site of the 1916 Easter Monday Uprising). This facility, owned by Richard Quirke, offers two rooms for slot machine gaming. The upper room has lower prize machines as well as video games. It permits minors on the floor. Many children—with and without parents—were playing money on the machines. The downstairs room offers big prizes and restricts players to those over 18 years. Membership was not required (for me anyway). A battery of six multiplayer roulette machines grosses as much as $8000 a day.[16] The machines attract mostly Asian players.

Three other casinos in central Dublin seek patronage from affluent and even tourist players. Cool Hand Luke's card club is on South Merrion Square (with its notable statue of a reclining Oscar Wilde) near the government buildings

housing the Dail. The casino is owned by Luke Ivory, a top poker player in Ireland. Two floors offer many poker tables as well as blackjack, roulette, brag, and punto banco games. There are 40 employees.[17]

Around the corner is the Fitzwilliam Casino Club. This facility is built into Clifton Hall, a structure that used to be a Catholic Church and nun's residence. Marketing manager David Hinkson hinted that statesman Eamon de Valera just might be rolling in his grave, as the very strict (and anti-gambling) Catholic moralist politician used to come to the building to say morning prayers before going to the Dail to lead parliamentary debates. In 2003 eighteen Dublin businessmen sought to establish a "suitable" place where interested businessmen could play poker.[18]

The club offers tables for several types of poker—Texas hold 'em, Omaha, and Three Card Poker, as well as mahjong, kalooki, blackjack, punto banco, and roulette. There are 21 tables operating on two floors. Each night there is a poker tourney. The casino employees 110 employees and is open 24 hours a day.[19]

Hinkson indicates that the club abides strictly by the 1956 law by requiring very tight membership rules with picture identifications and background checks. Members must be 21 years old. At the non-poker games, one player volunteers to be the "bank," assuring that even odds are given. At poker the table stakes are limited. The casino enforces business rules pertaining to money laundering. They also follow a code of conduct designed by the Gaming and Leisure Association of Ireland, an association founded by its directors of the Fitzwilliam Club in 2006.[20]

In October 2003 international casino manager J.J. Woods launched Ireland's first full fledged casino. In 2000 he had opened a casino called "Macau" on Parnell Street in an area with many Chinese businesses. That was a downmarket facility and is no longer in operation. Woods's new facility was called Silks, themed around horseracing and the colors of the famous racing stables of Ireland. It is located on Earls Fort Terrace amongst foreign embassies and other Georgian mansions, across from the very upmarket Conrad Hotel. Upmarket is the motif as it caters to "high ranking figures from the world of business, media and the horseracing fraternity," and other celebrities. A special opening was attended by celebrities, models, and sports figures. Woods has sought to have a club that could easily fit into the offerings of London's Mayfair with its Ritz, Curzon, and Mayfair casinos.[21]

PART II: Will Irish Casinos Become Legally Green in 2008?

My walking tour ended with me asking my original questions: why have casinos been illegal, and what are the prospects for changing their status? To find out I simply asked people in Ireland, "Why?" From their answers I identified seven major factors to explain the anti-casino position of the Republic of Ireland. For each factor I also identified major changes suggesting that legalization could be forthcoming.

Seven Factors Why Ireland Has Not Had Legal Casinos

The Irish Personality and the "All-In" Spirit

There is an "all-in" spirit that defines much of what is "Irish." Mythical heroes such as Cuchulaiann fought to the death and then kept on fighting. Rebels took to the streets with the odds and well armed enemies stacked against them. And when they won their revolution, many couldn't stop. They started a civil war. An inability to realize the second rule of the Kenny Rogers poker game ("Know when to fold them") might make casino play a very dangerous commodity. Within the Irish a burning desire to fight on remains; but a major change has occurred as well. Ireland was a land of isolation politically, economically, and ethnically until very recently. Now the leadership of the land has opened its doors to world trade and to immigration. A political need to protect the Irish common folk from their own foibles is blended with a realization that growing numbers of the population are eastern Europeans and Asians. Moreover, the Irish can no longer tell themselves to "Let it Ride, we have nothing to lose." There is now much to lose: money.

Poverty and Casino Prospects

While leaders could feel that the Irish may need protection from the effects of their innate personality drives, it could also be suggested that some economic protections would also be appropriate. Casinos work best when they are located to exploit particular markets—markets comprised of people with money. Time and again, I met people who commented "The Irish do not have money, hence there are no casinos." A cab driver offered his opinion that the "Irish don't have money, poor people can't gamble." A government official offered that the law against gambling was in place to "protect the poor."[22]

Ireland had been engulfed in poverty during centuries of colonial domination by the English and by their own leaders who glorified an isolated rural economy. But things have been changing radically. Steps toward development took hold as Ireland joined the European Union in 1973, and decades of international (EU) investment in Irish infrastructure had positive economic results in the 1990s. In the 21st century the country has witnessed levels of prosperity and a new phenomenon: many more immigrants are coming to Ireland than people are leaving.[23]

Irish are becoming heavy spenders. Only in recent years have major investors seen possibilities in cultivating gambling proclivities among the Irish by offering casino games.

Corruption in Politics and Legalized Casinos Do Not Form Good Partnerships

The political attention span of Ireland did not leave much time for things other than the spirit of nationalism until the recent years of prosperity. The consumption of the public mind with "what it is to be Irish" caused interests to neglect efficiency and honest administration in public affairs. Localism, nepotism, and outright corruption left a mark on the body politic.

Office holders became auctioneers, traders, and bargain makers for a variety of commercial interest groups. Their main goal was to put together coalitions of bargainers, so that they could emerge as winners in the elections. They also accepted policies creating government corporations that were used as vehicles for patronage.

In the 1990s the misuse of office was revealed with national tribunals focusing upon several scandals. Irish political scientists Neil Collins and Mary O'Shea documented many of the events and reported an international "Corruption Perception Index" with Ireland ranking 19th of 20 industrial countries on popular beliefs regarding the integrity of government. Deep down leaders must have asked: would this perceived atmosphere of corruption be exacerbated with the establishment of casinos?[24]

Casino consultant J.J. Silks agreed with the premise that Irish casinos might present ideal venues for money laundering and the exchange of money for political favors. As an advocate of legalized casinos he saw a necessity for new laws with regulations and controls over the exchanges of funds in casinos.[25]

As prosperity has replaced poverty, attention has shifted and citizens have begun to expect that leaders will deliver services that are worth the tax moneys they are giving the government. The current inquiries are perhaps making the point clear that corruption is no longer accepted. Leaders are on notice that corrupt acts may result in exposure and ballot repudiations, or more serious consequences.

Moreover, Ireland's participation in the politics of the European Union has required that political officials spend public funds (especially EU grants) responsibly. Funds are monitored and audited by persons outside of Irish government.[26] Political leaders are more reluctant today than they were just a generation ago to participate in overt payoffs that might otherwise be associated with the presence of casinos. Casino gambling no longer offers a major threat to the proper functioning of government.

A Culture of Latent and Manifest Violence

In 1987 I visited the casino in San Sebastian, Spain, located in the Londres Hotel. The casino was empty except for a few machine players. The manager indicated that the casino was failing due to a lack of local players, although it was the only casino in a region (Pais Vasco) of two million. It was in Basque Country. Basque separatists had initiated an active campaign of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and ransom demands, and other guerilla warfare types of activities. People with wealth carefully hid their resources from public view lest they become victims. If they had desired to participate in casino gambling, they ventured to far away places in other countries or to Madrid or Spanish casinos on the Mediterranean coast. The local casino was to be avoided.[27]

The San Sebastian experience serves as a model which casino investors desire to avoid. The model unfortunately has marked parallels with the Irish political milieu of the 20th century. The civil war never totally ended. Even in

modern times, an Irish Republic Army and its political arm Sinn Fein were clandestinely and openly supported by funds from the south and from other places as well, including America. Funds were also secured through bank robberies and kidnappings in the south, as well as demands for protection money. Over the decades, 3,000 persons, most in the North, died in assassinations and bombings.

But perhaps we have entered a new era. The milieu of violence has waned with prosperity and with the influx of new ethic groups. As mentioned above, NOW people have something to lose besides their ethnic dignity (and their lives)—they NOW have money to lose. Moreover, the force of religion on people's lives has abated, making ethic battles less relevant. Peace accords negotiated on Easter Sunday 1998 have taken hold, and while all know that the "Troubles" are long term, there is some real hope that a tranquil, enduring prosperity can be attained. Perhaps a signal has been given out that casino gambling can exist without fear of surrounding violence in both the north and south of Ireland.[28]

No Need to Defend Borders from Neighboring Casinos

High among the list of reasons promoters use to win the legalization of casino gambling in new venues is that neighboring venues have casinos and are taking "our" money away. The story has been told throughout Europe. Italy authorized casinos so that money would not go across the border to Monaco. Netherlands legalized casinos to keep money from going to Germany, Belgium, and France. Luxembourg also authorized a casino to keep local players leaving for these places. France permitted casino slot machines because Germany had slot machines. Finally voters of Switzerland said yes to casinos because the nation had become surrounded by casinos in Italy, France, Germany, and Austria, all of which looked to the Swiss as a primary market for players.

Ireland was not driven to accept casinos, because the Republic had no casinos on its borders. Its sole land border is with Northern Ireland, and that venue has had no casinos. Moreover, the Irish people have endured economic hardships precluding casual recreational travel to other lands which have casinos. Mediterranean beaches filled with Germans and English have until recent year's prosperity been devoid of a major Irish presence. Moreover, the close-by foreign casinos of Scotland, Wales, and Provincial England have been very small facilities that catered to local, not tourist populations. These casinos had little appeal even for affluent Irish as the casinos projected forth an English personality not welcoming for many Irish.

