



Perspectives in History

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PHI ALPHA THETA
ALPHA BETA PHI CHAPTER



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Letter from the President

You hold in your hands the 22nd Volume of *Perspectives in History*, which serves as a primary example of the best outstanding research on going here at Northern Kentucky University. Our Alpha Beta Phi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta (P.A.T.) takes pride in producing and supporting the publication of this journal each year, however, the success of this endeavor would not be possible without the contributions of many important people.

First, I want to thank all of those students who submitted their work for consideration in this volume, and congratulate all of those whose papers were accepted for publication. Your work sets high standards for future contributors. Secondly, I want to thank our outstanding History & Geography Department faculty, not only for their support of our Phi Alpha Theta Chapter, but most importantly for encouraging their students to produce and submit these exceptional pieces of historical research. I also want to offer my most sincere thanks to the Editorial Team who labored long hours to produce yet another stellar volume for our readers' enjoyment. The 2006-07 *Perspectives in History* Editor, Timothy Trenkamp, provided the Editorial Team with unquestionable professional leadership, even during times of personal life crises. Tim your dedication and involvement with Phi Alpha Theta, and the journal are inspirational and laudable. We thank you for all of the work you have put forth on our Chapter's behalf. The Editorial Team also included Assistant Editors Amanda Hope Campbell and Jeffrey Foster. Amanda's work with this year's journal and contributions to our chapter, (also in the face of many personal crises) has been noteworthy, while Jeff's dedication to the extra work involved in producing this volume in addition to being the father of two teenagers is dazzling. Amanda and Jeff, thank you, for all your hard work in producing this journal.

The successes we have achieved as a chapter would not be possible without

the exemplar leadership provided by our Faculty Advisors. The 2006-2007 Phi Alpha Theta Faculty Advisors have provided us unwavering support and encouragement throughout the year. Dr. Jonathan T. Reynolds is the source of much of our success. He coined the phrase/attitude of “love & happiness” which we have managed to embody in our activities all throughout this year. Doc R is our inspiration to work hard, but to never take ourselves too seriously. Under his leadership we have accomplished many civic engagement and academic goals; all the while, we were *both* working hard and having fun. Doc R, thanks for everything you do for us. We appreciate it immensely! A most sincere, and yet understated thank you, to Assistant Advisor Dr. William Landon. Dr. Landon not only has provided his leadership in serving as the 2006-2007 *Perspectives in History* Editorial Team Faculty Advisor, but has also served as our default “go-to guy” for any thing Doc R wasn’t available to do. And that job description entails more than can be delineated here! Dr. Landon, thanks for everything, especially for your brilliant sense of humor! Though not an official advisor, she certainly serves in an official capacity as our civic engagement coordinator—Professor Bonnie May. Without her organization skills, cheerleading attitude, and skillful cookie baking-maniac husband, we would not be as successful as we are. Mrs. May, thank you for all your hard work; it is certainly above and beyond the call of duty! To all of our advisors: THANK YOU for CARING ABOUT US!

As usual, this has been an exciting, hectic, and rewarding year for the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter. For the first time in many years, we held a Fall Initiation in addition to our usual Spring ceremony, which in total added 27 new members to our ranks. Also new this fall, but a bit less formal, PAT’ers participated in what we called “Operation Candy Drop” where we reversed “trick-or-treated” our faculty members as a “thank you” for all they do for us. Fun was had by all, students and faculty alike. The usual regimen of fundraising activities including our four infamously known and ever-successful bake sales and spring book sale brought in just over \$2000 for our chapter’s operational use. These monies raised helped to fund our monthly movies nights. We provided light refreshments for our guests, and held lively academic discussion about the movies we watched, which included *1776*, *Braveheart*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Titanic (1953)*, and *Hotel Rwanda*. We especially thank Dr. Burke Miller for his support of our PAT endeavors, as he served as our official discussion leader and gave up one Friday night each month to spend with us.

Our successful fund raising enabled the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter to co-sponsorship several unique programs this year. We kicked off the fall semester by hosting the 2006 Kentucky Association of Teachers of History Conference at NKU, providing assistance to both presenters and attendees. Additionally, in the fall semester we collaborated with the NKU Department of Literature & Language, sponsoring the artist MC Baba Brinkman, who performed “The Rap Canterbury Tales.” Phi Alpha Theta also teamed with the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences to co-sponsor a discussion forum on Middle East Culture. As part of a double departmental effort, P.A.T. co-sponsored with GEOS (the geography club) a Shapenote Singing Workshop led by Dr. Carol Medicott. In the Spring Dr. Jonathan Reynolds utilized his World

History Association connections to bring in guest speaker Felipe Fernández-Armesto who lectured to an audience of future, current, and potential World Historians, followed by a teaching workshop. In addition to co-sponsoring these programs, P.A.T. also provided on-going support to the NKU Military History Lecture Series. Under the direction of Dr. François LeRoy, and Professor Bonnie May the lecture series once again went on the road to the Tri-State Warbird Museum; however, this year we also added a stop on the tour by co-hosting a lecture on the Thomas More College campus. In fulfilling our duties as co-hosts/co-sponsors of these lectures we have more than honed our skills at organization, and public engagement, and we love every minute of it. Thanks to Dr. Leroy and Professor May for giving us these wonderful opportunities for personal growth!

Though our trips abroad were minimal this year, our Phi Alpha Theta Chapter managed to garner a wealth of knowledge and experience from every excursion. The 2006–2007 Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference was held at the University of the Cumberland and the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter sent five members for representation, accompanied by advisor Dr. Reynolds. Billy Matthews presented an undergraduate paper, and Rita Thomas presented a graduate paper. April was a fun filled month in that we took a field trip with Dr. Landon to the Cincinnati Museum Center's Titanic Artifact Exhibit, which was a follow up to our March movie night. For the fifth time Phi Alpha Theta capped off the year by participating in the Kelly Elementary CAT's Meow Program in which our History & Geography students attend an evening lock-in with three classes of fifth graders in an effort to prepare them for the state standardized testing. This year Eric Gorlewski and Eydie Turvey-Franklin took on the enormous (and brave) task of coordinating and preparing the lessons in Economic, Government and Cultures & Societies. I whole heartedly thank them for the tremendous results they provide for the students of Kelly Elementary.

Truly, it has been demanding but yet, rewarding year for the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter. As President I want to take this opportunity to extend thanks to those who I have not yet mentioned above. First, I want thank all the faculty members of the NKU History & Geography Department for their support, not only of this organization, but for each of as students. Words cannot enough express how much the caring and concern you have for us is appreciated—THANK YOU! Most significantly I want to thank Dr. Jeffrey Williams, Chair of the History & Geography Department, for all of the financial, academic, and emotional support he devotes to our chapter each year. With out his support and leadership within the department, we would not be as successful a chapter as we have come to be. I also want to thank Ms. Janice Rachford & Ms. Rebecca Middleton for their support of our office and officers. These ladies are really the mechanics that keep our department and office running smoothly. Though new to the department this year, Becky has become a significant source of our “sanity” who constantly reminds us in the mist of any crisis “chill, it'll be ok”—a sentiment that we have utilized more than once this past year. Thank you ladies for all you do. We love you.

Most sincerely, I want to thank all of my officers for their service this year:

Vice President, Ms. Amanda Campbell; Secretaries, Sean Pace and Stephanie Woodburn; Treasurer, Billy Matthews; and Newsletter Editor, Chris Dunn. I know at times we all just seemed absolutely overwhelmed with work from our studies, personal lives, and officer duties, but you all performed exceptionally! I thank you for helping to make this a year dedicated to the concept of “love & happiness.” I think we pulled it off spectacularly and we couldn’t have done it without teamwork. Thank you, each of you, for all you did for the benefit of our chapter. Additionally, I want to thank all of those members who chose to step-up and serve as next year’s officers: President, Eric Gorlewski; Vice President, Stephanie Woodburn; Secretary, Elizabeth Dzurenka; Treasurer, Chad Stephens; Newsletter Editor, Chris Dunn; Journal Editor, Amanda Campbell, and Assistant Journal Editor Ashley Talbott. All of these folks have contributed in so many ways this year; I know that they will continue to put forth the same efforts next year to ensure yet another year of success for the Alpha Beta Phi Chapter.

To all the members of Phi Alpha Theta, thank you for involvement, interest, and for the honor of allowing me to serve as your President. As I leave NKU, headed for graduate school abroad, I know that my involvement with Phi Alpha Theta has provided me with the most invaluable experience in leadership. As few as four years ago I never would have imagined being able to serve in such a distinguished position, let alone, accepting a position in graduate studies in Scotland! The mentoring, encouragement, and inspiration I’ve received as result from working with Dr. Eric Jackson has made all the difference in the path my life is about to take. Dr. Jackson, thank you for believing in me.

Finally, I hope that has you peruse the pages of this volume you will not only be enlightened by the knowledgeable contents, but also be persuaded and inspired to submit your work for the succeeding volumes. At the least, I hope your interest in history and the NKU Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society has been heightened by the quality of material contained here within.

Sincerely yours,
Rita R. Thomas
President, Alpha Beta Phi Chapter

Foreword

As I begin my final duty as editor of this edition of *Perspectives in History*, I reflect over the last nine months and how demanding, and ultimately, rewarding this experience has been. I have followed in the footsteps of over twenty former editors who have brought prominence to this journal for such a long time. It is my sincere hope that I have been able to keep up with the standards established those many years ago.

This task was not accomplished alone. There were numerous persons involved in every step of the process, and it all begins with those who submitted their work. Without the over twenty submissions received, it would have been impossible to publish this journal. The articles and reviews that were received were all well written and researched, but in the end it came down to a decision of publishing seven of the submissions. It was rewarding and inspiring to read the work of fellow students; I even learned a thing or two along the way. So to that end, I wish to congratulate Rigel Behrens, Rita Thomas, Erica Wagner, Christopher Karr, Iris Spoor, Krista Sigler, and Terry Fleming for the work they submitted.

It was the work of the assistant editors and faculty advisor that made my life just a little less hectic, and made the experience of being editor that much more rewarding. Dr. William Landon spent several of his afternoons going over the submissions, lending a trained eye to the mechanics of writing that would have pasted me by without a second thought. The assistant editors, Amanda Campbell and Jeff Foster, were also of great help in that I am a firm believer in the more 'eyes' looking over a paper, the better the end result will be. I send additional thanks to Amanda for her work in securing copyright permission for the images used in this journal. This was her second year filling that much needed job requirement and I am sure she has become an old hat at it by how.

Several professors have been instrumental in my development as a student over the years and they should be recognized for the impact they had on my education. When I first started out as an undergraduate student a decade ago, Suzanne DeLuca was the first history professor I had any contact with and she became my advisor as a freshman. She still takes the time to inquire as to how my studies are going, were I am going on vacation, and have always been there for discussions on classes to take even after her time as my academic advisor.

Dr. Leon Boothe, who has retired, yet can still be found haunting the halls of Landrum Hall was instrumental in my early development as a history student. It was Dr. Boothe who prodded me into presenting some of my first research papers at the Celebration of Research at NKU, an event that was both terrifying and rewarding. He was always there to help revise papers and took time out of what I am sure was an over packed schedule to guide me in an independent study.

Dr. William Landon in addition to being the faculty advisor for the journal has also been a mentor of sorts. He has agreed to be submitted to the tortures of guiding me through several courses and independent studies. The time with Dr. Landon was well spent and a friendship developed that is more rewarding than being the editor.

It would not be appropriate to exclude the Department of History and Geography. The continued leadership of Dr. Williams, the help received from Jan in getting the proper forms to printing services, and the faculty of the department, those of whom I studied under and those that I never received the chance to learn something from. They are the reason that makes NKU so rewarding; all of them genuinely care about the development of the student.

On a more personal note, the last year has been very trying physically. By the time this journal goes to print, I will have undergone a kidney transplant, and hopefully on my way to leading a more normal life; no more dialysis at five in the morning. Drs. Boothe and Landon have continually asked how I was doing and if there was any way they could be of assistance. Their friendship during this period has meant a lot to me and I look forward to their continued friendship.

To my sister, Julie, who has decided to donate one of her kidneys, words can not explain my gratitude. After all of the pain and torture that you endured at the hands of your older brother, why you are doing this is a mystery to me. It is my firm belief that there will be a special place in heaven for you.

Timothy L. Trenkamp
Editor



Jesus Christ, Karl Marx, and the Cold War: The Latin American Church's Response to a Changing World

Rigel Behrens

Introduction

Politics, economics, and other social factors have influenced and divided the Catholic Church in Latin America since colonial times. This divide threatened to send the Church into crisis in the 1970s and 1980s as it wrestled with a series of social and political issues. These issues included the Cold War, the failure of development policies in Central and South America to meet the basic needs of the people, the rise of violent military regimes, and social problems rooted in poverty, urbanization, and inequity. Despite the idea that spiritual concerns should somehow transcend worldly matters, many bishops, clergy and laypeople struggled to minister to the needs of their flocks without addressing the social and political forces that made life so difficult for the poor.

In Latin America, a clean separation between Church and State has existed rarely if ever. Roman Catholicism left an indelible mark on the social and political evolution of the region, influencing voters, politicians and whole regimes. Often, this relationship between Church and State was contentious as Latin Americans struggled to address their realities under colonialism, through independence, and within a world economic system that ultimately increased disparities between rich and poor. These challenges forced the Church to re-examine its mission on a continual basis, and conflicting opinions among the laity, clerics, and hierarchy threatened to fracture its unity.

José Comblin wrote, "One key to understanding the Catholic Church in Latin America is the realization that it has had a basic ideological split from the earliest days of Western colonization."¹ He went on to say, "The separation or differentiation of church and state . . . has never been the aim or goal of the Catholic Church in Latin America . . . [It] was a political Church from the outset and has never stopped acting in this role."² With its hierarchical struc-

ture, concern for public order, and its visibility and influence over society the Church cannot help but be an inherently political institution.³

I. Colonization and Independence

A sacrifice derived from ill- gotten gains is contaminated,
A lawless mockery that cannot win approval.
The Most High is not pleased with the offering of the godless,
Nor do endless sacrifices win his forgiveness.
To offer a sacrifice from the possessions of the poor
Is like killing a son before his father's eyes.
Bread is life to the destitute,
And it is murder to deprive them of it.
To rob your neighbor of his livelihood is to kill him,
And the man who cheats a worker of his wages sheds blood.

-Ecclesiasticus 34:18-22 ⁴

The Church was an integral participant in the process of conquering and colonizing the New World, acting, in many cases, as an “apparatus of the state.”⁵ For the most part, it reinforced the social and racial divisions that were already in place—with elite European landholders at the top and native peoples and African slaves at the bottom. Regarding economic activities such as sugar plantations and mining in which labor practices were generally inhumane and oppressive, “the Church blessed and lent legitimacy to the enterprise . . . and served as an arm of both conquest and royal authority.”⁶

However, not everyone in the Church held this viewpoint; there were sixteenth-century Catholics who were ferocious in their criticism of the inequities within colonial society and the Church’s role in maintaining it. A few priests and bishops advocated the defense of natives from the pulpit. In addition, they wrote letters of protest to the crown and the pope, took legal action in defense of indigenous people, and promoted resistance to unfair governmental policies, going as far as leading open revolts.⁷

The most famous Catholic defender of the Indians was Bartolomé de Las Casas, a priest and former landowner who gave up his *encomienda*, or grant of Indian laborers from the Spanish Crown. He experienced a “genuine conversion experience” after reading a passage from the Bible (Ecclesiasticus 34:18-22) that left him stunned with the indictment of sin for benefiting from the uncompensated labor of native people.⁸ His revelation led him to become a priest, and he took this message to his congregation, the Roman Catholic Church, and the King of Spain.⁹ Despite the divine inspiration of his message, most people did not appreciate his defense of the Indians. He was ridiculed as a fool, his flock disobeyed him, and he was accused of being a traitor and a Lutheran. Some of his detractors claimed that Las Casas was “providing material and arguments to [Spain’s] enemies . . . for the destruction of the Spanish Empire.”¹⁰

Las Casas was ahead of his time; his voice ignited an important debate

before the throne resulting in the institution of the controversial “New Laws” of 1542 as a means to provide some royal protection to native people in the Americas. However, parts of the New Laws outlawing *encomiendas* were revoked in 1545, proving that the institution would not quietly die in a system in which Indian labor was the foundation of the mercantile colonial economy.¹¹ Despite the example of Las Casas and a few like-minded priests, the role of the Church tended to support traditional institutions, justifying forced labor as a way to instruct natives in “the holy Catholic faith, the natural law, and orderly conduct.”¹² Las Casas’s theology and the force of the negative reaction to it foreshadowed much of what would occur in the Church more than 400 years later. In fact, he would come to play an essential role in twentieth century progressive Church politics, influencing important advocates of liberation theology like Gustavo Gutiérrez.¹³

As time progressed, Latin Americans began to look at themselves as citizens of a new homeland rather than subjects of the Spanish crown, and the clergy took as active a political role during and after independence as they had under Spanish rule. Some priests even armed themselves as freedom fighters in defense of their new nations. Two Mexican priests, Fathers Hidalgo and Morelos, both admirers of the Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, were “early apostles” of Mexican independence. However, both priests overstepped the bounds of what most of the landed elite were comfortable with. Believing that sovereignty resided with all of the people, Hidalgo and Morelos mobilized Indians and mestizos for the republican cause. Morelos in particular went well beyond the standard independence agenda and advocated the abolition of much more than just the monarchy. In pushing for the elimination of slavery, monopolies, Indian taxation, and corporate privilege, he “laid tinder under the spark of genuine social and racial revolution” in Mexico. Of course, the elites would not tolerate this agenda and both priests were eventually captured and killed for their part in stirring up the underclass. As a result, liberation in Mexico “quickly shrank from egalitarianism.”¹⁴

However, the cases of Hidalgo and Morelos were far from isolated instances. According to Gerard Drekonja, over 400 clerics took on “politico-military tasks” during Mexico’s war of independence from Spain. Drekonja wrote, “Seldom has it been shown more graphically how the stabilizing influence of the Church can turn into revolutionary ferment in critical situations. The parallel between the 1820s and the 1960s in Latin America . . . should be noted.”¹⁵

II. Threats to Church Power: Secularism and “Neo-Paganism”

As Latin America advanced through the 1800s and moved into the twentieth century, a variety of factors began to erode the institutional influence and strength of the Church. Many occurred or became apparent because of industrialization, immigration and urbanization; labor unions, communism, and folk religion were just a few of the problems with which the Latin American Church had to contend.¹⁶ Even the split between factions of Conservatives and Liberals throughout Central and South America, which divided citizens along

regional and political lines, had religious implications.¹⁷ Liberals tended to believe in free trade, individual rights, were typically town-dwellers, and had somewhat anti-clerical leanings.¹⁸ Conservatives, on the other hand, tended to be those on large rural estates, favored traditional social structures, and viewed the Church as an “indispensable foundation of social order and cohesion.”¹⁹ The ecclesiastical response to these challenges and divisions were, at best, ambiguous and, at worst, utterly contradictory.

Industrialization, touted as the path to economic salvation for the world, brought with it a host of social ills even as it provided jobs to a growing urban working class and material growth in the region’s economy.²⁰ In the past, the Church generally identified most with the wealthy, in part, because landowners and urban professionals were easiest to reach, and because the sons of the elite went into the priesthood; the poor generally had very little contact with church officials.²¹ Yet the rapid pace of demographic change pushed the Church to reexamine its relationship to society’s underclass. José Míguez Bonino discussed the concerns of the Church:

Urbanization made the poor visible—they were concentrated in the slums around cities . . . It was a threat to the Catholic authorities when they realized that these people were only nominally Catholic and were beginning to be lost for the Church. [. . .] There was a conscious feeling that what had happened in Europe—the secularization of the urban, working class—could not be allowed to happen in Latin America.²²

Because of the increased visibility of the poor and the example of European workers, the Catholic Church clearly saw both the effects of ecclesiastical neglect and the potential for social upheaval if it did not address the needs of the lower classes.

Adding to the problem, from the point of view of the Church, was a shortage of priests. This created a “detachment of the official hierarchy from the masses,” making it extremely difficult for the Church to deal with what it considered “popular beliefs and practices rooted in superstition and ignorance.”²³ These beliefs included the veneration of unsanctioned saints, syncretism of pre-Christian beliefs with Catholic doctrine, and the performance of “unofficial” religious rites meant to bring health, material success, and good luck to practitioners.²⁴ Combined with the rise of Protestantism, folk Catholicism had the “long-range effect of gradually undermining the influence” of the institutional Church.²⁵

The increased secularism of modern society and the influence of Marxist thought throughout the world were other concerns of the Roman Catholic Church. In response, Pope Leo XIII wrote the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891; his letter to the church hierarchy attacked socialism and class conflict while appealing to the “charitable instincts of the wealthy” to pay workers a fair wage.²⁶ Later referred to as the “working man’s encyclical,” the pope was critical of capitalism, gave his blessing for the formation of trade and labor unions, and “sowed the seed of the idea of the solidary self-action of the poor, if not as a class, then as a collectivity.”²⁷

The *Rerum Novarum* elicited a mixed reaction in Latin America. David Lehmann quoted an old priest who reminisced about the effects that Leo's encyclical had on his Brazilian parishioners:

I was a priest in a mining area. This simple idea that labor is not a commodity subject to the law of supply and demand, that it is not right to speculate with men's wages, with their lives, like you might speculate on the price of wheat, sugar, or coffee, that idea really shook us. For explaining it . . . I was taken for a socialist and the peasants sent me off in disgrace.²⁸

Peasants were not the only people who had a difficult time accepting the message of the Church's highest authority as most Latin American Catholics remained part of an "established capitalist order" that linked progress to industrialization.²⁹ Some conservative Latin American governments tried to suppress the pope's letter altogether. According to Mark McGrath " . . . before the first world war it was impossible to have Pope Leo XIII's social encyclicals printed in Chile. They had to be printed in Argentina and brought across because key Catholic conservative politicians prohibited their publication."³⁰

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Pope Pius XI continued with his predecessor's defense of trade unions and criticism of exploitive labor practices.³¹ Liberation theologians in the 1960s and 1970s would later adopt the criticisms of both popes, but Pius's approach would become particularly influential. According to Christian Smith:

Pius spoke with moral outrage at economic exploitation and criticized the deficiencies of liberal capitalism, but his teaching was stronger and more concrete than that of Leo. Pius viewed sin as potentially collective, arguing that injustice and fraud take place under the common name of a corporate firm so that no one need take individual responsibility. Whereas Leo focused on personal sin and had mainly called for reform of individual conduct, Pius advocated social-structural, as well as moral, changes.³²

Despite the progressive ideas coming from Vatican, the Church hierarchy in Latin America continued to be more tolerant of oppressive totalitarian states than they were of leftist governments because they believed that right-wing governments would be a better defense against communism.³³ In addition to their condemnation of Marx's anti-religious stance, many viewed communism as an incitement to class warfare, a situation far more dangerous than a world war in the eyes of the Church.³⁴ For this reason, the institutional Church was willing to back military regimes because it believed that the military could establish discipline and order, enforce morality, and maintain the Church's position of privilege within the society.³⁵ Phillip Wiarda suggests that the revival of Catholicism through corporatist-authoritarian governments in Latin America in the 1920s and 1930s "was a sign not of a strong Church, but of a weak Church trying desperately to hang onto its communicants and to bring lapsed believers back into the fold."³⁶

Nationalist dictators, however, were not interested in the theological and spiritual aspects of Catholicism as much as they felt that the Catholic Church formed the basis of the national identity.³⁷ In many countries, the Church went along with this nationalistic view of religion, lending its support to the authoritarian right throughout Latin America.³⁸ The alliance between the Church and Juan Perón in Argentina in 1946 was not a result of any deep affection between the two parties, but more of a marriage of convenience. The Church supported Perón primarily because socialists and communists supported Perón's opposition. In return for this support, Perón "granted more favors to the Church during his early years than conservative or radical governments had ever done previously."³⁹

III. The Cold War, the Cuban Revolution, and Vatican II

After World War II, the repression and excesses of dictatorships in Germany and Italy caused fascist forms of government to lose legitimacy, leading many people to examine alternatives. The Catholic Church began to believe that they could stabilize society and reduce the appeal of communist and socialist influences if they addressed the economic and social needs of the poor directly. By the 1950s, development theory was "received as a providential salvation and a universal solution" to both the poverty in the developing world and the threat of communism; Popes John XXIII and, later, Paul VI saw development as a path to peace and justice for the entire world.⁴⁰

By the middle of the twentieth century, global change accelerated at a dizzying pace. The example of the Cuban revolution only served to reinforce the sense of urgency for both Church and government leaders to fight against communist manipulation of the masses.⁴¹ Seeing the decline of its worldwide influence, the Vatican struggled to reassert its authority. The Second Ecumenical Council of the early 1960s, better known as Vatican II, reflected the Church's attempt to remain relevant to the lives of believers across the planet. The council advocated allowing an expanded role for lay people in order to compensate for the shortage of priests, it increased its focus on social problems, and it developed a more open attitude toward internal debate. These changes created an "earthquake in the Church, especially for the priesthood."⁴² There was a "change in the atmosphere within the Church: debate was tolerated and the doors were now open to the influence of secular thought."⁴³ Perhaps even more revolutionary, the decisions made during Vatican II changed the definition of the Church, moving the focus from the hierarchy to the "people of God . . . the *whole* people of God."⁴⁴

These changes pushed Latin American bishops into "an environment of intellectual ferment and challenging ideas."⁴⁵ Experimentation, innovation, and debate occurred within the Latin American Church as a direct consequence of Vatican II. The Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), which began as a "militantly Catholic and conservative" organization, began to speak out about poverty, the "abuses of the capitalist system," and the necessity of reforming society.⁴⁶ In 1968, CELAM held a general assembly in Medellín, Colombia to explore how to apply Vatican II reforms in Latin America. During the course

of the proceedings the bishops denounced what it called “structural sin”, criticizing past failures of the Latin American Church (including its support of the inequities of social hierarchy and participation in the oppression of native people), and denounced both communism and capitalism as “equal affronts to human dignity.”⁴⁷ The language of “liberation theology” appeared openly at Medellín, shocking most Christians who read it.⁴⁸

It is undeniable that there exists a revolutionary situation in many parts of the Latin American continent, a situation that calls for urgent, thorough-going and basically revolutionary changes . . . We Christians cannot stand aside or declare our neutrality as we see our people going forward to their historic destiny. The average per capita income is barely 300 dollars. This is a state of affairs which results from our continent’s subjugation to foreign capital, whose power never ceases to increase . . . The existence of privileged groups made up of barely 2 or 3 per cent of the population . . . between them receive an enormous proportion of the national income. The Latin American who has for so long borne his poverty in silence has suddenly woken up to the situation, and his needs far outstrip the pace of development. What was unconscious poverty is now conscious destitution . . .⁴⁹

For a Church that had previously clung to the side of the wealthy and powerful, the Medellín documents (primarily penned by a pioneer of liberation theology, Gustavo Gutiérrez) represented a radical departure that “would yield radical consequences.”⁵⁰

Representing the majority of clergy and parishioners, conservative members of the Church felt that the bishops in Medellín had gone too far. They resisted not only the changes brought about by CELAM, but the Vatican II reforms as well.⁵¹ Many felt that the Church should not engage in class analysis, which appeared dangerously similar to Marxism, nor should it involve itself in politics of any kind, particularly left-wing politics.⁵²

The communist revolutions that occurred first in Cuba in 1959, and then in Nicaragua by the Sandinistas in 1979, served as both a warning and an example to the Cold War world. Under Castro, revolutionaries closely watched “reactionary foreign priests” who faced expulsion from the country, and private schools were nationalized, appropriating Church property without compensation and relieving the Church of one of its most important pre-revolutionary functions.⁵³ For conservatives, “the condition of the Cuban Church became the strongest argument against revolution, increasing fear and revulsion of any radicalization.”⁵⁴ Those who felt apprehension about the encroachment of communism, whether they resided in the Vatican or in the White House, “now felt outright fear.” They felt that the example of these revolutions “put social transformation on the order of the day as not only a desirable but an achievable goal” for would-be revolutionaries throughout Latin America.⁵⁵

Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, a number of Latin American bishops, including several who had signed the Medellín documents, began to

distance themselves from the pronouncements made in Colombia, “stating that they didn’t realize at the time how radical the consequences would be.”⁵⁶ The modernization of the Church, though meant to increase unity, only seemed to bring into the open the underlying differences that had always existed.⁵⁷

IV. Liberation Theology, Dictatorships, and US Intervention: The Church in Crisis

Two other factors brought the division between progressives and conservatives in the Church to a head. The first was that after a decade of developmentalism in practice, the conditions of the poor in Latin America grew worse than ever. This occurred despite a steady six percent annual growth in GDPs across the entire region; the profits simply failed to trickle down to the lower classes.⁵⁸

The second factor was the rise of military dictatorships in Central and South America throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Though thoroughly anti-communist, these regimes were also brutally repressive. Renewing close church-state relations, conservative elements of the Church aligned themselves with these authoritarian governments, which courted the Catholic hierarchy in return. Dictators offered to restore the Church to the prominent position it enjoyed in colonial days, promising to institute Catholic principles and morality into law, in addition to offering guarantees of order, stability, and economic growth for the nation.⁵⁹

Progressive elements within the Church refused to accept this state of affairs and took an anti-dictatorial position, challenging the idea of “the corporate state and fascism as the ideal socio-politico-economic structure” and championing a more humanistic, democratic viewpoint that boldly defended the poor.⁶⁰ Gustavo Gutiérrez, a pioneer of liberation theology, acknowledged the deepening division within the Church:

... The polarization of options and the hardening of the situation have placed some Christians amongst the oppressed and others amongst the persecutors, some amongst the tortured and others amongst the torturers. Out of this emerges a serious and radical confrontation. . . . The Latin American Church finds itself strongly divided. In these circumstances, life in the midst of a Christian community becomes particularly difficult and conflictive It will be impossible in the future not to face up to the problems arising from such a division amongst Christians.⁶¹

This situation created serious tension. Progressive priests who wanted the hierarchy of the Church to react more quickly to the poverty and injustice that they saw around them sometimes engaged in “acrimonious public debates” with their bishops, who would then punish rogue priests for their rebelliousness and disobedience.⁶² However, the split was not a simple division between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the rank-and-file clergy. It was not a horizontal “opposition between base and authorities, but a vertical division; each side included Episcopal conferences, clergy, religious institutions, and laity.”⁶³

The Cold War, the Cuban Revolution, the failure of capitalism and development to elevate the masses, and harsh authoritarian regimes all served to entrench the two sides into their respective corners. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo, and Clodovis and Leonardo Boff, among others, articulated a theology of liberation that viewed the gospels as a call to work for social justice. This “relationship between action and thought” went beyond mere academics. Beginning “with a description of the world and the church within it, [one] reflects on the situation from a biblical perspective, and acts to bring the world and the Church more in harmony with this biblical vision.”⁶⁴ Liberation theology exerted a powerful influence over progressive Catholics who began to espouse a “preferential option for the poor” as they witnessed the example of revolutionary priests who were willing to put their lives on the line for these beliefs. Though most were life-long churchgoers, they found this “liberationist version of Catholicism a more vital and relevant expression of their faith” than what they had known before.⁶⁵