Until the 21st century, Ireland felt little need to have casinos in order to keep Irish gambling money at home. Now this situation has been altered. Two new factors are in play. First, Internet gambling has invaded Ireland as it has every other country of the globe. Ireland courts have interpreted laws to forbid the Internet betting within Ireland. However, legal authorities do permit off-shore service providers to beam their signals into Irish territory. Irish are betting on the Internet. Several advocates wish to legalize casinos which can offer games in a

controlled social atmosphere and take customers away from their computer games.

Additionally, the era of affluence has resulted in many overseas trips for the Irish. Trips abroad are for all kinds of recreational purposes which include casino forays. The appeals of "let's bring the gambling dollars home" may now have a resonance they never had before.

Political Influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland

In Ireland "The" Catholic Church has been an influence dampening efforts to legalize casinos. The power of the Church has been a major force in Irish politics for many centuries. In 1935 Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Eamon de Valera spoke to his nation's relationships with the Church: "Since the coming of St. Patrick, fifteen hundred years ago, Ireland has been a Christian and a Catholic nation. All the ruthless attempts made through the centuries to force her from this allegiance have not shaken her faith."[29]

The influence of the Church over the people was found in part in the large number of clerics vis-à-vis laity. This was a result of economic pressures that propelled masses that had few other viable economic options save emigration to seek out religious vocations. Common folk had many priests and nuns available to observe their daily trifles and to warn them to stay on the proclaimed path toward righteousness. With 1921 Independence, "political Catholicism in Ireland emerged victorious, and Catholic values were very effectively enshrined in the political system." When Eamon de Valera's Fianna Fail government came to power in 1933, it was a movement "zealous in its efforts to ensure that Catholic morality should be enforced by legislation."[30]

Most often the Church did not have to make its positions clear in policy debates. Church views were not openly challenged as political leaders accepted censorship of books and films. The members of the Dail—of both major parties—did the bidding of the Church unasked. Casino gambling legalization was one forbidden territory.

Things began to change as Ireland dropped its economic isolation policies and joined the European Union in 1973. Europe and the world came knocking at the door: at it was a secular world. The influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland cannot be as effective as a political force now in the 21st century as it has been over the past century. The numbers of clergy have been reduced considerably in recent decades. There are other economic options to the priesthood. They no longer have as direct a presence in the daily activities of the people. Attendance at weekly mass is still high relative to the rest of Europe, but attendance numbers have fallen.[31]

The Church's views on issues involving sex, marriage, and gender relations are no longer controlling. The people have accepted divorce, homosexuality, and contraception against the wishes of the Church. The exposure of clergy as abusers in sex scandals involving children and also in scandals involving orphanages has dealt a major blow against the unchallenged reputation the

Church enjoyed in the past. Censorship is at an end. Political leaders can debate casino legalization without fear of lost political support.

Competitive Venues Wishing to Suppress Casinos: Gaming and Non-Gaming

The Irish public has several entertainment venues whose existence could be compromised by the legal casinos. Two stand out: the Irish public house or pub, and the betting shop.

There are 11,000 pubs in Ireland (three times the number per person as in England). They are not owned by the major brewery companies as in England. Many have been in the same families for generations.[32] Pubs have been attacked as has the consumption of alcohol for scores of years, yet they have persisted.

Until recently government efforts to limit drinking, especially drinking at pubs, were futile. However, the influence of the pub as a cultural icon has suffered with a national prosperity that finds people going to off-premise stores and taking alcoholic beverages to their now larger homes where friends and guests gather. Pubs have also lost patronage as laws now ban smoking in public places, and laws now give offenders a zero tolerance for any drinking and operating of motor vehicles. [33]

Betting shops did not emerge as places for social and financial activity until laws provided for off-track betting in 1926. Prior to that time, betting on horse races and other events was banned in places other than tracks. There are now an estimated 1,100 licensed betting shops in Ireland, and unlike the pubs, they are growing in numbers. Moreover, shops are owned by major companies. In the past, their voices were likely to be in the negative regarding casinos. The future offers quite a different situation. The bigger players in the industry, such as Paddy Power and Ladbrooks, are not at all opposed to casinos. Indeed they want to have casinos legalized so that they may participate by owning and operating the casinos.[34]

The Stage for Casinos Is Set

The stage is set, the atmosphere for legalization is right, and proposals for casinos are being made. The Gaming and Leisure Association of Ireland (GLAI) was formed to fight Minister McDowell's efforts to close casinos. But they have gone further as they are advocating a plan for legalization. So too is the new Minister of Justice, Brian Lenihan. The first item on the agenda of the GLAI as to offer the government suggested legislation to legalize the casinos.[35]

The GLAI wants the legal casinos to emphasize social camaraderie by strictly limiting the numbers of machines allowed to three machines per table game. They do not want high stakes slot clubs such as Amusement City and Dr. Quigley's. They do not want the government to become financially dependent upon casino tax revenues, so they proposed that the casino tax (in addition to normal business taxes) would only be one per cent of casino revenues, the same tax rate paid on wagers at the betting shops.

The GLAI wants all matters pertaining to betting limits and hours of play be left up to each casino, and that all personnel involved in gaming to be licensed by the government following receipt of a certificate of personal fitness from the Garda Siochana (police). The GLAI also feels that a new law should have provisions governing Internet gaming so that Irish players would not be required to patronize untaxed and unregulated offshore providers.

In their proposal the number of casinos would not be limited, but the licensing authority would consider market conditions and locations which would avoid residential areas and also be attractive for tourist gamblers. The casinos would be limited in size to 15,000 square feet, with less than half that space for gaming activities. European Union money laundering rules would be followed by the casinos. This is a strong argument for legislation, as the rules now have no effect on casino club activity.[36]

The GLAI has a Code of Practice which they also incorporate into their proposal. The Code calls for financial transparency, video surveillance, and recording of all names and accounts of players. No credit would be given by the casino.[37] The casinos would publicize the dangers of gambling addictions, and they would maintain and enforce a registry for voluntary exclusion of players, in addition to intervening when players show signs of addiction.

Minister Lenihan's plan has yet to be unveiled in all its details. Thus far it is known that it would create a gaming commission to license and regulate the casinos. Casinos could be licensed if they demonstrated solvency as well as having detailed security systems. Moreover, the horse tracks would also be allowed to have licenses.[38]

Is the Time Right For (Legal and Regulated) Irish Casinos?

The political landscape of Ireland has been cleared of serious opposition to casino gambling. Forces of inertia remain, and advocates of casinos must still be careful as they design their policy initiatives so that they do not excite a latent opposition that always lurks to defend any "status quo" situation. It is appropriate to move seriously and openly and "with all due deliberate speed" toward proposals for casinos that may be put forth for consideration by the cabinet, executive, and then the Dail—the national parliament.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas William Thompson

Notes

[1] Rick Steves and Pat O'Connor, *Rick Steves' Ireland 2007*. Emeryville CA: Avalon Travel Publ., p. 40.

[2] Gaming and Lotteries Act (Ireland), 1956.

[3] Interview with Joseph Kelly, Partner A+L Goodbody, Attys, North Wall Quay, Dublin, October 4, 2007.

[4] Interview with Joseph Kelly, above; interview with J.J. Woods , director of Operations, Atlantic Casino Consultants, at Clontarf Castle, Dublin, October 6, 2007; Tom McEnaney, "New Casino Takes a Gamble on Irish Law," *The Sunday Times* (London), October 26, 2003; and Clair Ryan , "The Other National Vice," *Sunday Independent LIFE* (Dublin), March 6, 2005, pp. 23–25.

[5] Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. June, 2000. *Review of the Gaming and Lotteries Acts 1956–1986: Report of the Intergovernmental Group.* Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
[6] Interviews with Joseph Kelly, above, note 4; and J.J. Woods, above, note 4.
[7] Interview with Joseph Kelly, above; and interview with Grainne Bolger, Assistant Principal Officer, Project Development Division, Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform, Dublin, October 5, 2007; and interview with J.J. Woods, above, note 4.
[8] Interview with Grainne Bolger, above, note 7.
[9] Tour conducted October 4–7, 2007, Dublin.
[10] www.dublinevents.com/dublin-casinos/casinoclub-78.php. Visited October 29, 2007.
[11] www.showbizireland.com/news/october05/26-desmond01.stml. Visited October 29, 2007.
[12] Interview with security officer (unnamed), at Sporting Emporium, Dublin, October 5, 2007.
[13] Interview with security officer, above, note 13.
[14] Interview with security officer; above note 13, and J.J. Woods, above, note 4.
[15] Interview with Thomas Graham, Ph. D. Instructor for New York University Dublin Program, October 8, 2007.
[16] Personal visit to casino, October 7, 2007; www.whatswhat.ie/business.php/Dr-Quirkeys-Goodtime-Emporium/8796. Visited October 29, 2007; interview with J.J. Woods, above, note 4.
[17] Interview with John Stewart, Manager, Cool Hand Luke's Casino Club, Merrion Square, Dublin, October 4, 2007.
[18] Interview with David Hinkson, Marketing Director, The Fitzwilliam Casino and Club, Clifton Hall, Dublin, October 4, 2007; www.fitzwilliamcardclub.com. Visited October 29, 2007.
[19] Interview with David Hinkson, above, note 18.
[20] Interview with David Hinkson, above, note 18.
[21] McEaney, above, note 4; interviews with J.J. Woods, above, note 4., visit to Silks, October 29, 2007.
[22] Interview with Michael Walsh, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Dublin, October 5, 2007.
[23] E.g., see: Sean Dorgan. How Ireland Became the Celtic Tiger. The Heritage Foundation. June 23, 2006. http://www.heritage.org/research/worldwidefreedom/bg1945.cfm; Coakley and Gallagher, above, note 37, p. 483.
[24] Neil Collins and Mary O'Shea. 2000. Understanding Corruption in Irish Politics. Cork; Cork Univ. Press. P. 60; see also Deirdre Hennessy.2004. "A Study of Political Corruption in Twentieth Century Ireland." B.A. Dissertation, Department of History, University College, Cork.
[25] Interview with J.J. Woods, above, note 4.
26 Colin Maynard. Audit by SAIs of EU Funds. http://72.14.253.104.Search?q=cache:kre5Wv8XMIMJ:www.nku.ez/seminars/eurosai-pr
[27] Author visited casino January 10, 1987.
[28] Steves and Pat O'Connor, above, note 1, pp. 372–373.
[29] John Coakley and Michael Gallagher. 2005 (4th ed.). *Politics in the Republic of Ireland.* London: Routledge, p. 45.
[30] Terrance Brown. 2004. *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922 to the Present.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p. 116.
[31] Coakley and Gallagher, above, note 29, pp. 46–47.