On the other hand, liberation theology both alienated and worried the conservative wing of the Church, the elites who had been important sources of Church support, and even the U.S. State Department.⁶⁶ By using Marxist dialecticalism as a tool for social analysis, liberationists incensed their critics. Within the Church, many claimed that liberationists wanted to remove personal accountability for sin and redemption and simply blame all of the world’s ills on “oppressive social and economic structures,” charging that liberationists “sought to wed Marx and Jesus” into “an unholy alliance.”⁶⁷ These critics argued that the religious had no business meddling in worldly concerns, and that the Church was in danger of division along class lines.⁶⁸ In addition, many in the Church realized that opposition to established regimes would risk repression by authorities and “an unhappy martyrdom for the Church.”⁶⁹

Some progressives felt that the Church’s battle against communism was not doctrinal or pastoral but geopolitical; many suspected that it was not involvement in politics that was inappropriate, but involvement in left-wing politics. “The Church exists in the West; the West seeks security in fighting the East (communism); so the Church seeks its geopolitical security in doing the same,” or so the argument went.⁷⁰ Moreover, the liberationists viewed the negative reaction of the United States government toward their message in this way:

We can be sure that if Gustavo Gutiérrez and liberation theology had been concerned only about heaven, there would have been no scurrings of perturbation on the part of those who worked in the White House [. . .]. A theology that was no more than a soothing otherworldly tranquilizer would have suited them splendidly, for then they could have gone about their business sure that no challenges to their use (or abuse) of earthly power would be forthcoming.⁷¹

The involvement of outside forces, which perceived all world politics in Cold War terms, magnified the theological differences within the Church. The influence of the United States, Latin American dictatorships, and the media all

contributed to this deepening schism. The media especially contributed to an atmosphere that discouraged dialog and promoted confrontation. Newspaper editorials accused liberation priests and bishops of “various errors with the objective of achieving a clear condemnation of liberation theology” in addition to framing the inter-Church conflict as “a pitched battle of cynical church and secular powers against righteous, impoverished ghetto dwellers [who were] praying and plotting their way to political enfranchisement.”⁷² In countries like El Salvador, Nicaragua, Chile and others with extremely polarized societies, the United States utilized political, economic, and military pressure to influence the Church hierarchy to control priests.⁷³ North American influence was especially apparent in the tensions between the Sandinista government, which included liberationist priests within its cabinet, and the conservative episcopacy in Nicaragua.⁷⁴

As the Cold War progressed, the stakes became higher. A significant minority within the Latin American Church began to align itself with the segment of society that the military governments and landowning classes traditionally thought of as peasant hordes. In many parts of Latin America, the Church became “the voice of the voiceless,” and in identifying itself with the suffering of the poor, it brought affliction upon itself. As a result, the divisions in Latin American Church became even more pronounced.⁷⁵ Priests, bishops, and lay people became victims of physical attacks, kidnappings, tortures, and assassinations. This experience terrified some members of the Church into silence even as it radicalized others.⁷⁶ There was a growing realization among priests and bishops that speaking the word of God could bring the unwelcome attention of totalitarian regimes, and many felt forced to choose between speaking out and remaining true to their missions, or keeping quiet and surviving unharmed.⁷⁷

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s totalitarian governments took over one Latin American country after another. Although anti-communist leaders like Chile’s Pinochet and Nicaragua’s Somoza received U.S. support through CIA operations like “Operation Condor” meant to stop the spread of communism by every means available, the repression and violence caused formerly moderate and conservative bishops and priests to question and oppose their governments.⁷⁸ In Brazil, the tragic disappearances of people who spoke out against the military government transformed Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns from a “cautious, relatively moderate, and traditional” man to an outspoken advocate for the poor.⁷⁹ The Vatican had appointed Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador to his position precisely because of his conservative past and aversion to political theologies. However, after witnessing the brutality of poverty and oppression, he became a fierce opponent of the Salvadoran dictatorship.⁸⁰ For taking sides against El Salvador’s ruling class, he was assassinated on March 24, 1980 as he delivered a sermon in the cathedral in San Salvador.⁸¹ Dom Hélder Camara, Archbishop of Recife, Brazil, began his work with a “basically conservative outlook.” Like Evaristo and Romero, Camara became an advocate for economic, political, and social justice and found himself muzzled by both the Brazilian army and the church hierarchy.⁸²

An extreme example of the lengths that a man of the cloth would go in defense of the poor is Colombian priest Camilio Torres. Insisting on the need

for rapid structural change in Colombian society and feeling “there could be no other solution,” Father Torres left the priesthood to take up arms with revolutionary guerillas.⁸³ He was soon shot dead by government troops. While many wrote the priest off as a “doctrinaire Marxist” and “naively un-Christian and counter-productive,” others felt that his example deserved careful analysis. For the latter, he became a “potent symbol for the revolutionary left . . . whose life embodied the possibility of Christians committed to revolutionary armed struggle.”⁸⁴ Scott Mainwaring and Alexander Wilde summed up the impact of authoritarianism on many members of the clergy:

Why was the experience of authoritarianism important in the formation of the progressive Church? . . . When committed Catholics were imprisoned, tortured, and even killed, bishops in a significant number of cases then denounced the state, setting off a spiral of greater repression against the Church, followed by new Church denunciations of authoritarianism . . .⁸⁵

V. Pope John Paul II and the End of the Cold War

By the early 1980s, liberation theologians and Church radicals experienced profound setbacks. Heavily persecuted by right-wing militants and opposed by conservatives within the Church, “liberationists did not always recognize the weight of a very old and particular set of constraints that shaped the lives of so many impoverished Catholics, nor did they appreciate the strength of the institution (Church) in either blessing or damning their efforts.”⁸⁶ When members of the Church affiliated themselves with revolutionary movements that became violent, their example was invoked as a “powerful argument for control of any social action of the church.”⁸⁷ Echoing criticisms leveled against the 16th Century priest Las Casas, progressive priests faced accusations of “acting like Protestants” and were blamed for encouraging the “growth of Pentecostalism and other forms of evangelical Protestantism” in Latin America whenever they attempted to break down hierarchical structures within society and within the Church.⁸⁸ In opposing conservative members of the hierarchy, progressive clergy were accused of breaking their vows of obedience “and by extension breaking one of the most important ties with the Church.”⁸⁹

Once John Paul II became pope in October of 1978, the Church “reasserted the importance of maintaining clear lines of authority” and used its powers to silence and replace liberation theologians, appointing conservative bishops in their stead.⁹⁰ Seeking to reaffirm the Church’s “unity, universality, and hierarchical authority,” the Church undertook a restoration of pre-Vatican II principles. John Paul’s “powerful doctrinal watchdog group,” the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith led by Cardinal Ratzinger, issued statements condemning liberation theology and political involvement of priests and bishops:

As political goals become the supreme criterion of truth and morality, the whole of life is unduly politicized. [False liberation] divides the

Church against itself on the basis of social and economic class . . . One may rightly acknowledge the fact of severe social conflict, but one must not glorify class conflict as the path to the classless society of the future.⁹¹

With the progressive Church effectively drained of its influence by the end of the 1980s, little more was heard of liberation theology.⁹² Nonetheless, there are signs of life stirring within the progressive Church once again and a revival of interest in liberation theology by seminary students.⁹³ In 2005, National Public Radio aired an interview with an authority on liberation theology about the direction it may take in the new millennium:

I think we'll see less of the Western style of legalism in the Church and more of a focus on spirituality. I think we'll see less formalism and more adaptation to the local customs and anthropology. And I think we'll see less triumphalism . . . and more humility.⁹⁴

With the fall of communism, where will new liberation theologians and Church progressives focus their energies? Current projects include educational and psychological programs for young sex workers in Nicaragua, environmental work in Honduras, and resistance to free trade agreements with the United States throughout the region.⁹⁵

In conclusion, the Catholic Church in Latin America cannot escape its connection to worldly concerns through politics. It has always been and continues to be linked to political and social movements, and will continue to struggle with how best to carry out its mission in a rapidly changing world. This will certainly create conflict within the Church, just as it always has. Perhaps José Comblin sums this up best: "The Church has always been (and is still) simultaneously for and against revolution. Its institutions and persons are intimately connected with the established stand against revolution; its evangelical message of poverty, community, and liberty can only stand for it."⁹⁶



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African Americans and U.S Race Relations: A Pictorial Historiography Since Reconstruction

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Illustrations: Not only do words reflect bias—so too do the pictures in books. And they do it at the flick of a page, confirming an image in the mind or flashing a new one.¹

The visual image is the most engaging of sensory messages, imprinting its outline upon the subconscious like an acid etch. The imprint is often indelible—defying the forgetfulness of the conscious mind.²

. . . By understanding the degree to which racism and discrimination have permeated our past, we lay the foundation for acknowledging the deeply rooted nature of the turmoil of present.³

. . . It is necessary for all Americans to improve their understanding of the role of race in American history, including the history and contributions of all minority groups in the continuing effect of that history on race relations in American today.⁴

The four quotes presented above highlight the importance of the historiographical examination that is to follow in this paper. The significance of the role of illustrations and visual images throughout U.S. history will be explored as they are indicative measures of the status of race relations in the United States. A detailed analysis of the images of African Americans as portrayed in popular media, literature, and school textbooks, will demonstrate how the state of race relations in the United States from the time of Reconstruction to present have been, and are currently reflected in the imagery of those cultural sources.

I. Definition of key terms and justification of sources

In order to begin a thoroughly supported analysis of historical images as indicators of race relations, it is necessary to define clearly and justify the significance of the contribution of the sources that will be cited throughout this paper. The term “popular media” as it will be applied in this work refers to newspapers, broadcast journalism, television programs, and films. These media outlets are important in this study because they are significant sources of historical record in that they reveal a society’s cultural values, attitudes, and mores at particular moments in time. Newspaper stories with illustrations, political cartoons, broadsides, and news broadcasts record images which reflect the present attitudes of the society when they are published. Therefore, the sources of popular media can be said to provide the historian with particularly essential images that serve as primary documents when attempting to explore a cultural aspect of a society such as the state of its race relations.

In addition to popular media, this analysis will also involve the review of contemporary literature of the historical periods being analyzed. Literature, similarly to popular media, serves as a signpost of a contemporary society’s social values and mores. Violet Harris explains in her article “African American Children’s Literature: the First One Hundred Years,” literary “canons, or sanctioned lists of works perpetuated by critics, educators, and cultural guardians, constitute the literature many students read . . . by the time students have graduated from high school they will have read books from a canon . . . deemed necessary for cultural literacy.”⁵ In this respect, it becomes important for historians to analyze imagery as presented in literature of a period because literature constitutes the initial stage at which societal values, like racism and prejudice, first have the opportunity to be taught to children and, therefore, become embedded in mainstream society as those children develop into adults.

The book *The Black American in Books for Children* contains a contribution written by Beryle Banfield and Geraldine Wilson in which the authors identify the importance of analyzing children’s literature as a reflection of society’s cultural attributes. “Children’s literature provides an almost unflinching gauge of the level of racism and sexism in a society. It must be recognized that the racism in children’s materials is not a personal aberration on the part of an individual author, but rather a reflection of societal attitudes and practices.”⁶ The concept that texts are reflections of a societal value system, and not of an individual author, can be applied to wider spectrum of written materials including history text books.

Like literary texts, an analysis of the imagery in history textbooks can also provide a more in-depth and accurate perception of the state of race relations within a society. History textbooks serve an important role in society as a source of both national and cultural identity to the readers of such texts. In the article, “The Shifting Status of African Americans in the American Collective Identity,” author Rebecca Kook specifically defines the role of the history textbook in today’s society: “Through history books, chosen symbols of a nation’s past are transmitted and elaborated on. The history book may be perceived as fundamentally the biography of the nation. The vivid images that people retain of a nation’s past are drawn from its pages.”⁷

History textbooks usually identify key elements of historical relevance that particular the authors consider to be important. Usually these individuals attempt to present a version of history that will be accepted by a majority of the readers so as to produce a widely utilized text. Therefore, the inclusion or exclusion of material in history textbooks becomes a matter of what the public is willing to accept as its historical reality; this version of history is not always the complete historical record. This characteristic element of history textbooks makes them important sources for analysis in how they portray African Americans and present images of African American (as well other minorities) as an indicator of the state of race relations in America today.

In her book, *Reading into Racism*, Gillian Klein acknowledges the reality of this flaw in the recording of American history:

Who and what history is about has largely been determined by the judgment of those who record it. Though historians work from contemporary records where they are available, the selection they make from those records is designed to accord with what they consider worthy of immortality.⁸

Ultimately, such judgments on the part of the authors of history textbooks lead us to conclude that exploration beyond the presentation of historical fact is needed in assessing the realities of the state of race relations in American History.

II. Imagery of the Reconstruction

An exploration of the state of race relations during Reconstruction would not be replete without an analysis of the political broadsides and other newspaper illustrations that blatantly demonstrated negative feelings held towards African Americans. The turbulent political upheavals that occurred during Reconstruction stimulated the heated debates concerning the place and acceptance of the freed African Americans in both northern and southern states. The political broadside entitled “The Freedman’s Bureau” (see Appendix, Figure 1) from the 1866 Pennsylvania gubernatorial campaign demonstrates the hostilities that existed between the whites and African Americans. The text of the cartoon is written as propaganda for the election of candidate Clymer who is opposed to the legislation that supports the maintenance of the Freedman’s Bureau:

The Freedman’s Bureau! An agency to keep the Negro in idleness at the expense of the white man. Twice vetoed by the President, and made law by Congress. Support Congress & you support the Negro, sustain the President & you protect the white man.⁹

In addition to the text, the imagery presented in this cartoon reflects the racist ideology of the era in that the white man is presented in two separate images in which he appears to be toiling laboriously, contrasting the “Negro”

who is presented as caricatured image with a wide smile, large lips, eyes, and long gangly legs, lazily resting in the mist of the hard working white men. “This cartoon’s racist imagery played upon public fears that government assistance would benefit indolent freedmen at the expense of white workers.”¹⁰ This imagery reflects the racist attitudes of the northern region and vividly depicts the state of race relations in that portion of the nation in which Northerner’s were believed to have been sympathetic to the Reconstructionist’s cause. The imagery from the southern territories is more evident of the dire state of race relations during the Reconstruction period.

Newspapers like *Harper’s Weekly* commonly depicted images of the realities and the plight of southern African Americans. One story presented in *Harper’s Weekly* on October 24, 1874 describes the atmosphere of racial discrimination that existed during Reconstruction and describes the fear of the Ku Klux Klan that existed in southern communities. The author of the column comments on the conditions under which his journal is banned in southern states because of its sympathetic attitudes towards African Americans.

. . .Nor does any Southern paper in Georgia, or Alabama, or Texas and scarcely in Tennessee, venture even to denounce the murders or the violators of the laws; or if any Northern journal roused to a proper indignation by the wrongs inflicted upon peaceable settlers and citizens in the disturbed districts, calls for the suppression and punishment of the lawless crew, it is at once placed under the ban of the secret associations. Such journals (exclaims the *Austin Daily Statesman*) “are more to be hated than the rattlesnake.” *Harper’s Weekly* has been especially marked in this way and its sale is forbidden by no unmeaning threats to the booksellers of Austin.¹¹

The cartoon presented with this story is entitled “Worse than Slavery” (see Appendix, Figure 2). It depicts the image of an African American family huddled in fear and sadness on a “shield of victory” over which a representation of a KKK member and a member of the White League shake hands over their victory of domination over the African Americans. In the background of the shield images of a burning school and a hanged man represent the strife suffered by the African American family inflicted by the white men of the KKK and the White League.¹² This cartoon as presented in *Harper’s Weekly* clearly depicts the state of black suppression and white domination. The images are bold, and indicative of the attitudes held by both sympathizers and opponents of the Reconstructionist’s cause.