[32] BBC News May 6, 2007. Changing habits threaten Irish country pubs. http://news.bbc .co.uk/2/hi/business/6625687.stm?Is; http: // www.irelandlogue.com/pubs

[33] E.g. http://historyofalcoholanddrugs.typepad.com/alcohol_and_drugs_history/Ireland/ index.html.

[34] Merrion-Landsbanki. October 30, 2007. Paddy Power Company Update, p.12.

[35] Interview with David Hinkson, above, note 18; and Report of the Gaming and Leisure Association of Ireland (GLAI-0907-001-LCC). 2007.

[36] Interview with David Hinkson, above, note 18, and GLAI, above note 35.

[37] Code of Practice of the GLAI. 2007

[38] Niamh Doohan. Lenihan set to regulate rather than ban casinos. Independent i.e. (national news), December 30, 2007.

Roswell: Communicating Fact and Fiction in Popular Culture

In recent decades the American people have become more cynical about, and more skeptical of, official government statements, and the elected officials' honorable intentions. Thanks to Watergate, the Iran-Contra affair, former President Clinton's various scandals, the Bush administration's assertions of "weapons of mass destruction" as a justification for pre-emptive war, and general comments from officials regarding the outcome in Iraq the public may have good reason to be suspicious—and even a little paranoid—of the government and the military. Scandals, cover-ups, and even conspiracies, no longer shock the jaded American public.

This brings us to what some conspiracy buffs allege, and much of popular culture assumes, to be the greatest conspiracy and cover-up in American history: the Roswell Incident. According to *Time* Magazine, the Roswell Incident is the only time that the U.S. government has (intentionally) gone on record as saying UFOs really exist (*Time*, 1997). Author Charles B. Moore notes that UFO was not always synonymous for extraterrestrial. At one time it simply referred to something observed in the sky that was not a known phenomenon or conventional aircraft. But by the time the Roswell Incident hit the papers, UFO was a common "buzz-word" for flying disc (containing alien visitors).

Roswell, New Mexico is a small city of about 49,000. It once housed a military air base, is the birthplace of Demi Moore, and also boasts the world's largest Mozzarella plant. A nearby town is somewhat famous for its lizard races. But Roswell has them beaten, hands down. Tourists come from all over the world to visit the UFO Museum, and the site of the famous 1947 "crash-landing."

Any researcher attempting a sober study of the UFO phenomenon faces a daunting task. The difficulty arises not only from the incredible amount of material pertaining to UFOs, but also that it is all incredibly one-sided—especially when it pertains to the Roswell Incident. Most of those who have written about this have done so with a very clear agenda: either to prove that the aliens crash-landed on US soil, or to disprove this, dispelling all notions of extraterrestrial visitors, and pooh-poohing all reports of UFOs as ludicrous and wacko. The vast majority of this material seems to be written either by dyed-in-the-wool true believers who will go to any great length to argue their point and make converts, or by narrow-minded skeptical scientists and others determined to debunk the "UFO myth." Some of the latter may be guilty of harboring ulterior motives.

Everybody seems to agree on one thing: something plummeted to Earth near Roswell, New Mexico in June of 1947. Cattle rancher W.W. "Mac" Brazel stumbled onto the strange debris at the Foster Ranch (85 miles northwest of

Roswell) on June 14, 1947 (*Time*, 1997). He later returned with his family, gathered the debris, and took it home. On June 24, 1947—just a few days later and hundreds of miles distant—pilot Kenneth Arnold was flying near Washington State's Cascade Mountains, when he reported seeing nine disk-like objects flying in formation at about 1200 miles per hour (*Time*, 1997). To this day, skeptics have not come up with a plausible explanation for what he saw. Arnold's report seemed to trigger a rash of "UFO sightings" across the country, and by the Fourth of July newspapers everywhere were printing reports of "flying saucers."

Brazel led an isolated life, and kept a separate residence away from his wife and children, on his ranch with no outside means of communication. Apparently he had not heard about the UFO furor until July 5, when he went into the nearby town of Corona and heard the rumors. The next day he reported to Sheriff George Wilcox, saying he thought he had found a "flying disk." Wilcox immediately phoned the Roswell Army Air Field, notifying Major Jesse Marcel, the group intelligence officer. Marcel and counterintelligence corps officer Sheridan Cavitt picked up Brazel and headed out to the ranch to retrieve the debris.

Colonel William Blanchard soon ordered Walter Haut, the 509th's press officer to issue a press release, telling him "we have in our possession a flying saucer. This thing crashed north of Roswell, and we've shipped it all to General Ramey, 8th Air Force at Fort Worth."

The press release read "The many rumors regarding the flying disc became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509th Bomb Group . . . was fortunate enough to gain possession of a disc through the cooperation of one of the local ranchers and the sheriff's office of Chaves County." The release went on to say the wreckage had been transferred to "higher headquarters," according to the July 9, 1947 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle.* The story was picked up by the Associated Press, making news in the *New York Times*, and even the *London Times.*

Several hours later the military issued a new release that the "flying saucer" had turned out to be nothing more than a weather balloon. Most of the major newspapers ran the new slant to the story. A major exception was the *Washington Post.* As Berlitz and Moore note in their book, *The Roswell Incident* (1980) the *Post* referred instead to an imposition of a "news blackout."

In their 1997 book *UFO Crash At Roswell* (curiously with the same title as a1991 book by Randall & Schmitt declaring aliens really did land), Benson Saler, Charles A. Ziegler, and Charles B. Moore discuss the development of a modern myth, and how it compares to other classic myths and legends. Ziegler calls it "a traditional folk motif clothed in modern garb." They discuss the grain of truth contained in the "myth," and tell what they think really happened. Co-author Charles B. Moore was the project engineer for the top-secret Project Mogul. This involved launching balloon trains each carrying three radar reflectors. These were kite-like structures made of paper and tinfoil, with frames

of lightweight sticks. Moore and the other authors profess to believe that a balloon train launched June 4, 1947, carrying three radar reflectors, probably landed on the Foster Ranch.

Ten days after the Roswell incident, Kenneth Arnold reported seeing nine unusual objects flying at high speeds in Washington State. The authors theorize these were either an American secret project, or a novel Soviet aircraft bent on surveillance, "or some more sinister purpose."

This set off the wave of UFO sightings reported in newspapers across the country, leading to the offer of a $3,000 reward for anyone finding and retrieving a UFO. The authors go on to say Brazel probably heard about the reward in the nearby town of Corona, and thought he might be able to collect. After all $3,000 was a lot of money—in fact it would have provided a modest but livable annual wage—back in 1947. Brazel reported to Sheriff Wilcox, who promptly phoned the military. The book states the reason Major Marcel, Col. Blanchard and the rest could not identify it as a weather balloon was that the project was so classified and so top-secret that they did not even know about it. Moore claims Project Mogul was so classified he didn't even know the name of it until 1992. He "theorizes" that when General Ramey and Colonel Dubose saw the wreckage they were probably just as mystified as Marcel and Blanchard, because they had not been briefed either. He claims the purpose of the project was carrying acoustical equipment into the stratosphere to monitor Soviet nuclear tests. He concedes that the military might have deliberately issued misleading statements and attempted a cover-up of sorts, due to the sensitive nature of the tests and the climate of the cold war era.

The authors also blame the media for the agitation, and describe the whole incident as a "funny example of how the flying saucer furor could get the press so excited about a research balloon flight." They conclude the whole Roswell Incident was nothing more than the wreckage of Project Mogul's balloon flight number four, and say the whole thing would have died fifty years ago if it was not for tabloid television reviving the myth. There is at least some truth to this; if you reference the 1972 book *UFOs—A Scientific Debate*, editors Carl Sagan and Thornton Page document a number of well-known UFO sightings, but the Roswell Incident is never referenced once.

Time Magazine also concludes the Roswell Incident would have disappeared for good once the headline "Flying Disk Explained" appeared. "Tranquility returned to Roswell, and three decades would pass before any more excitement was stirred," *Time* relates, until nuclear physicist Stanton Friedman discovered Major Marcel lived near his home in New Brunswick Canada, and still believed the debris he found was extraterrestrial. His research and conclusions led to the book *The Roswell Incident,* and finally to a 1989 episode of the TV show *Unsolved Mysteries,* catapulting the sleepy town of Roswell to its current cult status.

In *UFO Crash at Roswell,* Saler, Ziegler, and Moore conclude the whole thing is a case of mistaken identity perpetuated by the media, and tabloid TV.

They believe the media continue to play an important role reinforcing the Roswell Incident as a myth. They say a story is shaped by the originator first, and then by the media. Some segments accept and push the originator's image; others do a critical evaluation and present an alternate version. Tabloids reach a few million people, and television reaches tens of millions. Newspapers only reach a few hundred thousand. So when the predominate image projected by the media is the tabloid/TV image people begin to accept the flying saucer crashed from outer space image as reality.

In the 80s and 90s New Mexico Congressman Steven Schiff, physicist Bruce Maccabee, and various groups interested in UFOs petitioned the US General Accounting office, the US Air Force, the FBI, and other government agencies to release all documents pertaining to UFOs and the Roswell Incident under the Freedom of Information Act. Saler, Ziegler, and Moore state that in the1000 pages of documents dredged up and released in 1995, there is no saucer, there are no bodies, and there is no cover-up. They complain that the ongoing UFO investigation has wasted hours and hours of government time, costing the taxpayers thousands and thousands of dollars, producing nothing substantial.

Not so, according to Berlitz and Moore in *The Roswell Incident*. One of the notes contained in the 1000 pages of documents, according to the authors, is a memo from former FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover: "Memorandum for Mr. Ladd . . . it has been established that the flying discs are not the result of any Army or Navy experiments, the matter is of interest to the FBI." Added to the bottom of the memo, in Hoover's own handwriting, is: "I would do it but before agreeing to it we must insist upon full access to discs recovered. . . . the Army grabbed it and would not let us have it for cursory examination."

The May 1, 1983 edition of a Midwestern newspaper, the Springfield (MO.) *News-Leader* ran a United Press International article, with a Washington byline, and a headline reading "U.S. had real interest in UFOs, data shows." The article went on to say "Declassified government documents indicate that despite public comments to the contrary, officials took seriously some reports of UFOs and mysterious lights that danced around the Southwest and elsewhere. The recent declassified material also includes the revelation that Air Force investigators reported three 'so-called' flying saucers—each of them occupied by three bodies of human shape but 3 feet tall—were recovered in New Mexico in 1950." It says the documents detail encounters with UFOs from the 1947 discovery of a "flying disc" near Roswell, to the 1980 reports of mysterious objects landing at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. The FBI document about the three crashed "saucers" with humanoid bodies reportedly speculated they might have crashed because of high-powered government radar. While the Springfield paper perhaps did not have the highest standards of journalistic integrity in the country, it attributed this information to the UPI wire service.

More "evidence" about the Roswell Incident has surfaced in recent years. In 1991 science fiction author Kevin Randle, and Center for UFO Studies investigator Don Schmitt published *UFO Crash at Roswell*, introducing new

witnesses including former Roswell mortician Glenn Dennis, who claims he received inquiries from the air base about the availability of numerous child-size coffins, and procedures for embalming bodies that had been exposed to the weather for several days. Springfield MO. resident Gerald Anderson also came forth and spoke about what he remembered from when he was five years old living with his family in New Mexico in 1947. In an interview with the Springfield *News-Leader*, he stated: "We all went up . . . to it (a large silver disk). There were three creatures, three bodies, lying on the ground underneath this thing in the shade. Two weren't moving, and the third one obviously was having trouble breathing, like when you have broken ribs. There was a fourth one (that) . . . apparently had been giving first aid to the others." Then, Anderson claims, the military arrived, warned everybody this was top secret, to forget what they saw, and "unceremoniously" ushered everybody away.

The skeptic's choice *UFO Crash at Roswell* (Saler, Ziegler & Moore; 1997) concedes Anderson agreed to and passed a lie detector test about his viewing the crashed saucer with the alien bodies, but also notes he was only five years old at the time and said in his original statement that at first he thought they were "plastic dolls." The authors go on to say that looking like "plastic dolls" is a strange way to describe dead aliens, and that what he really saw were the anthropomorphic test dummies that the military was allegedly dropping from weather balloons in the mid 1950s. In *Case Closed*, the 1997 Air Force report on Roswell, Captain James McAndrew critiques Anderson's testimony. He says when he first saw the craft he thought it was a "blimp," and "he didn't really get very close," but thought he saw four bandaged crew members and at first thought they were "plastic dolls." He also described attempts by persons in his party to communicate with one of the "crew members." Soon after, other civilians arrived, followed by military personnel "screaming and hollering" to the civilians "this is a military secret," started recovery of the alien craft and crew. Anderson also says he recalled the military threatening civilians with imprisonment or death before escorting them out of the area.

McAndrew's official rebuttal states the terms "blimp" to describe the crashed vehicle and "dolls" to describe the crew "suggests that a balloon with an anthropomorphic dummy payload" was the foundation for this testimony. He also "concludes" that his assertion "they were all wearing one-piece suits . . . a shiny silverish-gray color, trimmed in . . . maroon-like cording" is probably a reference to a standard issue, gray, Air Force flight-suit used to outfit the dummies and red duct tape used in the tests to prevent air from filling the flight suits. His recollection that they had "bandages" on their bodies were probably refers to the tape and nylon webbing used to prevent flailing of the dummy's arms and legs, McAndrew documented. He said the "bandages" were probably the chest and shoulder straps for the dummies' parachutes.

The report questions the validity of Anderson's testimony, because of his age at the time, and because he states "he didn't really get very close." But it goes on to explain every detail of everything he saw seemed to be accurate, but

was just misinterpreted. The only part of the testimony McAndrew really takes issue with is the part about the military threatening civilians and ordering them out because it was top secret. He claims the military would have never acted in such an unscrupulous, unprofessional manner, and that to go around yelling that something is top secret would have been counterproductive. *Case Closed* zeroes in on the fact that Anderson described the "bodies" as looking like "plastic dolls" from a distance, but doesn't address the fact that he said one of the adults in the party was trying to communicate with one of them, or that in other interviews he has said it appeared that one of them was injured, but still breathing.

Case Closed marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Roswell Incident, and the military hoped this would put an end to all the speculation and inquiries. Military officials appeared on TV answering questions, and reiterating that the Roswell Incident was a combination of Air Force activities occurring over a period of many years, now consolidated and represented to have occurred in 1947. They claimed the "alien bodies" were merely the anthropomorphic test dummies dropped from balloons in the mid 1950s. And they responded to the question of the "aliens" being put into body bags as merely being a protective measure to protect the dummies. They also noted some of the reports of alien bodies could have resulted from a 1956 aircraft accident in which 11 crew members lost their lives, and a 1959 manned balloon mishap in which two Air Force pilots were injured. Captain McAndrew claims most of the reports relating to the Roswell Incident come from Project Mogul, the Army Air Forces balloon-borne research project. His report states most of these records were never classified, were publicly available, and published in one volume for ease of access for the general public. This is a direct contradiction to Charles B. Moore's statements that the project was so top secret and classified that he did not even know the name of it until 1992.

Is the Roswell Incident merely a modern myth or is there more to it? Is it merely an example of symbolic convergence, or fantasy theming? This phenomenon was first described by Ernest Bormann, and involves a kind of group fantasy that seems to have universal themes, common to all cultures. Benson Saler writes of Roswell as a kind of religion, and the book *UFO Crash at Roswell* (1997) describes how the Roswell Incident cannot be disproven. If it is not disproven, then it is true. If it is disproven, that is merely the result of a government conspiracy and it is true anyway. How seriously should we take the divergent arguments? It does seem unlikely that the military's top brass would fail to recognize the remnants of one of their own weather balloons, and have to ship the debris to Texas to have it analyzed. It strains credulity somewhat that the "alien bodies" people reported seeing in Roswell were really test dummies dropped five or ten years later; but then everything about Roswell is a bit of a stretch. The official information and explanations that the military has put out seems almost as far-fetched as the tall-tales the people of Roswell are telling. So the question again is, how seriously should we take all this?

Astronomer Carl Sagan believes that there is a strong probability that there are about a million other stars with planets housing advanced civilizations, even though he thinks the odds that extraterrestrials are currently visiting our planet are fairly slim. Astronauts Buzz Aldrin and others have reportedly seen UFOs while in space, and Aldrin even photographed one on the center rim of a moon crater, according to the *Roswell Incident*, but NASA would not release the photos. Conservative Senator Barry Goldwater, of Arizona, who was also an Air Force General, reportedly went to Wright-Patterson Air Base to see his friend General Curtis Le May, asking to view the "Blue Room" where UFO artifacts were kept. Gen. Le May's response, according to Goldwater's statements in *The Roswell Incident*, was "hell no, I can't go, you can't go, and don't ever ask me again." President Eisenhower was rumored to have visited Muroc to examine the alien bodies on February 20, 1954, but this story is unsubstantiated and may be incorrect. The Majestic 12 document pertaining to Eisenhower has been exposed as a fake. But apparently Eisenhower did disappear from his press corps and entourage on that date. Press Secretary James Haggerty was hastily summoned to make a statement. Merriman Smith of the United Press reported that the President had been taken for "medical treatment," and the Associated Press even flashed on their wire that President Eisenhower was dead, only to retract it moments later. When Haggerty showed up he denounced it as "a demonstration of journalistic mob hysteria," and announced he'd merely knocked a cap off of his tooth. But did he really sneak off to view alien bodies?

President Carter announced he had once seen a UFO, and promised to release all government documents pertaining to UFOs, only to renege on his pledge once he took office. In April 1977 the *U.S. News and World Report* said before the year was out "the government—perhaps the President—is expected to make what are described as 'unsettling disclosures' about UFOs. Such revelations, based on information from the CIA would be a reversal of official policy that in the past has downgraded UFO incidents." *The Day After Roswell*, a book written by Philip J. Corso, a retired Army-intelligence officer, and former member of Strom Thurmond's staff, claims that Ronald Reagan's whole "Star Wars" Strategic Defense Initiative was not really concerned with the Soviets, but really designed to protect us from alien space invaders.

This certainly sounds far-fetched, but there may be more substance to Corso's claim than one would think. Reagan's press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, included in his memoirs (Fitzwater, 2000) the astonishing (but almost completely ignored) comment that in speaking on SDI, Reagan had wanted to refer to the "prospect of an alien force threatening earth from space." On two separate occasions, Fitzwater revealed, Reagan's staff had to excise such references from the president's written speeches. Fitzwater noted that Reagan had a vision of all countries on earth joining together to defeat alien invaders. President Reagan was thus either less grounded in reality than even his critics thought, or more visionary and perceptive than even his most ardent adherents knew!

In December of 1995 on a state visit to Belfast Ireland, President Clinton was asked if an alien spacecraft really landed in Roswell and he responded "no, as far as I know, an alien spacecraft did not crash in Roswell New Mexico, in 1947. (Laughter.) And . . . if the United States Air Force did recover alien bodies, they didn't tell me about it either, and I want to know." (*Time*, 1997)

So what did happen? Did the government really cover up the Roswell Incident? If it did, was it to protect military secrets, or were officials really covering up an alien landing? Is it even possible for anybody now to be really sure what happened after years of confusion and obfuscation? It seems certain that the government took the UFO threat seriously, at least for a while. In the Sagan book, James E. McDonald writes "What I find scientifically dismaying is that while a large body of UFO evidence seems to point in no other direction than the extraterrestrial hypothesis . . . that possibility is going unconsidered by the scientific community because this entire problem has been imputed to be little more than a nonsense matter unworthy of serious scientific attention."