Harper’s Weekly maintained its sympathetic perspective in the struggle for racial equality throughout the years of the Reconstruction period. Two years after the “Worse than Slavery” story/cartoon was published, the newspaper published the cartoon “Of Course He Wants to Vote the Democratic Ticket” (see Appendix, Figure 3). Again, this image comments upon the racial inequities and tension that existed in the southern states. As the years of Reconstruction endured, tensions between the races grew stronger and violent conflict more prevalently accepted by white society. “Most Southern whites

could not accept the idea of African Americans voting and holding office, or the egalitarian policies launched by the new governments.” In order to gain control from Republicans, “Southern Democrats launched a campaign of vilification against Reconstruction, employing lurid appeals to racial prejudice” that included a campaign to prevent African Americans from voting or participating in government.¹³ The imagery presented in “Of Course He Wants to Vote the Democratic Ticket” reflects the efforts of whites to keep African Americans not only from voting, but from voting Republican.

The imagery as presented in the newspaper *Harper's Weekly* on October 21, 1876, depicted and reflected the state of race relations in the south during that period. In some instances, African Americans would be allowed to go to the polls, but only after having submitted a ballot for the Democratic ticket. The cartoon depicts an African American at the polling place surrounded by two white men holding guns to his head as he casts his vote. In the background, white men can be seen looking on in support of the coercion that is taking place in front of them. Also in the background, a vague image of an African American man appears walking between two men on horses, seemingly being dragged to the polling place.¹⁴

The illustrations from the period of Reconstruction realistically depict the dire state of Black/White race relations in the United States. The images presented for analysis of this period were drawn from the popular media of the day and serve today's historian in analyzing the cultural value systems of the Reconstruction period. In continuing the analysis of the depiction of African Americans through United States history, a consideration of the imagery of the post-Reconstruction period is necessary. The next section of this paper will explore how images in literature and film accurately reflected the state of race relations in the early 1900s.

III. African American Imagery in the early 20th Century

As mentioned above, when assessing the state of race relations, it is essential to analyze literary images because literature commonly serves as a gauge of societal and cultural values. Since the end of Reconstruction, African Americans struggled to claim their new identities as free persons, seeking employment, education, and equality before the law and body politic. However, white dominated society prevented the full blossoming of those goals. The literature of the early 1900s produced images that reflected specific stereotypes of African Americans and their roles in white-dominated society. In commenting on African Americans' images and roles in literature, Violet Harris noted that Sterling Brown in 1933, “determined that the literary depiction of African Americans entertained whites and . . . provided literary justification for institutionalized racism. The Negro has met with as great injustice in American literature as he has in American life. The majority of books about Negroes merely stereotype Negro character.”¹⁵

Harris identifies the seven primary stereotypes found in the literature, ranging from folktales to caricatures, to short stories, of the period as: “the contented slave, the wretched freeman, the comic Negro, the brute Negro,

the tragic mulatto, the local-color Negro and the exotic primitive.”¹⁶ These stereotypes are not only identified in the literature of the period but also surface in images produced in films, which will be discussed later in this investigation. One of the most identifiable images of African Americans during this period develops from the literary contribution of Helen Bannerman and her work “The Story of Little Black Sambo.” The stereotypical image that developed from this literary work portrayed African Americans in comically over caricatured images; “the illustrations show Black people as simian-like or with protruding eyes, and large, red lips, extremely dark skin and in the case of male, long, gangly arms.”¹⁷ The image of “Sambo” became a prominent stereotype that evolved beyond the pages of literary text as it became a widely accept image of the African Americans in every day life. As depicted in Figure 4 of the Appendix, statuettes and other types of reproductions of the Sambo character were common at the turn of the century.¹⁸ The popularity of such images, as well as the literary works which inspired them, reflect the cultural attitudes and stereotypical ideal held towards African Americans during this time period.

In addition to the male Sambo image, the stereotypical images of the Africa American female also developed. Images that stereotyped the African American female include the “mammy” figure, or “Aunt Jemima” figure that emphasized the clothing and derogated the role of the female in African American culture. One interesting source of evidence that this stereotypical image of the African American women was commonly accepted and depicted is found in a child’s cartoon from 1939. Warner Brother’s Pictures produced the Merrie Melodies cartoon *The Early Bird Gets the Worm* in which a family of *black birds* (note: an absent father) is portrayed. The three little black birds are being raised by their “mammy” blackbird as one little adventurous black bird goes out on his own, against his mother’s warning, and gets into trouble. The most significant thing about this cartoon is not its storyline, but the physical characteristics of the blackbird family. The baby birds have distinctive “curly” feathers on their heads, wide grins, and large eyes—all characteristics of the caricatures that commonly portray African Americans. Most significantly, the mother bird is called “Mammy” by her children, and she dons the stereotypical red head wrap as portrayed in the mammy caricature.

According to Beryle Banfield and Geraldine L. Wilson, the red head wrap in African culture represented a mark of status and honor; however, as the dominant white society began persecuting African cultural entities, the red head wrap came to symbolize “derided Black womanhood, a mark of low status and a mark of servitude.”¹⁹ In westernized society, the African feminine red scarf was set in opposition to the concept of white, virginal, purity, thereby making the individual who wore the red head wrap a less than desirable in moral character. Although the “Mammy” as depicted in the Warner Brother’s cartoon is a bird in character, the character has been highly personified to reflect the derogatory stereotypical image of an African American “Mammy.” As mentioned earlier, the necessity for analysis of children’s literature and textbooks as sources of racial imagery is important because those are sources from which growing children first receive messages about the concepts of

race. Here too, it is evident that careful analysis needs to be given to children's cartoons, and films as sources of racial imagery that reflect the societal attitudes about race and race relations.

Perhaps the most racially controversial film ever made was D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*. This film is also the most significant indicator of the state of race relations during this period. The film was released on March 3, 1915 and depicted "images of the South after the Civil War as a land of good-hearted, embattled whites held hostage by brutal, ignorant and vicious Blacks, the film drew on some of American's crudest stereotypes."²⁰

Francis Hackett's analysis of *Birth of a Nation* provides a detailed list of the images set forth in Griffith's representation of the negative societal attitudes and stereotypes held towards blacks:

We see Negroes shoving white men off the sidewalk, Negroes quitting work to dance, Negroes beating a crippled old white patriarch, Negroes sling up "faithful colored servants" and flogging them till they drop, Negro courtesans guzzling champagne with the would-be head of the black Empire, Negroes "drunk with wine and power," Negroes mocking their white master in chains, Negroes "crazy with joy" and terrorizing all the whites in the South Carolina. We see blacks flaunting placards demanding "equal marriage" with an imprisoned and gagged white girl. And we see continually in the background the white Southerner in "agony of soul over the degradation and ruin of his people."²¹

The images Griffith produced in this film served to feed the fear that dominant white society had concerning the loss of control and power they once possessed over the black man. They feared retaliation, and, therefore, had to create a justification in which it would be appropriate for them to maintain power and control over free black society. In the book, *Racism: from Slavery to Advanced Capitalism*, Carter Wilson addresses the impact of Griffith's film.

This movie not only embodied the planter perspective on Reconstruction. It impressed on the minds of Americans vivid images of black incompetence, inferiority, and bestiality. It contributed to the formation of a racist culture that contained images that dehumanized blacks and perspectives that legitimized oppression.²²

Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* is an indicative gauge of the state of race relations at the turn of the century.

The imagery and depiction of characters was reflective of the sensibilities of white society. "*Birth of a Nation* helped to justify the denial of civil rights . . . The turn of the century witnessed the nadir of race relations in the United States. Lynching was wide spread,"²³ race riots occurred, segregation was instituted, and African Americans were denied the right to vote during this period. Within sixty years of the release of Griffith's film, the societal values of the United States would take a tumultuous turn leading the country deeper into the struggle for civil rights and racial harmony.

IV. African American Imagery during the Civil Rights Era and Beyond

The Civil Right movement of the 1950s and 60s occurred during an age in which television broadcast media brought images of the activism and racial conflict in to American homes. The plethora of images of riots, police dogs, sit-ins, marches, and other forms of activism appeared on family television sets. These images affected the American psyche that framed the human drama of violence and hatred as realities of modern American life. In response to the intense violence plaguing the nation, on March 2, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson called for a study to be done to determine the cause of such violence and upheaval. The Kerner Commission study reached a watershed decision stating: "This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal."²⁴

Ultimately the Kerner Commission blamed white racism as the cause for violence and suggested that the media portrayal of blacks was a key element of the state of race relations in American. Often cited as the starting point in the research of race and the media is the report published by the Kerner Commission in 1968 that determined that the news media had "too long basked in a white world, looking out of it, if at all, with white men's eyes and a white perspective"²⁵ "The absence of black concerns and black faces from newspapers contributed to the white lack of understanding of black Americans and helped to widen the gap between the two races."²⁶ The Kerner Commission set forth the objective to the media that it was to maintain a responsibility in telling the true story of race relations in America.²⁷ The problem, with that charge, was that the Kerner Commission intended that the media correct itself, a media owned and dominated by whites, who are they themselves, influence by societal values, including racism.

Many strides have been made since the Kerner Commission's report to evolve modern media to the utopian creation that promotes equality, and civil justice for all races. However, no matter how much success has been accomplished in creating that equality, racism still manages to present itself in modern media. One key problem that has carried over from the 1960s is the dominance of white media outlet ownership, and a low black employment rate throughout all forms of journalism.²⁸ These factors were what initially contributed to the problem faced by the media outlets in the 1960s, only today, blatant racism is taboo in the world of political correctness. Today's media is different from that of the 1960s in that it attempts to paint a harmonious picture of the state of race relations.

Occasionally, examples of the presence of racism in the modern media will slip through the editing reviews. Such was the instance in January, 2002, in College Station, Texas. The Texas A&M University newspaper, *The Battalion*, ran a cartoon that depicted "a black mother scolding her son for flunking a class. Both mother and son have big eyes, and frowning large lips—caricatures historically used to denigrate blacks."²⁹ The text of the cartoon read: "If you ain't careful you gonna end up doing airport security."³⁰ This cartoon caused much controversy on the Texas A&M campus; enough to bring together a panel discussion to condemn the cartoon, the pseudonym artist, and the editor

for choosing to run the cartoon (see Appendix Figure 5 for a photograph of the panel discussion and cartoon image).³¹ After the controversy, the cartoon image was pulled from all archival editions of the paper. The only image available of the original cartoon was present in a photograph of the panel discussion. As indicated in this example, racism in the modern media occasionally becomes evident if one looks below the surface.

V. A Critical Analysis of School Textbooks

Evidence of racism and the state of modern race relations can be found throughout images in our society; however, none is more poignant than those images presented in children's textbooks. These books are not only sources of general knowledge for children, but they are also teachers of societal values, ideologies, and mores. The images and portrayals of African Americans in U.S. History books and courses are important to the state of race relations in this nation because as cited at the beginning of this work: "the visual image is the most engaging of sensory messages, imprinting its outline upon the subconscious like an acid etch. The imprint is often indelible—defying the forgetfulness of the conscious mind."³² Therefore, educators, historians, and citizens, seeking a peaceful state of racial equality, must consider the "imprints left on the conscious minds" of children.

In his article, "Black History in Secondary Schools," William Katz stressed the importance of providing a curriculum to secondary students that includes Black History. ". . .an even greater need is to integrate the information about black Americans in to the existing course of study. It is in these regular courses that this nation's students, black and white will learn or fail to learn about Afro-Americans."³³ As with the broader problem, in the documenting of history and the inclusion and exclusion of materials, teachers have the difficult choice of determining what versions of African American history they are to teach. Katz explains:

While one side claims that secondary school students need not be told of the violence, horror and bestiality that have characterized our racial relations, the other side has said that portraying successful black people obscures the plight of many and is basically irrelevant to either history or students. . .Students need to know why such thing took place, not how. Black heroes, like white heroes, played a part in history and their stories are indeed proper classroom fare.³⁴

Today, teachers have access to diverse sources beyond their textbooks; therefore, the general pattern of development of the treatment of African American in history textbooks seems to be improving. According to Rebecca Kook, "the African American appear[s] more often but he appears increasingly as a positive role model. There is also an increase and diversification of pictorial illustrations of African American doctors and of integrated classrooms."³⁵ In today's textbooks, the African American is "now more likely to be associated with traits such as intelligence, talent, ambition and success."³⁶

Certainly these changes of imagery in depictions of African Americans are reflective of the ever-changing state of race relations within American society. An examination of the contents of two school primers used in classrooms during the early 1900s provides an illustration of the state of race relations of that era. The analysis of books like *A School History of the United States*, and *Primary History of the United States* serve as indicative gauges of the presence of racism through the lack of discussion and lack of presentation of imagery of African Americans.

Within the 274 pages of text of *A School History of the United States*, (1910), the existence and discussion of African Americans within American society is almost non-existent. Not until page 84, in the section describing the establishment of the colonies, is the presence of African Americans in the colonies introduced.

The New York Negro Alarm: Trouble, however arose in New York in 1741. At that time some fires broke out, and people conceived the idea that the Negro slaves had formed a plot to burn the city. Great excitement prevailed; a number of slaves were tried, convicted and burned alive, while several whites suspected of being in the plot were hanged.³⁷

Not only does this example show how whites and African Americans were treated differently for conviction of the same crime during the colonial era, it also provides insight into the attitudes held towards African Americans during the time in which this text was utilized in classrooms.

The text primarily covers European interactions with Native Americans in the Americas; it fails even to mention the importation of Africans or the institution of slavery. The first time intuition of slavery is discussed is in relation into the admission of Missouri to the union. Images of slaves, or any other African Americans do not appear anywhere in *A School History of the United States*. A total of four pages are dedicated to the discussion of issues leading up to the Civil War and how differences of opinion on slavery split the nation; the chapter on Reconstruction totally avoids the issue of race relations and focuses on the presidencies and is the shortest chapter in the text.³⁸ Obviously, a text that avoids the discussion of race relations during a time of intense racial conflict reflects the dire state of race relations in that the subject is denied existence in mainstream consciousness.

Similarly, *Primary History of the United States* (1910) reflects the same kind of indifference towards, or seeming denial, of the existence of African Americans that *A School History of the United States* (1910) presents. *Primary History of the United States* lacks any imagery of African Americans and references the issues of slavery in only two pages of text.³⁹ The section dealing with the period of Reconstruction, once again fails to deal with the issues of race relations and African Americans' new status as free persons, it completely avoids mention of the word Reconstruction. The chapter is titled "Events Since the Civil War."⁴⁰ This text does, however, discuss the institution of slavery as an element of the development of the colonies.