It is hard if not impossible to get to the truth of the matter. Do the documents released under the Freedom of Information Act really confirm that extraterrestrial visitors crash-landed here? Some people want desperately to believe, while others simply rule out any possibility. Without wading through thousands and thousands of pages of documents yourself, it seems to depend on whose literature you read, and upon whom you believe. The Truth is out there, but you really have to search for it—and even then for most people the conclusion likely would be more a matter of mindset than of solid evidence.

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Becoming Texas: The Fusion of Regional Identities in San Angelo's Popular Culture

The city of San Angelo, Texas, has recently received national media attention as the setting of the custody hearings for the children from the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints compound in Eldorado, located 65 miles to the south, and the place where these children were temporarily housed at Fort Concho, San Angelo's historic 19th century Western fort. Nevertheless, even though greater San Angelo (the city and the adjoining community of Grape Creek) has a population of around 100,000, few Americans (or for that matter, Texans) who live on or east of the Interstate 35 corridor, can place San Angelo on a map. Texans' lack of familiarity with the city or its vicinity seems singularly strange given that most know of Sonora, Texas—a town of just under 3,000—because of the caverns there and because it is on Interstate 10, and of Abilene, a slightly larger city of 116,000—located on Interstate 20—yet many have apparently never even heard of San Angelo, located right between them—85 miles north of the former and 85 miles south of the latter. Of course, for many Texans, especially for the state's majority of "Texas Hill Country" enthusiasts, it would only take finding out that San Angelo is in the west part of Texas to lead them to assume that the city must be as barren of vegetation, windy, and dusty as the high plains or the rolling plains to its north, the Permian Basin to its west, or the arid rangeland to its south where the Yearning for Zion Ranch is located and the 2007 film, *No Country for Old Men*, based on Cormac McCarthy's 2005 novel of the same name, is set.

Anyone who travels to San Angelo, however, will find a surprisingly wooded pocket of Texas within a more arid surrounding landscape. The city was built at the fork of the branches of the Concho River, and therefore features pecan trees, evergreen oaks, and abundant vegetation. Moreover, geographically, the city and its river valley is in the northwestern part of the Edwards Plateau, the geological formation that created the hills in central Texas ("Texas Hill Country" being just the vernacular name for the southeastern part of the plateau where the hills and rivers are most concentrated), and thus, it is technically the western part of the watershed of that beloved river region though it is not definitively identified with it in Texas popular culture or, oddly enough, with any other part of Texas. Nonetheless, for its citizens, San Angelo's "place" in the cultural landscape of Texas—its collective popular culture identity—is fascinatingly ambiguous and pliable, making this city an ideal case for studying both the limitations and creative potential of regional identification through popular culture within the nation and within individual states.

San Angelo's popular culture has come to embrace a multi-regional Texan identity because the city is located in a marginal zone just outside of multiple, well-defined geographical and cultural borders: the border between the

Southwest and the South within the U.S. and the four-corner borders dividing the Texas Oil Country (the Permian Basin, which comprises another larger portion of the northwest area of the Edwards Plateau) to the northwest, the Texas Hill Country (the southeastern Edwards Plateau) to the southeast, the Rolling Plains to the northeast, and the high desert mountains (the Chihuahua Desert/Big Bend area) to the southwest within the state. The east-west poles of this plus-shaped border region constitute, roughly speaking, the internal border between the American Southwest and South, given that the Pecos River, about 110 miles west of San Angelo, is the famous late 19th century frontier dividing line between "civilization" and the lawless frontier. Thus, this desert region, as well as the Permian Basin (the southern portion of which lies within this desert region), are associated with a clearly Western symbolism, while the other two regions—the rolling plains and the Hill Country are more Southern in their cultural associations because of their agricultural emphasis on cotton and, in the eastern part of the Hill Country, the antebellum use of slavery to produce it.[1]

San Angelo is not one of the "border" cities or towns located near the edge of, yet clearly within, the confines of any of these regions. Mertzon, Texas, population 830, which is just 26 miles west of San Angelo, is the eastern border town of the Texas Oil Country closest to San Angelo; Abilene, 85 miles north of San Angelo, is the border city that marks the southern edge of the rolling plains; Christoval, Texas, population 450 (including, until a few years ago, Colby Donaldson of *Survivor* fame), located just 20 miles south of San Angelo and also in Tom Green County, is the town that marks the northwestern border of the Texas Hill Country; and Fort Stockton, about 160 miles southwest of San Angelo, is often called the border city of—or "the gateway" to—the Big Bend/Chihuahua Desert Mountain region.

Instead, San Angelo is located in a swath of territory, an isolated river valley (the Concho Valley), located in the zone just beyond the edges of these several converging borders. Much of the city's and the Concho Valley region's popular culture is thereby undetermined and open-ended, absorbing some aspects of all of these regional identities. In the next 100 years or so, San Angelo may be truly subsumed into the Chihuahua Desert because of global warming, but, despite a pattern of recent droughts here and in the rest of Texas, San Angelo's climate is still semi-arid. (Even as some maps of the Chihuahua Desert show it moving east of the Pecos River, it still spans only to a point some 50 or 60 miles west of San Angelo.)

Unfortunately, this geographical marginality prevents San Angelo from projecting a definitive regional identity that would make the city and the Concho Valley known throughout Texas. San Angelo has gained a unique local benefit, however, from its regional marginality within the state: Confronted with the grab bag of potential regional Texas identities, San Angelo paradoxically projects an identity that blends four of Texas's regional identities into a single, undiluted Texan identity. In fact, in residents' collective imagination, as

reflected in several venues of its popular culture, San Angelo is perhaps the most resolutely Texan of cities. The images found in San Angelo's Chamber of Commerce publications, in the advertisements of local businesses and social groups, and in representations of local celebrities imply that San Angelo is the state's popular culture center, what one could call the "Texasmost" city in popular culture—the popular culture complement to Fort Worth, the *historically* "Texasmost" city (as Leonard Sanders has claimed the latter city to be[2]).

Relying on San Angelo's central location, about 70 miles from the geographical midpoint of the state, San Angelo residents use popular culture to associate the city with the most iconically Texan of these four regions' enterprises: the cotton farming of the plains, the cattle ranching of the Hill Country, the oil production of the Permian Basin, and, of course, Texas frontier and cowboy tourism, which aims to capture the rugged beauty and romance of the trans Pecos (i.e., west of the Pecos River) desert region. In short, San Angelo and the Concho Valley have some cotton farming typical of the rolling plains, some oil production (though not as much as the counties immediately west), some cattle ranching like the Hill Country, though sheep and goat ranching are more profitable here, and some desert mountain scenery similar to the northeastern portion of the Chihuahua Desert. This early and continuing financial stake in so many facets of the Texas economy, despite the city's location on the margins of the regions from which these economic resources originate, has become the basis for the multi-regional, yet determinedly unified Texan popular culture of the city.

San Angelo's popular culture is full of striking images of the symbolism of all four regions. For example, prominent restaurants include Southern franchises—Luby's, Kettle Country Café, and Grandy's, which feature Southern cuisine, as well as several local Southern style restaurants, a particular favorite being Mr. T's, a neighborhood place that serves Southern food as well as Texan/Western dishes, such as chili and King Ranch Chicken. Perhaps even more noticeable is the abundance of Southern plantation-style architecture characteristic of the Deep South. In two neighborhoods, one downtown and one just across the river, built from the 1920s to the 1940s, several large houses with enormous white columns and romantic live oak trees in the yards are found mixed in with Southwestern adobe-style houses with red tile roofs, and Texas Hill Country stone houses.

Moreover, several businesses use Southern names, such as the Dixie Hardware Company, Southwind Construction, and Goin' South Storage, not to mention the entire section of town named Southland, with dozens of businesses using that name there. Tom Green County (for which San Angelo is the county seat) is named after the famous Texas Confederate brigadier general, and one of the main streets in the city, Beauregard Avenue, is named for another confederate general. One of the city's middle schools is named for Robert E. Lee, as is an entire small town just 31 miles to the north of San Angelo. Many

people here, especially people 40 and older, self-identify as Southerners. This group has decidedly Southern accents. They listen to popular Nashville country music on the four country radio stations here. Also notable are the 18 Southern Baptist churches, and the dozens of other Southern-based Christian churches, including the Tree of Life church, whose handsome, charismatic pastor has doubled as a televangelist on local television. Thus, despite the historical fact that the frontier town of San Angelo was not settled by Southern Anglo-Americans until a generation after the end of the Civil War, the city's Southern identity is highly visible, and audible.

Just as noticeably, however, the city projects itself as part of the Texas mountain region of the Chihuahuan Desert, the home in the nation's imagination to sublime sunsets over rugged mountains, frontier forts, cowboys, outlaws, bordellos, cactuses, and twisted mesquite trees.[3] While the physical landscape partly justifies this regional identification—San Angelo does have two buttes and a few small ridges within view, and ample growth of a variety of cactuses as well as mesquite—the popular culture is far more liberally sprinkled with these interrelated images than the physical geography merits. Images of cactuses abound in local advertising, including even Saguaro cactuses, a species that grows only in the high desert of Southern Arizona, as if the city were truly in a desert region.

Similarly, fantasy visions of the area's two buttes abound throughout the city in popular culture images. The buttes are frequently called the "twin mountains" and are represented as much larger than they are. In fact, in the popular imagination, as in the logo for San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo, they have undergone what one could call butte augmentation.[4] And just as San Angeloans are proud of their buttes, they are proud of their less fantastical frontier past, the time when the fledgling town was a prominent player in the Indian Wars, the open range cattle drives, buffalo hunting, and the outlaw entertainment industries of gambling and prostitution. The city has one of the best preserved and restored cavalry forts in the American West, Fort Concho, which was the home to several of the famous African American regiments (called Buffalo soldiers by the American Indians they fought). And one of the city's other main tourist attraction is Miss Hattie's, a restored upscale bordello that once catered to the officers at the fort and continued in operation into the 1950s, and which, through a series of secret passages connecting the bordello to an adjoining bank, allowed local politicians and other influential citizens to enjoy the hospitality of the establishment.

Predictably, the Southern Christian aspect of the San Angeloan identity causes many here to be chagrined about the "sinful" past of the city, as well as the present-day adult entertainment venues. For example, a few years ago, the charismatic Southern televangelist described above used some of his church's money for a large billboard in the parking lot of a strip club then called "Infinity," on which he informed the patrons of the club and other passersby that

only Jesus Christ can take us "to infinity and beyond." Here in this very parking lot Southern Christian values clashed with Wild West immorality (with a little rhetorical inspiration from Disney's Buzz Lightyear!).

The majority of San Angeloans, who are of European-American descent, are also ambiguously connected to the Hispanic implications of San Angelo's Chihuahua desert region identification. The city is approximately 25 percent Hispanic, and many of the Mexican-Americans here have active family connections to the Mexican state of Chihuahua. Moreover, San Angelo has a Hispanic name. The city was originally named Santa Angela, in honor of the city's founder's late wife, a Mexican-American woman from San Antonio who died before her husband came to San Angelo. Almost immediately, however, the English speakers of San Angelo muddled the correct Spanish of the original name and began to call the new town San Angela, which was "corrected" to San Angel*o* when the town was granted its first post office. Now, many Anglo residents call the city either Sanangelo (one word, pronounced SaNANgelo) or just Angelo, as in Angelo State University. The same kind of alteration occurred with the name of the Concho River—the correct Spanish word is concha. Nevertheless, San Angelo's European-American residents patronize the dozens of excellent Mexican restaurants, the city supports a Mexican-American radio station, and even in the most prestigious Anglo neighborhood, one of the wealthiest streets retains the original Hispanic name—Paseo de Vaca (cow path)—to commemorate the time when the street was literally a path used by Mexican vaqueros (cowboys) to bring cattle to the river.

The Permian Basin Texas Oil Country enters into San Angelo's popular culture in an even more qualified, though clearly recognizable, manner. The city's older, wealthier neighborhood that Paseo de Vaca winds through and in which the many antebellum style homes mentioned above are located, is named Santa Rita after the famous oil well, Santa Rita #1, located on University of Texas land in Reagan County (just west of Tom Green County, just thirty miles southwest of San Angelo itself). Moreover, Ira Yates, the famous original owner of the Yates Oil Field in Pecos County, who became a millionaire almost overnight in 1926, was, several years before his oil discovery, a cattleman and a city marshal in San Angelo, afterwards becoming a philanthropist in the city. Indeed, much of San Angelo's wealth came from the oil boom of the 1920s. The Transcontinental Oil Company had a West Texas office here during that period. The Santa Rita neighborhood was built during that time, and the city's connections to oil wealth are imprinted on the grandeur of its homes.

Nonetheless, in San Angelo's current product advertisements and the city's representation by the Tourist Welcome Center and the associated Chamber of Commerce, this aspect of the city's identity—its connection to Texas Oil Country—is not presented as nostalgically or idealistically as the others. Oil industry suppliers are located here, and they advertise their products with appropriate graphics of oil derricks and cricket pumps, but only one other

institution, an insurance company, uses the images for regional flavor.[5] This moral discomfort with the oilman and the machinery around him is, of course, native to Texas itself, as the classic 1950s movie *Giant*, and the 1960s movie *Hud*, based on Texan Larry McMurtry's 1961 novel, *Horseman Pass By*, demonstrate.

San Angelo is far more comfortable and emotionally attached to its "Texas Hill Country" identification, as well as to its Southwestern identity. Competing icon for icon with Southwestern/Texas desert mountain imagery in the city's popular culture is the imagery of the "Hill Country"—the spring-fed creeks, scenic rivers, weathered stone houses, limestone, cedar, metal windmills, and abundant evergreen oaks. That the Concho River happens to have mussels in it that produce pink and purplish pearls facilitates our deep attachment to the river culture of the Texas Hill Country as well.[6] San Angelo's landscape is not as rolling (the geographical term is "dissected") as it becomes just 20 miles southeast of the city in southern Tom Green County, but clearly the people of San Angelo are happy to be as close in distance and thus in spirit to the Texas Hill Country as we are. The Hill Country has a special home-like quality in Texas popular culture, as David Syring's 2000 cultural study of the region elaborates:

> The Hill Country is where most Texans would choose to live if they could pick anywhere in the state. If you come from East Texas . . . you love the feeling of space and openness the region gives. . . . When you approach the area from the west, the small, well-kept towns remind you civilization does exist in Texas, and the startling sight of spring-fed streams and rivers soaks into you like a cold drink for your parched West Texas soul.[7]

Thus, it is not surprising that the Texas Hill Country's landscape and cattle ranching ideal are found everywhere in advertisements and other logos, and that Hill Country images seem to be particularly central in apartment complexes' signage and advertisements.[8]

The shared ethnic background of the white population here is an important connector of the city and the Texas Hill Country region—the same mix of Southerners with mainly English, Irish, and Scottish ancestry from the mountain regions of the South (generally Tennessee, Arkansas, and Missouri) as well as mid-19th century German and Czech immigrants originally settled both San Angelo and the Texas Hill Country. As Fredericksburg, the best known of the German-American settlements in the Hill Country, still celebrates its Oktoberfest in honor of its ethnic heritage, San Angelo and neighboring towns stage annual Czech heritage celebrations. Moreover, one of the main attractions of the city's historic downtown area is Eggemeyer's General Store, with its

charming German name, where German hams and Czech and Polish fine pottery are abundantly displayed.[9]

Significantly, however, the shared major industry of the "Texas Hill Country" and the Concho Valley, ranching, is practiced differently in the two regions. Though the Concho Valley supports some cattle ranching, the region is in fact an international leader in sheep and goat ranching. Cattle are not as well suited to the Concho Valley's vegetation, which is tougher and sparser than that of the wetter Texas Hill Country. However, this fact does not deter the cattle ranching image from dominating the popular culture of the city. As in the Hill Country and the rest of Texas, steakhouses are a mainstay of the restaurant industry. Likewise, in a symbolic gesture, the city secured part of the official State of Texas Longhorn cattle herd to be kept in San Angelo State Park.[10]

Photographs of cattle and cowboys can be seen throughout the city's public spaces and publications, and, although the area's cattle ranching industry has shrunk because of the recent longstanding drought, which has abated only in the past few years, the San Angelo Rodeo has expanded. The cash prizes now offered rival or exceed those offered by the major Western rodeos (including San Antonio), and thus San Angelo is attracting the best rodeo talent from around the country. [11] The two-week event is covered extensively by the news media, and the schools are closed on the final Friday of the event so that teachers and students can attend.

This showcasing of the rodeo supports the most crucial claim of this argument—that San Angelo, has posited a compensatory, unambiguously Texan identity to counter the multiplicity of its marginal, multi-regional identity. The city's Chamber of Commerce has dubbed San Angelo "The Shining Star of Texas," and, in the past decade one of the most recently well-known representative groups of Mexican-American popular culture and two of the most prominent representative individuals of Anglo Texas popular culture are from the Concho Valley: respectively, the band Los Lonely Boys, writer Elmer Kelton, and reality-show star Colby Donaldson.

Most notable is the recent rapid rise to fame by the Grammy-winning Latino-rock fusion band, Los Lonely Boys, three brothers who have been mentored by Texas music icon Willie Nelson and who have been compared by music critics to their legendary Chicano predecessors, Los Lobos, who emerged out of Southern California, a region that vies with Texas as the center of Mexican-American culture. The Los Lonely Boys web site highlights the brothers' San Angelo affiliation, describing the Texican Chop Shop, a "rebuilt/custom car business," owned jointly by the brothers and a childhood friend. The site suggests that one day the brothers will move permanently back to San Angelo: "it's not hard to imagine them hanging out there in the garage someday playing their guitars surrounded by grandkids."[12]

Similarly, one of the most prolific Texan Western writers, Elmer Kelton, is a San Angeloan. The author of 46 popular Texas Western genre novels, he is a

four-time winner of the Western Heritage Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, was voted "All-Time Best Western Author" by the Western Writers of America, and according to Texas Governor Rick Perry, "is truly a Texas Legend." His photograph taken at historic Fort Concho, as well as the accompanying feature on his writings, in the San Angelo's Chamber of Commerce's 2006–2007 magazine, *Images of San Angelo*, demonstrate the city's regional identification with his quintessentially Texan image.[13]

Moreover, it is entirely logical to Concho Valley residents that Christoval native, Donaldson of *Survivor* (Australia) notoriety, had perhaps more than the requisite, proverbial 15 minutes of fame because of his handsome representation of all things Texan. As he himself famously announced during his run on the reality show: "When I wake up in the morning, there are two things I'm thankful for: One that I'm alive and the second that I'm a Texan."[14] When Donaldson used the large Texas flag, one of the few items he had selected to take with him into the wilderness, as a tent to shelter his team members, he demonstrated his uniquely Texan appeal not only to American popular culture but also to the Texan popular culture that San Angelo defines itself by. Indeed, female fans of Donaldson from San Angelo have confessed to me that they became teary-eyed when he unfolded his Texas flag.