Negro Slavery First Introduced—Great attention was given to raising tobacco, which was sent to England and brought much money to the colony. In 1620 a Dutch ship brought over about twenty Negroes from Africa and sold them as slaves to the planters. This was the beginning of the Negroes slavery in this country. The Negroes proved useful as field hands, and their work in attending the tobacco crop increased the wealth of the colony.⁴¹

The passage that immediately follows that statement is highly reflective of the attitudes held towards the history of slavery, and indicative of the types of messages which were conveyed to school children who utilized these kinds of texts. The message is subtle, but clear—whites may have been slave holders, but they were good people because they helped other people (implying African Americans) to improve their manners and to be refined and generous. The passage states: “Many of the settlers of Virginia were of good family and well educated; and they so helped to improve the manners of the other colonist, that the people grew up intelligent, refined and generous.”⁴²

The exclusion of African Americans within these U.S History texts assuredly reflects the attitudes of the society in which they were utilized. African Americans were treated in history texts as non-entities; the issue of racism non-existent. In society African Americans were being denied their rights, and essentially remained being treated as second class (non-)citizens. White America was not willing to accept the changes instituted by Reconstruction, and those attitudes carried over from one century into another, reflected and passed on through societal mediums such as school textbooks.

Though omissions of African Americans’ full history are evident in history textbooks of the past and images in general are lacking in comparison to that of their white and Native American counterparts, the images of African Americans have over time become more numerous and more positive; changing as the attitudes of American society have changed. Societal initiatives to reduce and eliminate racism in modern society have helped to create the circumstances in which blatant racist imagery and attitudes are no longer tolerated. Therefore their stereotypes are ideally not incorporated into educational mediums such as school textbooks. By presenting more positive and numerous images of African Americans (and other minorities) in school texts, students are given the opportunity to register in their minds positive images of African Americans; establishing within our society a source of positive attitudes towards constantly improving the state of race relations in the United States.

As the analysis of history textbooks of the past provided insight into the state of race relations, an analysis of the history texts utilized in today’s classrooms can also provide evidence of the state of race relations in modern American society. The size and nature of the older texts enable a full critique of the presentation of African American imagery; however, the size and nature of the modern high school texts inhibits a full analysis. Therefore, the discussion of images of African Americans and changing societal attitudes will be limited to the chapters on the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. The

mere appearance of such chapters dedicated to the Civil Rights Movement in modern school texts is indicative of the progress of race relations since the early 1900s when texts completely denied the existence African Americans within American society by omitting them from such texts.

The texts being analyzed for this discussion include: *America: Pathways to the Present*, *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century*, and *American History: the Modern Era Since 1865*. In analyzing texts used in modern high school classrooms two key elements essential to correlating the state of race relations and imagery of African Americans becomes evident: first, the images include African Americans and whites working together in support of the Civil Rights movement and last, the images of white opposition to the Civil Rights movement portray blacks as the victims of unjustified violence, and whites in the negative light as the oppressors and perpetrators of violence. These key elements are apparent in all three of the texts analyzed for this discussion, suggesting that the messages reaching children in today's classrooms is consistent and highly reflective of the true state of race relations in America.

All three texts include pictures of Dr. Martin Luther King's marches from Selma to Montgomery and/or the March on Washington, D.C. These pictures include images of white supporters of the Civil Rights movement walking side by side with African Americans.⁴³ *America: Pathways to the Present*, *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century* both present pictures of a Jackson, Mississippi lunch counter sit-in in May 1963; these images depict African Americans and whites sitting together in peaceful protest against racism.⁴⁴ In addition, *The Americans* presents a picture of both African Americans and whites linked arm in arm in front of a bus participating in the Freedom Summer voting drives in Mississippi.⁴⁵ Images such as these depict positive race interactions in the struggle for equality. They reflect the notion that authors of texts who present such images, are supportive of and encourage the nurturing of such racial interactions (i.e. the authors feel that the ideas presented are socially acceptable to the public and will enable the to sell their text). In the past, whites and blacks would not—could not be seen together sitting at a lunch counter, but the struggles of the first Civil Rights activists ensured that such activity would be possible, and is possible in today's world. By presenting images that encourage students to stand up for what is right, to acknowledge the legitimacy of universal, civil, and human rights, the authors of these texts reflect a key element of modern society's values and mores.

Another way in which the authors, Andrew Cayton, *et al*, in their text *America: Pathways to the Present*, Gerald A. Danzer *et al*, in their *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century* and Donald A. Ritche in his text *American History: the Modern Era Since 1865* make suggestive societal commentary is in the depiction of images that cast whites in a negative light as oppressor of African Americans in their struggles for Civil Rights. Pictures that show white Americans violently reacting to African Americans' protests during the Civil Rights Movement help students to form the ideas that white society of that era was committing serious wrongs, and African Americans (as well as other minorities) were entitled to equal treatment. One might say that

images like those presented in these texts help students empathize with the people and their cause (Civil Rights), while emotionally they negatively react to the oppressors/perpetrators.

Pictures of the bombing of the Freedom Riders' bus in Anniston, Alabama on May 14, 1961, as presented in *America: Pathways to the Present*, and *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century* invoke students' emotional reactions for the victims. This degree of brutality is disdained by a basic human reaction to such cruelty.⁴⁶ Identifying whites as the perpetrators of such violence, the authors are attempting to project to students the reality that whites were responsible and capable of such crimes against African Americans and their supporters. By projecting images into the forefront, the true realities of history, unlike the texts of the early 1900s, as discussed above, contemporary texts reflect the status of race relations in that most Americans are willing to accept the truth, and rectify it through their actions in modern society. In other words, American society acknowledges the evils and injustices that occurred in past, and now hope to move forward by continuing the initiatives of those who suffered by attempting to ensure that further injustices will not be committed in modern society.

Other pictures that invoke this type of reaction are images of protestors being attacked by police dogs, or fire hoses, as are presented in *America: Pathways to the Present*, and *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century*.⁴⁷ Other images that the authors present that strike up emotion in students are ones to which they can easily relate. Pictures of the Little Rock Nine as depicted in *American History: the Modern Era Since 1865*, and *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century* show African American teenagers being prevented by the armed Arkansas National Guard from attending Central High School and other images of angry protesting white students who jeer and mock the African American students as they try to enter the school.⁴⁸ The messages sent by the authors of these texts are clear—racism exists, but the right thing to do is to fight it. The attitude the authors take towards racial inequality and the fight for equality during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement is indicative of the modern state of race relations in America.

VI. Conclusion

To again, quote author Rebecca Kook, “through history books, chosen symbols of a nation’s past are transmitted and elaborated on. The history book may be perceived as fundamentally the biography of the nation. The vivid images that people retain of a nation’s past are drawn from its pages.” The imagery of the texts *America: Pathways to the Present*, *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century*, and *American History: the Modern Era Since 1865* present not only the biography the nation, but provide a snap shot of the history of American’s race relations. When comparing the imagery of contemporary texts with that of texts used in the early 1900s, it is easy to see how far the nation has progressed in race relations: from the point where the existence of African Americans was completely denied, to the point where

white society is willing to accept and admit the reality the legacy of heinous crimes that were perpetrated against African Americans for more than 400 years.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton commissioned his Initiative on Race, a study designed to make recommendations to the President to help the United States build a more racially united America. The final recommendations included a list of suggestion that every American should try to do to reach that goal. One important item stated:

Insist that intuitions that teach us about our community accurately reflect the diversity of our nation. Encourage our schools to provide festival and celebrations that authentically celebrate history, literature, and cultural contributions of the diverse groups that make up the United State. Insist that our children's schools' textbooks, curricula, and libraries provide a full understanding of the contributions of different racial groups and an accurate description of our historic and ongoing struggle for racial inclusion. Insist that our news sources—whether print, television, or radio—include racially diverse opinions, story ideas, analyses, and expert. Support ethnic studies program in colleges and universities so people are educated and critical dialogue is stimulated.⁴⁹

This statement reflects the importance racial imagery has had throughout our history, and continues to have in today's society. The history of race relations in the United States has been long and tumultuous, especially for those individuals who have suffered oppression. The illustrated history of race relations as discussed in this paper serves as a documentation of that history and a measure of how far we have come in regards to achieving racial equality, and it also illustrates how far we have to go in order to reach complete racial harmony.



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THE FREEDMAN'S BUREAU!

AN AGENCY TO KEEP THE **NEGRO** IN IDLENESS AT THE **EXPENSE** OF THE **WHITE MAN**.
 TWICE **REJECTED** BY THE **PRESIDENT**, AND **MADE** A **LAW** BY **CONGRESS**.
SUPPORT CONGRESS & YOU SUPPORT THE NEGRO. SUSTAIN THE PRESIDENT & YOU PROTECT THE WHITE MAN



Figure 1:
 "The Freedman's Bureau"
 Political Broadside from
 1866 Pennsylvania
 gubernatorial campaign.



Figure 2:
 "Worse than Slavery"



Figure 3:
 "Of Course He Wants
 to Vote the Democratic
 Ticket"
 Harper's Weekly Cartoon
 October



Figure 4:
"Sambo" Clock c. 1875

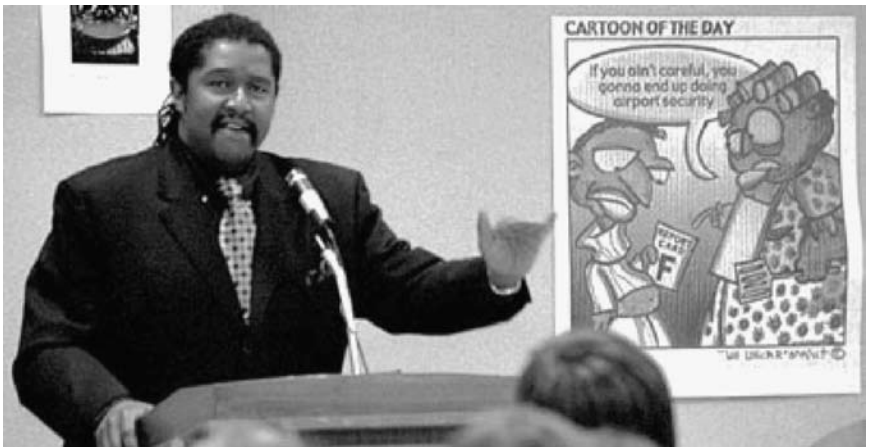


Figure 5:
Photo take during a panel discussion concerning the printing of a racist cartoon in the Texas A&M Battalion. Image of the cartoon is in the background of the photo.

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Militancy and Constitutionalism: The Methods and Relative Effectiveness of Emmeline Pankhurst and Millicent Garrett Fawcett on the Women's Suffrage Movement in Great Britain

Erica Wagner

The struggle for women's suffrage in Great Britain was a long and laborious fight undertaken by multitudes of women and men dedicated to the cause. Beginning with the suffrage bill of 1870, bills for women's suffrage were introduced in nearly every session of Parliament, though none became law prior to 1918.¹ In the early years of the movement, progress was slow and change unseen. However, early advocates for suffrage did influence some of the more prominent leaders, such as David Lloyd George and Bonar Law, who emerged around the turn of the century. Under the leadership of women such as Emmeline Pankhurst and Millicent Garrett Fawcett, the women's suffrage movement experienced a resurgence of energy and action. The years 1897-1903 saw the rise of two widely influential suffrage societies: the Women's Social and Political Union and the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. While both organizations aimed to gain the vote for women, their approaches to the problem were drastically different. The Women's Social and Political Union, founded by Emmeline Pankhurst, eventually resorted to forms of militancy to demand action from political leaders.² The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, with Millicent Garrett Fawcett in the position of president, refused to support the use of unconstitutional means to campaign for the vote.³ While the methods employed by the militant suffragettes called attention to the rising support of enfranchisement for women, the constitutional means employed by Millicent Garrett Fawcett and others in the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies had the greatest influence upon principal politicians of the day, and the combination of these factors, along with a favorable political climate, contributed to the inclusion of women's suffrage in the Reform Bill of 1918.

Emmeline Pankhurst's dedication to the women's suffrage movement began early in her life. Her family was committed to human rights causes, and Pankhurst's first memory was of collecting money with her mother to donate to the newly emancipated slaves in the United States. A combination of factors led to Pankhurst's passion for the suffrage cause. Her husband was an early supporter of women's suffrage, and in 1870, Dr. Richard Pankhurst introduced the first women's suffrage bill in Parliament.⁴ Following her husband's death, as Pankhurst worked as a registrar of births and deaths to support her family, women who visited her office would often share their life stories. Hearing these stories, Pankhurst was "reminded over and over again of the little respect there was in the world for women and children."⁵ This further convinced her that something had to be done to remedy the current situation, and she concluded that women must have a say in the affairs of her country.

Emmeline Pankhurst committed her life to gaining the vote for women in Britain after hearing a speech by Susan B. Anthony around 1902.⁶ Pankhurst had already been involved in the struggle for women's suffrage through her participation in the Women's Suffrage Society starting in the 1880s.⁷ However, Susan B. Anthony's speech helped motivate Pankhurst to more pronounced action. The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was founded in 1903, when Pankhurst hosted a meeting of women in her home. The name was chosen for the organization " . . . partly to emphasise its democracy, and partly to define its object as political rather than propagandist. . . . Deeds, not words, was to be our permanent motto."⁸

The Women's Social and Political Union (hereafter referred to as the WSPU) soon lived up to the promise of its motto. In 1905, the Women's Suffrage Bill was once again driven out of Parliament by the bill preceding it in the agenda for the day. Opponents to women's suffrage deliberately discussed, longer than necessary, a bill that concerned lights on vehicles, leaving no time for the Women's Suffrage Bill. Emmeline Pankhurst gathered a small group of protesters at the door of Parliament to demand that the bill be saved. This action, although it was scarcely noticed at the time, is considered the first act of militancy undertaken by members of the WSPU.⁹ By this time, almost forty years had passed since organized efforts for women's suffrage had begun, and many felt frustration at the lack of evident progress. It was this "atmosphere of relatively leisured debate, in which few serious politicians devoted more than fleeting attention to the issue, that the militant movement was to shatter and transform."¹⁰

Although the WSPU did not begin to employ militancy until two years after the organization was founded, an attitude of extremism can be found even in the policy adopted for admitting members. For a nominal fee, women were allowed to join the organization if they would agree not to support any political party until women were granted the right to vote. One of the few rules the WSPU enforced concerned members' loyalty to the ideology of the organization. If a member openly disagreed with a policy, that individual was no longer permitted to be a part of the Union. In the words of Emmeline Pankhurst, "The WSPU is simply a suffrage army in the field. It is purely a

volunteer army . . . we don't want anybody to remain in it who does not ardently believe in the policy of the army."¹¹

Not all of the work of the WSPU was blatantly confrontational. During bye-elections, members of the Union would infiltrate small towns just before political candidates would arrive in them and reserve the most desirable meeting-houses, then work to draw attention to their gatherings. As Pankhurst later recalled, "Often, a candidate with Suffragettes for rivals spoke to almost empty benches. The crowds were away listening to the women."¹²

Militancy began to receive national attention as the protests became more frequent and extreme. In 1906, a shift in the focus of the WSPU to the city of London coincided with a steady stream of activity from its members.¹³ The *Daily Mail* was the first to use the term "suffragette" in reference to the militant suffragists at this time.¹⁴ In March of that year, the suffragettes went to see Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman twice, and in April, they protested in the House of Commons after the debate concerning women's suffrage. In June, suffragettes began to have demonstrations outside the homes of cabinet ministers and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, H. H. Asquith. These actions did not go unnoticed, and in October 1906, as suffragettes attempted to lobby Parliament, many were arrested for illegally holding a meeting in that location.¹⁵ Arrests were not uncommon among members of the Women's Social and Political Union, as there were a number of later incidents that resulted in the arrest of several hundred women.¹⁶

After being arrested, members of the WSPU routinely subjected themselves to hunger strikes.¹⁷ Many of the women would be force-fed through feeding tubes, although this was never done to Emmeline Pankhurst, most likely because "the Government feared the retaliation which might ensue."¹⁸ Later in the movement, Pankhurst and others began using thirst strikes as an even more effective mode of resistance.¹⁹

One particularly violent episode occurred in 1907 when women were not permitted outside the House of Commons by an order of Parliament. Women of the WSPU attempted to ignore the orders and were soon in the midst of a fierce struggle with police. As some of the police were on horseback, many in the country were outraged upon hearing of the incident of "mounted troops out against unarmed women."²⁰ There were a total of fifty-seven women and two men arrested, including Emmeline Pankhurst's daughters Christabel and Sylvia. This incident received widespread publicity and was instrumental in winning additional support for the Women's Social and Political Union.²¹

The WSPU routinely employed methods of destruction, such as throwing stones at windows and destroying letters and mailboxes, in order to gain attention. The first window-breaking incident of the WSPU occurred when two women threw stones into the home of Exchequer H. H. Asquith.²² On March 2, 1912, *The Times* reported that on the previous day:

. . . some hundreds of women sallied forth carrying large muffs in which hammers were concealed, and at a given moment...they went up to the plate-glass windows of various shops and deliberately smashed them with hammers. The destruction done was immense...

An attack was also made on the Prime Minister's house in Downing-street, to which three women, including Mrs. Pankhurst, drove in a motor car. The bell of the house was rung and a letter given in, and stones were then immediately thrown, four panes of glass being broken. While Mrs. Pankhurst was being removed to the Cannon-row Police Station she wrenched herself free and threw a stone through the window of the Colonial Office.²³

In the opinion of Emmeline Pankhurst, throwing stones is the "easiest and most readily understood" way to argue a point, and she whole-heartedly advocated the practice.²⁴

In targeting letters and mailboxes, the suffragettes were aiming to destroy a main concern of government - property. Mailboxes were set up to catch on fire when opened, and a total of about five thousand letters were either corroded with chemicals or the addresses permanently stained black.²⁵ Another incident of property destruction occurred in April 1913, when suffragettes set an empty train on fire. After an investigation was completed, reports were made that ". . . petroleum candles had been placed in nearly all the coaches, and that the cushions had been saturated with petroleum." The connection to suffragists was made after "a large quantity of suffragist literature was discovered in the train, including postcards containing messages to Mr. Asquith, members of the Government, and other members of Parliament."²⁶

Emily Wilding Davison was a remarkable example of a member of the Women's Social and Political Union willing to take extreme action for the cause. Emily Davison's harsh treatment in prison for WSPU activities helped formulate her opinion that "the conscience of the people would awaken only to the sacrifice of a human life."²⁷ She suffered one unsuccessful attempt to kill herself by jumping from upper galleries of the prison before her final act for women's suffrage was undertaken. On June 4, 1913, with the colors of the WSPU sewn inside her jacket, Davison attended the Derby and made her way onto the track as the horses were passing.²⁸ As the incident was reported in *The Times*, "The King's horse was brought to the ground by a woman suffragist, who rushed from the crowd at Tattenham Corner, apparently with the object of seizing the reins." Davison's connection to the suffrage movement was immediately suspected, as "It appears after the woman fell a placard bearing the words 'Votes for Women' was raised by somebody in the crowd, suggesting that the whole thing had been prearranged."²⁹ Emily Davison remained unconscious for two days before she passed away at Epsom Cottage Hospital. A funeral procession was organized in her honor by members of the WSPU, and large crowds gathered to watch final march of the woman who had appealed to the government for action with the sacrifice of her own life.³⁰

Prior to World War I, members of the Women's Social and Political Union undertook an incalculable number of protests and illegal actions. The connection between the acts of the militants and their final aim, the right to vote, was difficult for some to ascertain. Emmeline Pankhurst addressed this issue best when she explained, "every advance of men's political freedom has been marked with violence and the destruction of property. Usually the advance

has been marked by war, which is called glorious. Sometimes it is marked by riotings, which are deemed less glorious but are at least effective.”³¹ Thus, she saw the militant actions of the WSPU as typical of measures employed by those desiring political change, and as the only way proven effective for achieving reform.

Despite her grand aspirations, not all of Pankhurst’s militant strategies were successful in instigating change. Following a 1908 WSPU demonstration where 250,000 people gathered in Hyde Park, Mr. Asquith “replied formally that he had nothing to add to his previous statement - that the Government intended, at some indefinite time, to bring in a general reform bill which *might* be amended to include woman suffrage,” a response which greatly disappointed Pankhurst.³² As the violent acts of the WSPU began to increase, many former supporters of the organization began to withdraw their support and in 1909 Parliament passed a Public Meetings Bill in an attempt to control militancy.³³

Hostile actions enraged Parliament; even politicians who were once sympathetic to the suffragettes “as martyrs and sufferers” began to change their opinions, as they “suspected and disliked the spectacle of women behaving as aggressors: this violated the Victorian teachings which shaped their concept of women.”³⁴ In January 1910, a bill for women’s suffrage designed to be acceptable to all involved parties was authorized to be drafted by a Conciliation Committee. At that time, the suffragettes agreed to cease militant activities until the success of the committee could be determined. The bill was drawn but defeated, and the militants soon resumed activity with increased passion.³⁵ However, these setbacks and disappointments do not wholly discount the contributions of Emmeline Pankhurst and the Women’s Social and Political Union to the women’s suffrage movement. The Government was forced to take notice of the suffragettes as a result of their daring actions.³⁶ Emmeline Pankhurst’s contributions have been challenged by some modern historians and feminists, but her ability to recruit supporters for the suffrage movement and her unyielding belief that success was imminent have led to her immortalization as the figurehead of the women’s suffrage cause in Britain. She is included in *The Legal 100: A Ranking of the Individuals Who Have Most Influenced the Law*, “both as a tireless worker for women’s emancipation and as an innovative strategist in the world of political agitation that [she] deserves to be listed among those who had a major impact on the evolution of the law.”³⁷

Although Emmeline Pankhurst and the Women’s Social and Political Union may be the most well-known names of the women’s suffrage movement in Great Britain, another leader acting entirely independent of Pankhurst and the WSPU, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, is also credited with substantial contributions to the cause. Fawcett was a founding member and president of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies, which was formed in 1897.³⁸ She was a “reserved and unemotional” woman, unlike Pankhurst, but one with a level head and fierce determination.³⁹ The household wherein Millicent Garrett Fawcett was raised fostered her dedication to the women’s movement as she witnessed her sister’s difficulties in entering the medical profession and

was influenced by a her father, who was also a feminist. In 1867, she married Henry Fawcett, a Liberal Member of Parliament who was a known supporter of women's suffrage and also a friend of John Stuart Mill, the man who had proposed the first petition for women's suffrage in 1866.⁴⁰

Millicent Garrett Fawcett maintained an ideology drastically different from that of Emmeline Pankhurst, although at first it appeared as if the two societies could be mutually supportive of one another. Fawcett believed that it was in the best interest of all involved if suffrage societies could maintain peaceful relationships in order to stay focused on their common goal. In 1906, Fawcett was among those who "refused to recognize an unbridgeable division between militant and constitutional methods."⁴¹

Unfortunately, the opposing ideologies of the two prominent women's suffrage societies soon corroded the peaceful relationship Fawcett had desired. Constitutional suffragists believed that "moral force was a more effective, and a more honorable, weapon than physical force," and worried that once violence began, there would be no way to control its use.⁴² As militancy spread and became more violent, Millicent Garrett Fawcett maintained her belief that suffrage must be gained through the use of purely constitutional methods. She denied three appeals for cooperation between the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and the Women's Social and Political Union, and guided a resolution through a committee of the National Union members condemning "the use of violence in political propaganda."⁴³ Fawcett wrote, ". . . if Women Suffragists embark on crime as propaganda, they will stop Women's Suffrage."⁴⁴

The strategy of the National Union was to use influence among political leaders to have a women's suffrage bill proposed and made into law. As each new session of Parliament began, members of the National Union would send letters to each Member of Parliament imploring them to sponsor a bill for the women's suffrage cause. The National Union also sent multiple petitions to Parliament.⁴⁵ Around 1913, the National Union adapted its strategy by aiming for a Government Bill, as it recognized not much chance existed of passing a bill that was privately sponsored.⁴⁶ At the same time, the efforts of the members continued undeterred, as member societies of the National Union began to appeal to working class women by forming suffrage clubs in various communities.⁴⁷ One of Millicent Garrett Fawcett's contributions to the National Union was her speaking tours, which are credited for "attracting large audiences and providing reassurance to workers that the movement was continuing to progress."⁴⁸

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies had traditionally relied upon the support of the Liberal Party to advance its interests in Parliament. However, after the failure of the Conciliation Bill in 1910, the National Union members started to become disillusioned with their Liberal allies.⁴⁹ Prior to 1910, the National Union, "convinced that women's suffrage was a liberal cause, tended to ignore the figures and to exaggerate the Liberal Party's enthusiasm for the cause," a practice that was some finally began to see as dangerous following the disappointing loss of the Conciliation Bill.⁵⁰ The National Union decided that it may be more effective to align strategi-

cally with the Labour Party. Millicent Garrett Fawcett saw the alliance with the Labour Party as a temporary situation, and commented that as soon as the Liberal Party realized the dangers of not supporting the suffragists, the agreement with the Labour Party would be dropped and interests realigned with the Liberals.⁵¹ The National Union and Labour Party established an Election Fighting Fund with the intention of supporting Labour candidates for Parliament in order to threaten the power of the Liberal Party. Thus, by the beginning of World War I, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies had secured a commitment from the Labour Party - although the party held no hope of majority rule - but had no commitment from either the Liberals or the Conservatives that if either were elected, a bill would be presented for women's suffrage.⁵²

The stagnant situation faced by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies at the start of World War I does not discredit the work they achieved prior to that time. While women were still denied the right to vote, the issue of women's suffrage had at long last become an issue granted national support, in part due to the suffrage organizations created by the National Union. Members of the National Union had also secured ties with many prominent members of Parliament, including David Lloyd George, an important politician who would later serve as Prime Minister from 1916 to 1922, and Bonar Law, a Member of Parliament who later became Prime Minister from 1922 to 1923.⁵³ Additionally, the first nationally organized effort to draw working class women to the movement is credited to the National Union.⁵⁴ In the years leading up to the War, Millicent Garrett Fawcett attributed the lack of progress in the movement to the "increasingly violent and uncontrolled actions of supporters of the Women's Social and Political Union, and negotiations with politicians whose commitment to women's suffrage could not be relied upon however blandly sympathetic their words."⁵⁵

Tensions between the two organizations were not always cordial, but at the start of World War I, both the National Union of Women's Suffrage societies and the Women's Social and Political Union set aside their grievances with each other and with the government in order to support the war effort. The National Union agreed to support their country and end political activity for the time being after discussing the issue during two days of meetings.⁵⁶ The WSPU suspended militant activity, but only after the government agreed that "all suffrage prisoners would be released unconditionally."⁵⁷

The fact that World War I positively impacted the women's suffrage movement is undeniable, yet multiple theories exist as to how the war created this positive effect. In May 1915, the first Coalition Government was formed, and this change had positive repercussions for the movement. Political parties were no longer engaged in their old struggles for power, as all were concerned with the war, and this climate helped to precipitate change.⁵⁸

Opponents to women's suffrage prior to the war often argued that if women were granted the vote, the domestic stability of the country would be destroyed. When women demonstrated, through their entry into the workforce during the war, that families would not be endangered by the empowerment of women, they disproved the claims of their opponents.⁵⁹ However, Christabel

Pankhurst was one woman who challenged the claim that women proved themselves during the war and thus were allowed to vote. She challenged “those who held that women’s massive war effort rather than the suffragette guerrillas, had secured the vote. This would not have been granted, she was convinced, if politicians had not been afraid of a resumption of militancy.”⁶⁰

Perhaps the more credible explanation of why the war aided the women’s movement so greatly is one of a more practical nature. As the men returned from fighting in World War I, they found that they had been disenfranchised because they had not resided in the same location for the amount of time stipulated by the law. This seemed unjust to most in the country, and there was widespread support for a reform bill that would allow returning servicemen to maintain the right to vote in upcoming elections. The women suffragists seized this opportunity to advocate the inclusion of women’s suffrage in the new bill. Millicent Garrett Fawcett wrote to Mr. Asquith, and while his response was less than a commitment, it was more encouraging than previous correspondence had been.⁶¹

In 1918, the Representation of the People Act became law, and the women’s suffragists celebrated a victory. Women over thirty who were householders, wives of householders, or occupied property with a value of at least five pounds a year, or women who had graduated from a university, were permitted to vote. 8,479,156 women were soon registered. But the right to vote was not seen as an end in itself by the leaders of the women’s suffrage organizations, which soon turned to supporting causes now able to be directly influenced by their votes. Millicent Garrett Fawcett marked a noted increase in legislation benefiting women’s interests passing through Parliament after 1918. In 1920, Fawcett and nineteen other women were appointed as magistrates.⁶² After 1918, the National Union agreed to add to its list of goals. The organization’s primary aim was still to secure voting rights for women which were equal to those of men, but the desire to work towards other reforms of benefit to women and also to “assist women to realize their responsibility as voters” were newly adopted.⁶³

While Fawcett and others were in favor of a political organization that allowed both men and women to take equal part, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst opposed this idea and “relaunched the women-only WSPU as the Women’s Party” in 1917.⁶⁴ In 1928, ten years after the first women were allowed to vote in Great Britain, women were at long last granted complete voting rights. After learning the bill had been passed, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, who was eighty years old at the time, finally “acknowledged the enormous contribution of the militant suffrage campaign and of Mrs Pankhurst, who had died in June 1928.”⁶⁵ The effect of the women’s right to vote was demonstrated by the fact that in 1928, fifty-three percent of the eligible voters were women, and when these women were first able to vote on the same terms as men in May 1929, the election’s results were significant because they brought the Labour Party into power a second time.⁶⁶

Understandably, amidst the many years of struggle for enfranchisement, women involved in the battle became frustrated and oftentimes at odds with one another. The National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies was quick to

place blame upon the Women's Social and Political Union, just as the WSPU was liberal in its criticisms of the National Union. The criticisms the organizations had of one another, while sometimes quite harsh, often contained valid points. The National Union hoped that its "propaganda efforts would decimate the bad feeling engendered by militancy and show the suffrage movement in a more sober and respectable light," suggesting that the WSPU was mistaken in its belief that militancy was the best way to effect change, and in fact, many members of Parliament had become disenchanted with the activities of the militants.⁶⁷ Countering this argument, Sylvia Pankhurst believed that "if the non-militants had only been militant, the Government, deprived of its favorite contrast between the 'reasonable' Mrs Fawcett and the 'hooligan' Mrs Pankhurst, would have been forced to capitulate before the first world war."⁶⁸ Perhaps a less biased assessment of the relative contributions of the two women and their organizations is that "the non-militants exploited the opening that the suffragettes had forced through the wall of resistance to women's suffrage," as this acknowledges that both groups were instrumental in invoking change, and one without the other may not have been effective.⁶⁹

An interesting way to examine the relative contributions of the two societies is as foils for one another. The women in the National Union: created sympathy for the cause of women's suffrage by outwardly conforming to the very image which the Pankhursts and their colleagues rejected. In this respect the militants were a valuable foil for the suffragists and made the adherents of the NUWSS appear deceptively reasonable and moderate.⁷⁰

Without the standard of disregard for law and order set by the militants, the constitutional suffragists may have appeared more radical to the members of Parliament with whom they allied. Without their knowledge, the WSPU may have set the stage for the National Union to enter and play the role of moderate and reasonable suffragists who could sway the sympathies of the government. Had the WSPU not adopted militancy, there is no telling how long the women's suffrage movement may have continued on the path of disappointment, as all the efforts of suffragists from the 1860s into the twentieth century resulted in little or no advancement in their cause. Likewise, if the National Union had not remained reasonable, militancy may have discouraged support for women's suffrage and women may have continued to be denied the right to vote. The militants themselves did not win much support from Parliament, and therefore they were not as directly responsible for women gaining the right to vote as the constitutionalists. However, the militants gave the movement the momentum it craved in order to end the period of dashed hopes and enter an age of renewed possibilities.