These tears suggest the impulse behind the unusual abundance of Texas flags and Texas state shapes one sees all over San Angelo in commercial and private spaces. Like the rest of Texas, San Angelo's cultural and commercial popular culture is festooned with icons focusing on the shape of the state of Texas or featuring the state flag. As Richard Francaviglia has argued so persuasively, Texans have learned to attach many values related to state identity to the outline shape of their state. Calling this phenomenon "Tex-map mania," Francaviglia has posited that the horizontally substantial, graphically balanced, and immediately recognizable map shape of Texas represents to Texans (and most Americans) the literal and figurative "expansiveness" of the state—its large, territorial dimensions and the audaciously big ideas/ambitions associated in state and national popular culture with its early settlers and later residents—"remind[ing] us that Texas is both space and place" and projecting a "unity of what are, in reality, disparate [regional] Texas identities."[15]

It's hard to prove absolutely that San Angelo's commercial and other forms of popular culture feature more images of the flag or the map of the state of Texas than any other Texas city, but one senses that there could hardly be more. From contractors, to air conditioning companies, realtors, clogging groups, etc., the Texas state flag and shape of the state abounds in local marketing throughout the city.[16] Though many Texans east of the I-35 corridor do not even know where San Angelo is, these ubiquitous Texas shapes show that San Angelo posits itself in its popular culture as the essence of Texas, reveling in both its urban embodiment of an idealized Texan place and its geographical location in the center of a yet-to-be-developed, expansive space, symbolic of future cultural

and economic endeavor. Indeed, this city's positing of itself as the central point of a fusion of regional Texas identities demonstrates that its citizens have sought to create a place that illustrates Doreen Massey's notion of place as not an "inward looking enclosure," but "a subset of the interactions which constitute space, a local articulation within the wider whole."[17]

This fusion of Texas identity surfaces in the rapidly growing popular music scene in San Angelo. Blaine's Pub, a local bar, has become a center for Texas music, a subcategory of country music that defines itself as an alternative to Nashville country music, since the pub opened 10 years ago. Texas acts, such as Pat Green and Cooder Graw, find the San Angelo crowd invigoratingly focused on their (Texan) vibe.[18] The latest, even more explicitly Texan music venue and business is the Texas Coffee Company, a state-themed high-end café that features casual early evening concerts of Texas acoustic acts as well as gourmet coffee, tea, etc. This place's logo, which is modeled after the famous Luckenbach, Texas (a tiny Hill Country town) logo, puts its identity squarely in a Texan context, and has been a factor in this café's unusually dramatic success for a business of this type in its first three years of operation.[19]

Perhaps the best example of commercial popular culture to consider in this context is the San Angelo-based pickled okra producer, Talk o' Texas Pickled Okra, the largest okra pickling company in the world. The Southwestern cowboy imagery on the label clashes symbolically with the distinctly Southern associations of okra, but the use of Texas in the product's name provides the magnetic force holding the two poles together.[20] And even more significantly, the initial Southern/Texan dialect words in the name—*Talk o'*—demands recognition for this San Angelo commodity—and by hopeful extension the San Angelo community—within the state of Texas. Tellingly indeed, this representative object of San Angelo is marketed not as, as one might expect, "A Texas Treat" or "A Taste of Texas" for America at large but rather as a talked-about and desired delicacy for people in Texas, an object that internally defines Texas identity for insiders.

A former Chamber of Commerce slogan for the city—"Surprising San Angelo"—(which as previously mentioned later became "The Shining Star of Texas") speaks to this same desire for recognition and in this case a reappraisal of San Angelo by people in the rest of Texas. Whether San Angeloans' collective desire for a fair evaluation of their city could overcome the economic forces pulling people and resources east of San Angelo and the western half of Texas to the I-35 corridor is unclear. And the degree to which this community's identity-building has been co-opted by consumerist forces is likewise troubling, though typical of course. Most of the examples of San Angelo's Texan popular culture cited in this paper are consumer-oriented, and most of the Texas-identified items featured in San Angelo's heritage industry are made not just outside of the city and state but outside of the U.S. (usually in China) as well. Nonetheless, San Angeloans continue on, undeterred by even warranted

discouragement to their plan to represent Texas, to become the ultimate Texas place. Many San Angeloans identify in an intensely personal manner with the notion that the city embodies a distinctly Texan identity, even going so far as choosing tattoos that use Texan images. For instance, one young woman resident, spotted in a grocery store recently, sports on the back of her neck a Texas map tattoo with "San Angelo" inked prominently in the center.

Similarly, though on the other end of the cultural spectrum, several years ago city officials commissioned the building of a multimillion dollar, architecturally magnificent, art museum, for which the primary materials came from local sources: Texas mesquite for the wood floors, locally quarried limestone for the exterior walls, and west Texas red clay blocks for the interior walls. Donations to supplement the funding of the museum came from lower and middle class residents as well as from the more affluent who typically contribute funding to such projects. The remarkable roof structure of the museum, which has received international acclaim from architectural critics, resembles a covered wagon, symbolizing the city's pride in its pioneer past.[21]

As the eminent human geographer Yi-Fu Tuan notes, "deeply loved places [such as cities and smaller or larger locations] are not necessarily visible to ourselves or others," yet people are drawn to make their beloved cities and other places associated with their personal and collective identities as visible as possible by implementing three strategies, all of which are illustrated by San Angelo's attempts to embody a uniquely multiregional Texan identity: "rivalry or conflict with other places, visual prominence, and the evocative power of art, architecture, ceremonials and rites."[22] San Angelo's rivalry with other Texas cities, albeit not much noticed by those cities, is enacted in the city's implicit claim to be representative of four Texas regions at once, and this claim rests on the featuring of sufficiently, though not spectacularly, visible landscape traits of those four regions and of the Texas map shape and flag in texts that comprise a major part of the city's popular culture. This identification has also motivated significant artistic expressions, from the San Angelo Museum of Fine Art's monumental structure, to Elmer Kelton's popular and award-winning Texas fiction and Los Lonely Boy's Grammy Award-winning music. Though the city's national media exposure in the FLDS trial is unlikely to bring the city any long term geographical recognition even within Texas, San Angelo will continue to see itself as central to Texan identity long after the case is closed.

Angelo State University Linda Kornasky

Notes

[1] The other two regions of Texas are the Piney Woods in the east and the Gulf Coast/Rio Grande Valley in the far south. Though these regions comprise a considerable portion of the state, they are not generally depicted in American popular culture texts as representatively Texan as the other four regions are depicted.

[2] See Leonard Sanders, *How Fort Worth Became the Texasmost City, 1849–1920* (Fort

Worth, TX: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1973).

[3] Photographs of the famous local bordello, Miss Hattie's, now a restaurant and museum, are available on their web site: www.misshatties.com/index1.html. And the photographs of and historical information about Fort Concho can be seen on its web site: www.fortconcho.com

[4] See http://sanangelorodeo.com, as well as www.twinmountainfence.com.

[5] See www.zeschandpickett.com.

[6] For information about and a photograph of these pearls, see www.puretexan.com/concho.shtml.

[7] David Syring, *Places in the World a Person Could Walk: Family, Stories, Home, and Place in the Texas Hill Country* (Austin: U of Texas P, 2000), p. 9.

[8] For an example of Hill Country spring fed creek imagery, see Creekside Apartments' logo: http://greatersanangelorenter.com/accounts/creekside/creekside.htm; for an example of cowboy/ranching imagery, see Hunter's Run Apartments' logo: http://greatersanangelorenter.com/accounts/hunter/hunter.htm; and for an example of Hill Country evergreen oak and cedar imagery, see Cedar Crest Apartments' logo: http://greatersanangelorenter.com/accounts/cedcrest/cedcrest.htm

[9] See http://www.texasescapes.com/Preservation/San-Angelos-Old-Five-and-Dime.htm for photographs and information about Eggemeyer's.

[10] See www.friendsofsasp.com/photos5.html on the Friends of San Angelo State Park.

[11] For images and more information, see www.sanangelorodeo.com.

[12] See www.loslonelyboys.org/bio.html.

[13]See *Images of San Angelo*'s web site: http://imagessanangelo.com/index.php?/site/articles/culture/san_angelo_writer_voted_best_western_author_of_all_time

[14] See http://survivorwiki.wetpaint.com/page/Colby+Donaldson?t=anon

[15] Richard V. Francaviglia, *The Shape of Texas: Maps as Metaphors* (College Station: Texas A&M UP, 1995), p. 25.

[16] See, respectively, www.crosstexasinc.com/index.html, http://unlimited-air.com/, www.spoontsrealty.com/, and www.beer-bytch.com/cloggingintexas.htm

[17] Doreen Massey, "Double Articulation: A Place in the World," *Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question*, ed. Angelika Bammer (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994), p. 115.

[18] See the pub's website, www.blainespub.com.

[19] The logo and the dense Texan iconography of this café can be seen on the owner's personal website: http://www.myspace.com/texascoffeeco.

[20] See the company's web site, www.talkotexas.com.

[21]See www.samfa.org/the_building.htm.

[22]Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1977), p. 178.

BOOK REVIEWS

Leni:
The Life and Work of Leni Riefenstahl

Steven Bach

Alfred A. Knopf, 2007

Steven Bach's *Leni* is an engaging historical narrative unencumbered by rich historical details about the Third Reich's chief documentary filmmaker and Adolph Hitler's personal confident, Leni Riefenstahl. What is remarkable is that her dynamic and dubious life spans the pre-war 1920s to 2002 when she died at the age of 101.

Bach characterizes Leni Riefenstahl's attitude and behavior toward her own people as a person who "remained culturally a tourist in the city of her birth, sightseer sampling other people's art while trying to find ways, means, and creative motivations for her own" (p. 54). She witnessed first-hand the horrors of the war, and would continue to deny her part in the Nazis horrors as simply an artist, even though she used the most powerful people in the Reich, including Hitler, to create her "art."

The book follows the Leni's life before, during, and after World War II, including her work up until recently. Bach describes a woman who insisted on creating and maintaining her sovereignty in a state populated by both the fearful and faithful dependents of Hitler.