While Emmeline Pankhurst and Millicent Garrett Fawcett cannot be accredited with all the successes or condemned for the failures of their respective groups they did, nonetheless, exert considerable influence over their organizations. Pankhurst and Fawcett were both instrumental in the success of the

movement in that they set the tone for their organizations and then led their respective groups through the years of struggle. While their contributions could not have been entirely equal, the tactics of the women were so dissimilar that to hold their work up to direct comparison does not do them justice. Pankhurst was more effective in drawing attention to the cause, while Fawcett was more effective in winning the support of Members of Parliament.

Perhaps it was due to the times that women's suffrage was enacted in 1918. The war, undoubtedly, did play a part in the final decision to include women's enfranchisement in the Reform Bill of 1918, if for no other reason than that the returning soldiers were the reason the bill was drawn at all. However, had it not been for the work of women suffragists who pleaded for inclusion in the bill, and who had demonstrated their unyielding determination to win the vote in the decades prior to 1918, it almost certainly would never have become law at that time.



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The Pioneer of Postmodernism: The Creation of and Reaction to James Joyce's *Ulysses*

Christopher Karr

When attempting to summarize the magnitude and impact of James Joyce not only on literature and art, but also on culture in general, even the greatest, most insightful critics deem the task unfeasible. Revered literary critic Harold Bloom said that “defining the genius of James Joyce would be an impossible venture: who can define the genius of Shakespeare or Dante or Chaucer or Cervantes?”¹ Joyce’s influence is so remarkable and, in a sense, overwhelming, that it would be difficult to determine the source of his authority. Bloom verifies this claim: “I would have difficulty in taking apart the tangle of Shakespeare, Joyce, and Freud that manifests endlessly in our media culture.”²

The next question is only logical: How, exactly, does one man become so massively influential? Shakespeare wrote nearly forty plays and roughly 150 sonnets, and Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, left behind a large body of work and pioneered modern psychology. Joyce, on the other hand, wrote only three novels, a collection of short stories, and a handful of essays. But it was the massive impact of the limited body of work that has made his legacy immortal. After dedicating nearly twenty-five years of his life to writing only two major novels, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce contributed two pieces of literature that will continue to exert influence on the literary canon for many years to come. Though *Finnegans Wake* still perplexes even the most adventurous of critics, *Ulysses* is widely considered Joyce’s masterwork.

I. Life Before *Ulysses*

Born in 1882 to a Catholic family in Dublin, Joyce eventually left Ireland out of disdain for the political oppression and religious authority in the country, traveling to many other countries to seek out a place to call home. Even

though it appeared that Joyce despised his Irish heritage, all of his work takes place in Ireland, which was “the sight on which he set his fierce imagination and the subject of all of Joyce’s fiction and most of his writing.”³ Just as he rebelled against Ireland, Joyce also rebelled against the Catholic Church “in defiance of its strictures and demands for submission.”⁴ His contempt for both Ireland and the Catholic Church provided him with a wealth of material to write about. The remarkable aspect of his disdain for Catholicism and Ireland is that his body of work – *Ulysses*, in particular – is overwhelmingly preoccupied with influence from both.

Though there are numerous themes that stem from religion and national heritage running through both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, one can first notice these elements coming into focus in Joyce’s first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Finally published completely in 1916, *Portrait* examines the life of Joyce’s alter ego, Stephen Dedalus. The novel follows Stephen, the protagonist, from early childhood to young adulthood, when he decides that he wants to become an artist; at one point, Stephen expresses his manifesto: “I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use – silence exile, and cunning.”⁵ It’s easy to read Joyce’s own desires for artistic integrity in Stephen’s statement. When reading *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, one can see how Joyce’s desire to express himself “as freely” as he can comes to fruition. At the time, many viewed *Portrait* as a preview of what was to come from Joyce. “In its focus on the formation of consciousness and identity, in its fusion of the realistic and the symbolic...*Portrait* is in many ways the prototypical modern novel.”⁶ Though the novel was well received, it did not have the impact of *Ulysses*, his next work of fiction, which is considered by most to be his masterpiece.

II. The Longest Day in Literary History

It could be argued that the initial idea for *Ulysses* came from Joyce’s own fervent desire for literary immortality: “I’ve put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that’s the only way of insuring one’s immortality.”⁷ As he and his family moved from Trieste to Zurich to Paris over the course of nearly eight years, Joyce began, as he stated in a letter, “writing a book *Ulysses* which however [would] not be finished for some years.”⁸ Though he certainly knew that the novel would monopolize a great deal of his time and effort, (in a letter, he surmised that he “must have spent nearly 20,000 hours in writing *Ulysses*”) not even Joyce himself realized the impact that it would have on twentieth century literature.⁹

Though the novel has over seventy major characters, the story focuses on three people: Leopold Bloom, a 38-year-old Jewish advertising canvasser; Molly Bloom, his unfaithful wife; and Stephen Dedalus, the young artist from *Portrait*. The lives of the three characters intertwine with one another on a very long June day in Dublin, 1904. The structure of the book follows Homer’s *Odyssey*, and many of the characters represent the mythical figures that are

detailed in Homer's epic poem. The central protagonist, Leopold, is Joyce's Ulysses, which is an Anglicized form of Odysseus, wandering about the city of Dublin and encountering the same trials, tribulations, temptations, and complications as the warrior of Homer's tale on a smaller, more intimate scale. Joyce chose to superimpose his novel over Homer's poem because he felt the themes of the *Odyssey* were the "most beautiful, all-embracing . . . greater, more human, than that of *Hamlet*, *Don Quixote*, Dante, *Faust*...the most human in world literature."¹⁰ Particularly, it was the character of Odysseus who made Joyce want to utilize his characteristics when crafting Leopold: "The character of Ulysses always fascinated me—even when a boy."¹¹

Joyce also saw the epic implications of Ulysses' journey reflected in the common life of the novel's characters. "*Ulysses* makes the case that ordinary life reveals an epic significance through the power and genius of the novelist to unlock its secrets and trace its universal patterns."¹² Many critics view the novel as the culmination of the author's feelings of rejection, hatred, contempt, and rebellion toward the Catholic Church, Ireland, and perhaps even life itself. However, Richard Ellmann, Joyce's most noted biographer, contends that *Ulysses* is itself "a rejection, in humanity's name and comedy's method, of fear and hatred."¹³

Finally, *Ulysses* gained attention not only because of its scope, size, and ambition, but because of its technical uniqueness. Aside from the fact that it follows the path of the *Odyssey*, it is constantly engaging in a metafictional dialogue with itself.¹⁴ The final three chapters of the novel are composed of Molly's interior monologue, which is virtually free of punctuation of any kind; the chapter known as "The Sirens" is made up of short bursts of letters that may or may not even form words, the cumulative effect being that of listening to the music of our everyday lives; the "Oxen of the Sun" chapter, set in a maternity hospital, tells the story of a woman giving birth while simultaneously guiding the reader through the evolution of English prose (the prose at the beginning is Old English, which evolves into a Medieval literary style, etc.). On nearly every level imaginable, Joyce sought to challenge his abilities as a writer in the crafting of every aspect of *Ulysses*.

III. Publishing Problems and a Variety of Responses

Joyce finally published *Ulysses* in its entirety on February 2, 1922. Though it was initially difficult to get a publisher, Joyce's friend and fellow expatriate Sylvia Beach agreed to publish it through her Paris bookshop Shakespeare and Company. Though *Ulysses* was available overseas for some time, it had been banned in the United States until 1933 because of the "Western world's difficulty adjusting the promises and perils of contemporary life, and the emblematic of the struggle to unyoke the harness of the past."¹⁵ Within the six years after its first publication in Paris, many independent publishers – including Harriet Shaw Weaver, John Rodker, and Samuel Roth, who had tried to publish bootleg copies of the book – attempted to make copies available in America. Nevertheless, before the copies were made available to the public, they were seized or destroyed.

In 1933, there were obscenity charges brought against *Ulysses*, but “Random House successfully defended Joyce’s novel . . . and published [it] in the Modern Library.”¹⁶ The judge in the case, John M. Woolsey, who ultimately decided “*Ulysses* may, therefore, be admitted into the United States,” found the book to be “an amazing *tour de force*.”¹⁷ He dismissed the possibility that the novel was offensive and exploitive, and found it to be a valid artistic expression: “Although [*Ulysses*] contains . . . many words usually considered dirty, I have not found anything that I consider to be dirt for dirt’s sake. Each word...contributes like a bit of mosaic to the detail of the picture which Joyce is seeking to construct for his readers.”¹⁸

Upon worldwide distribution, *Ulysses* received a variety of reactions from the literary community that ranged from unrestrained praise to revolted disdain. Ezra Pound, an influential critic and poet during the Modernist movement of the twentieth century, said that “in a single chapter [Joyce] discharges all the clichés of the English language.”¹⁹ Fellow poet and critic T. S. Eliot deemed *Ulysses* “the most important expression which the present age has found; it is a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape.”²⁰ On the other hand, novelist Virginia Woolf claimed “never did I read such tosh.”²¹ The British novelist E. M. Forster felt the novel was “a dogged attempt to cover the universe with mud . . . an attempt to make crossness and dirt succeed where sweetness and light failed.”²² The original book review in *The New York Times* was mixed. The *Times* critic, Dr. Joseph Collins, said the novel “comes nearer to being the perfect revelation of a personality than any book in existence.”²³ At the same time, he believed that the book would not be very useful to the average reader: “There are [many] other angles at which *Ulysses* can be viewed profitably, but they are not many.”²⁴ Considering the reactions ranged from reverent admiration to utter disapproval, *Ulysses* is easily the most controversial book produced in the twentieth century. No other novel has gained so much attention – either positive or negative – from such a wide variety of people. With its literary invention, massive scope, and shattering originality, it changed the face of literature.

IV. *Ulysses* and Joyce in the Literary Canon

T. S. Eliot’s comment that everyone would be “indebted” to *Ulysses* has proven to be quite prophetic. In reflection on twentieth century literature, the massive impact of Joyce is evident. Several years ago, the Modern Library, a division of Random House dedicated to printing classics, sought to determine the 100 greatest books of the 20th century. The board members selected *Ulysses* as the number one greatest book of the century and the readers who were polled placed it eleventh. Though *Ulysses* has often been considered a book inaccessible to the masses, such polls suggest otherwise; while it is halloved by literary critics and scholars, there is also evidence that the common reader has found interest in it.

We return to critic Harold Bloom, a self-proclaimed elitist, who has written incessantly about the importance of fiction with high literary merit. Though he is doubtlessly aware of the important pieces of work in existence, he still

claims that Leopold Bloom of *Ulysses* is one of the most remarkable characters in all of literature: “If asked who is the most complete character in literature since Shakespeare and Cervantes, I would not hesitate: ‘[Leopold Bloom] is richest and would get my vote.’”²⁵ Joyce’s biographer Ellmann still insists that Joyce’s body of work, and our understanding of Joyce as a writer and artist, is still in the process of being sorted out. “We are still learning to be James Joyce’s contemporaries, to understand our interpreter.”²⁶

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we can find truth in Joyce’s promise that he would ensure his own immortality. Though his books still exist and are read by both scholars and the common reader, we are all still trying to understand his work. (Two full books have been published in order to hold the annotations for *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*; the book that supplements *Wake* – Roland McHugh’s *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* – is 630 pages long, which is roughly the same length as the novel itself.²⁷) Perhaps this is why our collective interest is still drawn to Joyce and his work. Despite the fact that his two most famous novels have been around for nearly a century, we have yet to reach any concrete conclusions regarding the author’s intent. Joyce operated outside the conventional literary box, and for that achievement, he changed the standard for twentieth century literature.



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1. Harold Bloom, *Genius: A Mosaic of One Hundred Exemplary Creative Minds* (New York: Warner, 2002), 522.
2. Ibid.
3. Nola Tully ed., *yes I said yes I will Yes. A Celebration of James Joyce, Ulysses, and 100 Years of Bloomsday* (New York: Vintage, 2004), 41.
4. Ibid.
5. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (New York: Vintage, 1993).
6. Daniel S. Burt, *The Novel 100: A Ranking of the Greatest Novels of All Time* (New York: Checkmark, 2004), 165.
7. Tully, *yes I said*, 63.
8. Richard Ellmann ed., *Selected Letters of James Joyce* (New York: Viking, 1975), 221.
9. Ibid., 282.
10. Burt, *Novel 100*, 11.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 13
13. Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 390.
14. The term “metafiction” refers to a type of fiction that is aware of the “fact” that it is a fictional creation; it self-consciously engages in a dialogue with itself.
15. Tully, *yes I said*, 23.
16. Ibid., 20.
17. Ibid., 36.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 26.
20. Ibid., 66.
21. Ibid., 26.
22. Ibid., 31.
23. Joseph Collins, “A Fine Madness: Ulysses by James Joyce,” *Books of the Century: A Hundred Years of Authors, Ideas, and Literature*, ed. Charles McGrath, (New York: Times Books, 1998), 46.
24. Ibid., 47.
25. Bloom, *Genius*, 525.
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Perspectives

South Africa: Bought by Blood

Iris Spoor

The prosecution of the Second Boer War (1899-1902) by both British and Afrikaners was to have enduring impact on the political landscape, economic base and social structure of South Africa. The British had been at odds with the Boer republics of South Africa for quite some time, fighting a war in 1880, but the second war was quite different. It could be considered one of the first modern conflicts and, to a large extent, the end of British, optimistic imperialism. A variety of factors precipitated this change. Newer highly accurate, “smokeless” guns were employed allowing for more lethal force, and covert, commando operations on the part of the Boers.¹ The war also featured brutal tactics including a scorched earth policy under Lord Kitchener, leader of the British forces, concentration camps to cut off support to the guerilla Boer commandos and, finally, the ruthless commando tactics carried out by well trained and experienced Boer soldiers.