While she was self-centered and purposely oblivious to the sufferings to the average German, not to mention the Jews, Poles, and all non-Aryans, Riefenstahl was a talented filmmaker developing innovative techniques recognized by even her harshest critics. Bach describes how Leni learned from leading Berlin- and Hollywood-bound directors like Joseph Von Sternberg and G.W. Pabst. Her richest experience came from acting and working with Arnold Fanck, known as the "father of the Alpine film," for whom Leni did many stunts over glacial crevasses and would later seek his advice on a number of productions. Leni's strength in film was cinematic craft in which she had crews dig pits for low angle shots and varied aerial shots as in *Triumph of the Will* (1935). With the aid of the one of the most powerful people in the Reich, Albert Speer, Leni was able to both protect herself from the likes of Joseph Goebbels and SS Head Heinrich Himmler, as well as use Speer's resources and skills to help her "select camera placements in space he had designed . . . his familiarity with hall, field, meadow, and stadium aided her in shot after shot . . ." (p. 118).

Until the end of her life, Leni constantly tried to reclaim her honor as well as the money generated by films like *Triumph of the Will*. She traveled to Africa when she was late into her 60s, following a dream to photograph the Nuba tribes who lived south of Khartoum and east of Darfur. These strong, nimble, and peaceful tribes offered Leni a chance to recapture the beauty of the human body in artistic form as she had in the film *Olympia*.

This book is a must read for anyone interested in film documentaries, women in media, or mass culture. Bach's writing style is both dramatic and meticulous, reflecting his expertise and experience as former senior vice-president and head of worldwide productions for United Artists Studios, where he was responsible for films like *Manhattan* and *Heaven's Gate*, the latter of which he wrote a best-selling book, *Final Cut*. Bach was familiar with Leni in her later life and lived around the corner from her in Berlin although he did not interview her.

In an interrogation report after the war, the Allies said she "more than any other person, had the opportunity to get to the truth" (p. 225) about the Nazis' atrocities because of her connections with the most senior leaders. But she was able to be granted the status of "fellow traveler," the next to weakest labels of her legal liability to the Nazis regime.

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Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography

Kwakiutl L. Dreher

State University of New York Press, 2008

Dancing on the White Page written by Kwakiutl L. Dreher is an important work. It focuses on black female entertainers whose struggles to cultivate their craft are reconstructed in autobiographical works. Although seldom addressed and used, Dreher's reconstruction not only helps to fill the void in this subject, but also manages to present the work in an entertaining, yet critical, manner.

Dreher has attempted to critique these "bios" of black female entertainers as a means of examining how these women saw themselves within the larger context of the entertainment world, and not just how they were seen. Dreher contends that, "the image more often than not obfuscates the real person and, in turn, creates a silence. . . . It aims to give voice to those silences that generally go unheard or are disregarded in celebrity and academic cultures" (27). The book explores six black entertainers: Lena Horne, Dorothy Dandridge, Eartha Kitt, Diahann Carroll, Mary Wilson, and Whoopi Goldberg. In an attempt to examine the literary text of these autobiographical works, the women defined themselves, as well as gave note to how they were defined by others.

Utilizing autobiographies as a means by which to critique these women is incredibly resourceful and thoughtful. Yet biographies of entertainers are also produced to participate in the construction of the public image that is made

accessible to a vast audience and they should be viewed with as much criticism as other representations despite the assumption that they somehow are more authentic or genuine representations of the entertainer when they are articulated through their voices or gaze. Actually, in spite of what they may or may not represent, the author of this work is effective in deconstructing these autobiographies to interrogate how these women saw themselves as black female performers attempting to build careers as entertainers in view of the social, political, and economic obstacles they stood to face in view of their gender and race.

Dreher effectively demonstrates how the biography participates in providing for and allowing for a close reading of the entertainer. With Lena Horne, Dreher states, "Horne's text lays bare a shrewd perception of the insidious nature of the labels (that is, "star," "symbol," "the first Negro to") from the onset, rather than as a regret in hindsight. This shrewdness protects her from the baleful emotional, physical, and mental pitfalls her film-star colleagues—black and white, predecessors and contemporaries—experienced." (47). As for Dorothy Dandridge, according to Dreher, her biography "joins an ensemble cast of black female writers and autobiographers who query across literary periods the peculiar status of the black child in the United States" (62). Regarding Eartha Kitt, Dreher proclaims, "Kitt is a celebrity autobiographer making the most of the dance of autobiography to "take up for herself" against the bully of defamation. In the process, the entertainer's dance on the white page at various intervals preserves a place for her at the gathering and subverts the exclusionary act as well as the speculation of the gossips." (92). Of Diahann Carroll, Dreher suggests that, "When the last exegesis is drawn from Carroll's narratives of specific tactics she uses to uphold the importance of self-identification in film and visual culture, one other aspect comes to light. Diahann Carroll acts out a fierce love for blackness. . . . In every enactment of loving blackness, Carroll delineates safeguards for self-identificatory practices not only for herself, but also for the community of black women. These safeguards recuperate, restore order, and thereby leave open a space for a holistic articulation of the lives of black women in visual culture as the trajectory of Carroll's own career illustrates." (145.) Offering the following assessment for Mary Wilson, Dreher states, "Wilson's text is not a single movement but a carefully arranged dance of minimovements that incorporate the biographies of the late Florence Ballard, her best friend; Diane/Diana Ross; and Motown CEO Berry Gordy" (148). Lastly, Dreher proffers that Whoopi Goldberg "opts for a descriptive discussion of scatology, feminine hygiene, and sex in her autobiography. . . . Goldberg selects, so to speak, a 'spread-eagled' approach, exercising a kind of agency in relation to her body. . . ." (175).

Providing an entertaining and illuminating discussion of these women frequently supported by their own words as presented in their autobiographies, Dreher's work seems to vacillate between (a) reconstructing their lives and (b)

using controversial events in their lives and their responses to these events as a means by which to capture who they were. While the book implies that it intends to critique autobiographies as a literary text, this intent seems to be overshadowed by the approach of intersecting biographical information with controversial events as a way of exploring who they really were. For example, the chapter on Eartha Kitt addressed how she was rejected as a child and how Kitt internalized this rejection and became combative—a skill necessary for her survival but a skill that resulted in her being alienated from the public. This dramatic event occurred when at a luncheon at the White House she expressed her political views, denouncing the Vietnam War and the exploitation of young males for this purpose. It was inevitable that Kitt's image would be forever marked by this event. Thus, although Dreher avoids overtly marking their identity on the basis of these events the subtle implication that these events become defining moments in the construction of their identities cannot be ignored.

The book's title becomes its underlying thematic, dancing on the white page, suggesting that these biographical works become forms of expression for black female entertainers who had to navigate the social and political struggles of the entertainment world and therefore, danced around, danced with, and sometimes danced in opposition to the restrictions imposed on them. The title and thematic that it represents is excellent for this work, however, there are moments in the text when it becomes overused and repetitious.

The topic is one for which little has been written, and because of the interesting personalities and lives exposed regarding these black female entertainers, the material presented is incredibly entertaining. Overall, this work is one that is indeed needed, and that will add substantially to the existing body of literature.

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William N. Thompson is a professor of public administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. His most recent books include *Gambling in America: An Encyclopedia of History Issues and Society* (ABC-Clio, 2001), and *Ethics in City Hall* (Jones and Bartlett, 2008). His previous articles in *Popular Culture*

Review include studies of the music of Tom T. Hall and Hank Snow, and the artwork of Cassius Marcellus Coolidge and his poker-playing dogs.

Popular Culture Review

Popular Culture Review, the refereed journal of the Far West Popular and American Culture Associations (sponsored by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas) is published twice yearly. It is indexed in the MLA Bibliography and the Modern Humanities Research Association's Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature. Members of the FWPCA/FWACA receive each issue as part of membership. Single copies may be purchased for $10.00 domestic and $15.00 international. Yearly subscriptions for institutions and libraries are $25.00. Requests for back issues should be submitted to the editor.

Please note that the journal is now all electronic and all requests for submission guidelines and/or submissions should be sent to Felicia Campbell (Department of English, University of Nevada, Las Vegas) at fcampbell@ccmail.nevada.edu. Documentation may take the form appropriate for the discipline of the writer; the current MLA style sheet is a useful model. The editorial staff will defer to the current *Chicago Manual of Style* to resolve stylistic differences.

The journal invites articles on all aspects of both popular and American culture. Correspondence about membership in FWPCA/FWACA, which includes a subscription to *Popular Culture Review*, should be sent to Felicia Campbell at felicia.campbell@unlv.edu.

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Studies in Popular Culture

Studies in Popular Culture, the journal of the Popular Culture Association in the South and the American Culture Association in the South, publishes articles on popular culture and American culture however mediated: through film, literature, radio, television, music, graphics, print, practices, conditions of life. Its contributors from the United States, Canada, France, Israel, and Australia include distinguished anthropologists, sociologists, cultural geographers, ethnomusicologists, historians, and scholars in mass communications, philosophy, literature, and religion.

Please direct editorial queries to the editor: Dennis Hall, University of Louisville, Department of English, Louisville, KY 40292. Telephone: (502) 588-6896/0509. Fax: (502) 588-5055. Bitnet: DRHALL01@ULKYVM. Internet: drhall01@ulkyvm.louisville.edu.

All manuscripts should be sent to the editor care of the University of Louisville, Department of English, Louisville, KY 40292. Please enclose two double-spaced copies and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Black and white illustrations may accompany the text. Our preference is for essays that total, with notes and bibliography, no more than twenty pages. Documentation may take the form appropriate for the discipline of the writer; the current MLA style sheet is a useful model. Please indicate if the work is available on computer disk. The editor reserves the right to make stylistic changes on accepted manuscripts.

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MARCH 13 – 15, 2009

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Felicia Florine Campbell
Department of English
University of Nevada, Las Vegas 89154-5011
(702) 895-3457 or e-mail: felicia.campbell@unlv.edu
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The registration fee of $175.00 includes a light buffet at the opening reception, morning coffee and rolls, lunch on Saturday, a subscription to *Popular Culture Review* (our refereed journal), plus additional conference events to be announced. Student registration of $65.00 includes all events scheduled on the program and one issue of PCR.

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