The conflict also featured more media coverage and anti-war protesting than any previous British conflict. Authoress Emily Hobhouse, who visited the concentration camps in South Africa, was one of the strongest critics. By presenting statistics, secondary (and some primary) literature on the subject, it will become obvious that the Second Boer war a new kind of war. It was a war which cracked the facade of the ‘Pax Britannia’ and highlighted the strained and unhealthy relationship which existed among the black Africans, Afrikaners and British. An investigation of the concentration camps and British policy will also show that the war was not merely a “white man’s war” as it has typically been portrayed.²

The essence of the conflict, what the Boers and British were actually fighting for, has been endlessly debated. Some, like prominent Marxist historian, Eric J. Hobsbawm, hold that, “the motive for war was gold.”³ Others, like Frank Welsh, believe that the British had grander aims in mind such as establishing, “hegemony in Southern Africa” to the exclusion of other European powers and that the Boers saw themselves as fighting for “national independence and the preservation of a distinctive native Afrikaner culture.”⁴ Indeed the Afrikaners referred to the war as the “Second War of Independence.”⁵ Many theories about

the motives behind the war exist, but the ostensible reason for British involvement in the war related to the rights of British *uitlander*, Transvaal miners. James M. Perry, for example, believed that the war was “inevitable” since the British miners were, “denied citizenship or even basic civil rights.”⁶

The British, acting to defend *uitlander* rights, sent an ultimatum to Transvaal Republic president, Paul Kruger, demanding enfranchisement of the British residents in the Transvaal.⁷ Kruger, a strong and well respected figure in his own right, offered a counter ultimatum on October 8, 1899. He asked for a “commitment to peaceful arbitration and assurances that all British forces would be withdrawn from the Transvaal border.”⁸ Needless to say, the British declined the offer. Whichever theory concerning the reason for conflict one endorses, Lord Salisbury’s (then Prime Minister in Britain) comment is interesting: “They’ve [the Boers]done it a defiance so audacious . . . liberated us from the necessity of explaining...why we are at war.”⁹ It is estimated that 88,000 men fought for the Boers while a stunning 450,000 served for the British. Many of the British troops came from Australia, New Zealand and Canada.¹⁰

The “first shot”, so to speak, was actually fired by the Boers. This initiated the first phase of the war. On October 11, 1899, Boer commandos from Transvaal and the Orange Free State attacked, “several towns garrisoned by British troops, including Kimberly.”¹¹ Kimberly was a major diamond mining town and Cecil Rhodes, diamond magnate, was present during the four month Boer siege following the outbreak of the war.¹² The first half of the war saw a number of British defeats. As Wilson and Thompson point out, “the isolation and numerical weakness of the republicans were offset,” since many of their soldiers had been, “bred to the horse and the rifle and had spent many months of their lives on commando service.”¹³ In addition, the Boers had the German Mauser rifle. Ian Hogg, British army Master Gunner and author, comments that the Mauser was a, “bolt action single-shot weapon firing an 11mm bullet from a metallic cartridge case.”¹⁴ He adds that it was, “well designed and well made.”¹⁵ The Boers would have likely been using a newer Mauser model (the gun was invented in 1871). The British used the Lee-Enfield rifle. It was a reliable weapon, but the Mauser was more accurate and had more stopping power. The Boers also had the courage of their convictions—they were fighting a war of “independence” while the average British soldier only had a vague idea of why he was fighting. They also believed that “an all powerful God” was on their side.¹⁶ An interesting quotation from a British Journal, the *Freethinker* (October 1899), observes that:

The Boer has a Mauser rifle in one hand and a Dutch Bible in the other, while the Britisher has weapons in both hands and a Bible behind his back. Each relies on the God of that book. Each prays to the God of that book. Each informs the God of that book which side he ought to take in the quarrel.¹⁷

The quotation points to the reality that the British had not fought with another Christian power since the Crimean War forty years earlier.¹⁸ The situation undoubtedly created confusion and uneasiness from the beginning.

One of the greatest defeats for the British in the early war occurred at Spion Kop hill. Perry tells us, for example, that, “seventy men were shot dead in one trench, each of them with a bullet in the head.”¹⁹ Winston Churchill, who was serving in the army at the time, was present at Spion Kop. His regiment joined the fighting late in the day. He described a scene as he ascended the hill:

Men were staggering along alone, or supported by comrades, or crawling on hands and knees, or carried on stretchers. Corpses lay here and there...I passed about two hundred . . .²⁰

The battle was a complete loss for the British, but it seems to have inspired some admiration for the British army in the eyes of the Boers. General Louis Botha of the Boers waved a flag of truce, “inviting the British to gather their wounded and bury their dead, tasks in which his men assisted.”²¹ One of the Boer doctors commented, with some admiration that, “We Boers would not, could not suffer like this.”²² Interestingly, a future, hugely influential figure was present on the battlefield, Mohandas Gandhi. He had formed, “an ambulance corps composed mainly of Natalian Indians.”²³

The second phase of the war began when the British received new commanders, Lord Roberts of Kandahar and Lord Kitchener of Khartoum.²⁴ Kitchener was emblematic of the new *realpolitik* of the age. As an example of his character, he desecrated the tomb at Mahdi, during the Mahdist wars, “as his first act after his victory at the battle of Omdurman” in 1898. In much the same way, he made swift decisions to end the Boer War. The new commanders turned back the Boer advances, “occupied Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and Pretoria, drove the aged President Kruger into exile via Lorenzo Marques, and gained control of the entire railway network.”²⁶ By 1900, the British believed the war to be won and the annexed the Boer republics under the names Transvaal and Orange River Colony. The war, however, was by no means over and entered into the third phase. The Boers scattered into guerilla commando groups and continued to harass the British forces. They attacked small British units and survived off the land and whatever supplies they could get from allies, or family. The British were confronted with “a nation in arms.”²⁷ To end this frustrating resistance, Kitchener developed the concentration camp system and adopted a scorched earth policy. Thousands of acres were burned and agricultural production dropped off sharply. The British army was heavily dependent on the railway lines and Boer sabotage to the system was very threatening. To reduce this possibility, the British (acting under Roberts’ orders) burned all houses near track breaks and imprisoned the owners.²⁸ Kitchener installed 3700 miles of barbed wire fencing, defended by a “chain of eight thousand fortified blockhouses.”²⁹ The blockhouses were located at one and a half mile intervals and manned by seven soldiers and three to four African watchmen.³⁰ This system divided the country into armed grids which restricted the mobility of the Boers. It is estimated that 136,000 Afrikaners were placed in 50 concentration camps while 115,000 Africans (usually servants or tenant farmers of the Afrikaners) were placed in 66 camps.³¹ The cost of this endeavor was enormous for the British government in financial and moral capital.

In the Afrikaner camps an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 women and children died. The cause of death was mainly disease, but starvation also took its toll. Dysentery, measles and enteric fever were some of the biggest killers. By October 1901, the Afrikaner in-camp death rate reached “344 per thousand per annum.”³² Most of these fatalities were women and children. The rate prompted the British to replace camp management with civilian leadership, but the damage had already been done. The total Boer population at the time was somewhere near 500,000—30,000 dead is an alarming proportion.³³ The African camps were just as poorly managed and not as well documented. Oakes informs us that the African camps first mission was to supply the British army with “native labor.”³⁴ Less money was spent on their rations as well. In Afrikaner camps, 8.5 pence was spent per person per day, in African camps it was a mere 4.5.³⁵ Some of the inhabitants, who had been given work by the Brits, did not receive free rations; they had to use their paltry income. Not surprisingly this combination led to many deaths. By December 1901, it was recorded that 436 per thousand died per year in the African camps.³⁶ Complete records do not exist, however, concerning how the African people died, but it was likely from the same diseases as the Afrikaners. These camps did not receive the same sort of publicity as Afrikaner camps did from authors like Emily Hobhouse and Hobson. Some missionaries visited the African camps, however, and they have left behind some interesting commentary. Oakes quotes the Reverend Mr. Brown who visited the African camp at Dryharts. He said, “between the Dutch and the English they have lost everything”³⁷

As mentioned above, this atrocity did not go unnoticed in the British homefront and has left an indelible mark on the Afrikaner consciousness. Albert Grundlingh pointed out that some Boers believed the British had embarked upon a “deliberate policy of genocide.”³⁸ There is nothing to suggest that the British had attempted a deliberate genocide, but when nearly 10% of a population, the majority being women and children (the future of any population), die, it is difficult to dispel the image. It is not unlike the potato famine situation in Ireland. Many Irish felt the British intentionally allowed the crisis to continue even though they had means to ameliorate the problem. It is not surprising that the Irish had sympathy for the Boer cause. The camps in particular helped foster a new Afrikaner identity. Survivors of the war who did not defect to the British and fought to the last days of the war were called “bitter-enders.”³⁹ They harbored anger and distrust of the British because of the camps, the scorched earth policy and their imperialistic presence. The situation is similar to that of the Reconstruction era in the American south. People who fought under bitter conditions, for a cause they believed in were being asked to give up arms and become part of a new, unified society. The transition in America was not smooth, and the transition in South Africa was not either.

The concentration camps, the overtly imperialist tone of British creation and heavy cost (in men, money and moral standing) of the Boer War prompted people like British politician, David Lloyd George and Emily Hobhouse to speak against it. Critics’ positions varied widely on the issue. Some were against the war entirely, while others were appalled by the tactics employed. Radical

liberals and socialists viewed the war as, “symptomatic of the breakdown of British society and its ability to conduct civilized relations among its own population and with other nations.”⁴⁰ Hobhouse visited some Afrikaner camps and was appalled, and then embarked upon a humanitarian campaign to have the conditions reversed. Her efforts earned her the title “Angel of Love.”⁴¹ Her efforts caused the camps to be reorganized under civilian control. While this resulted in better sanitation and medical conditions, the damage had been done. She was deported in October 1901, but returned in 1903 and helped shape the “education of women and girls in the Orange Free State.”⁴² Lord Kitchener was apparently so frustrated with her that he only referred to her as “that bloody woman.”⁴³

A secular critic, J.M. Robertson, denounced Britain’s actions in South Africa. He referred to imperialism as, “international burglary” he also denounced Rudyard Kipling as a “barbarian sentimentalist.”⁴⁴ Religious groups also began to distance themselves from the endeavor. People like Reverend Brown (mentioned above) began to see what imperialist adventures had wrought. Finally, and importantly, global opinion was generally on the side of the Boers especially in Ireland and America.

Another aspect of the Boer war that received little attention and has yet to be completely explored, is African involvement in it. Both sides have been criticized, but the Boers have come under special scrutiny; especially in light of apartheid and the obsession with racial categorizing that continued into the late twentieth century. The blacks were treated quite poorly under the Afrikaners since they first landed in South Africa. They viewed them as inferiors, heathens and, even as people “without souls.”⁴⁵ Blacks and others of the non-white population were subjected to restrictive Free State laws. Because of this, the black Africans placed, “great hopes on a British victory.”⁴⁶ Unfortunately, aside from a few vaguely “liberal statements of principle in the early stages of the war, Britain in effect did nothing but maintain the status quo after its annexation of the Free State.”⁴⁷ In fact, Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa, once said, concerning the treatment of race in South Africa: “You only have to sacrifice the nigger absolutely, and the game is easy.”⁴⁸ Both the British and the Boers stated that the war was between white men and they did not want to engage the black population in combat.⁴⁹ Both sides, “made extensive use of black labor” and, as it turns out, Africans played a fairly big role in the British army and even in the Boer army.⁵⁰ At least 10,000 black Africans, “went along with the commandos, not only as *agterryers*, but also as cattle drivers and herders.”⁵¹ The official number under the British provided by Lord Kitchener (which was probably much higher) came in at 10,053.⁵² Their treatment varied. They served largely as muleteers and watchman in the British army, some were “treated with disdain by some but with open camaraderie by others.”⁵³ According to Oakes, both sides denied that they “armed Africans, each accusing the other of doing so.”⁵⁴ In fact, the arming of Africans was cited by Boer peace delegates as one of the best reasons for ending the war. They said the “Kaffirs” who were armed and taking part in the war were, “through the committing of murders and all sorts of cruelties” causing an unbearable situation in “both republics.”⁵⁵ This

Boer attitude was a misrepresentation since they armed Africans as well and undoubtedly served to further the cause of apartheid. The British encouragement of “cheeky” Africans at Boer commando executions also served to increase Boer resentment toward the African population.⁵⁶

Kitchener’s tactics ultimately worked, however. The war finally came to a close in May 1902. The Boer free republics were fully annexed by the British Empire, but as Mostert points out, the Boers still had a “free hand with the natives” which, he claims, was as “important to them as their independence.”⁵⁷ Whether or not this is true, is up to individual interpretation. Indeed, the Africans were sadly disillusioned by the outcome of the war. The Boers were extremely concerned that the Africans would be enfranchised by the British. The Africans similarly presumed that they would be included as citizens in the peace. The British politically abandoned them with the Treaty of Vereeniging.⁵⁸ When Jan Smuts (Boer Commander and future British Field Marshall) and Milner met to draft the treaty, Smuts requested that the “question of African enfranchisement be deferred until after granting of responsible government.”⁵⁹ Milner answered, “On this question I am at one with you—it must stand over for responsible government.”⁶⁰ In other words, the British agreed to leave the matter to the Boers who would certainly veto enfranchisement of the Africans.

It is obvious that the Second Boer War is certainly not a simple matter. Each side engaged in subterfuge and employed brutal tactics in a distinctly modern way. Africans and Afrikaner, men, women and children were treated scandalously and inhumanely in the concentration camps and both sides tried to deny their employment of the African people in the aid of their respective causes. The war marked the beginning of the end of British imperialism. The bloom was off the rose, so to speak, when Britain willingly engaged in a battle against what appeared to be the underdog, free republic with little justification. The Afrikaners, for their part, suffered great losses and great injury to their population, economy and national identity. For a time, the war and the interment of civilians served as a source of national inspiration, but, in later years, the memory and the pride faded. Grundlingh reported an entry in the visitors’ book at the “War Museum of the Boer Republics” in Bloemfontein which translates to: “It is all very interesting but counts for nothing today.”⁶¹ Nothing could be further from the truth. What began in the Second Boer War in 1899 continued throughout the twentieth century and continues today. We see the ugly face of concentration camps and racial anxieties globally throughout the twentieth century. We see the destructiveness of prolonged guerilla warfare in the Middle East. Anti-imperialist and anti-war sentiments have never been stronger and certainly developed from the insights and work of people like Emily Hobhouse. In addition, the war has much to teach about how Afrikaners and black Africans interacted and how apartheid eventually developed. Finally, truth, no matter how unpleasant, or gruesome always has a place and most certainly counts for something. It is best to conclude, as Rudyard Kipling concludes his poem *The Settler* (written in 1903, after the close of the Boer war) with a striking stanza that refers to the British. However, it could be applied to all involved with the struggle for South Africa

Here, in the waves and the troughs of the plains
Where the healing stillness lies,
And the vast, benignant sky restrains
And the long days make wise—
Bless to our use the rain and the sun
And the blind seed in its bed,
That we may repair the wrong that was done
To the living and the dead! ⁶²



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Dancing with the Stars: Mathilde Kshesinskaia and the Politicization of Celebrity Culture at the End of the Russian Empire

Krista Sigler

Throughout the world, the glossy pages of celebrity gossip publications like *Us Weekly* and *People Magazine* are regarded as the epitome of American culture. They suggest the distribution of meaningless celebrities, symbols of little more than gross capitalist consumption and the vapid, non-critical, audience who remain dazzled by them. Mass celebrity culture has been viewed as a disease of the late 20th century, one largely created for and by the wealthy post-World War II American public.¹

Celebrity and celebrity gossip, however, has a larger history than the existence of television programming like *Entertainment Tonight*. In fact, celebrity is a particularly modern construction, created by rising urbanization, rising literacy rates, and above all, democratization of societies. Rather than being simply a product aimed at sedating a receptive public, celebrity is a language of symbols rife with political possibility. We see this at the end of the tsarist empire in Russia, when the media and audience created a celebrity out of the dancer Mathilde Kshesinskaia, a celebrity who existed, at first, only within the elite world of the imperial ballet. As control of the press broke down in the war years, however, the meaning of Kshesinskaia became a matter of broader and broader public discussion; this discussion ultimately reworked the imperial dancer's specialized celebrity into a national fame as an image of the Romanov regime. Rather than distracting the urban Russian audience from political discussion, celebrity became its ammunition, a vehicle to define what was wrong with imperial society.

I. Background: Kshesinskaia's biography

Mathilde Kshesinskaia's original fame in Russian society came through her success in the great Silver Age ballets. She was well-positioned for success in

dance: a child of two members of the Imperial Ballet, she entered the highly selective state theatrical school, informally known as Theatre Street, in 1880.² She finished ten years later as a distinguished graduate, immediately signed to the Mariinskii dance company.³ Her skills were recognized by the company; she was named a *prima ballerina assoluta* during her career, the highest ranking possible in the Russian ballet. Both her fame and position within the company benefited significantly from her social connections, particularly a short-lived relationship with the future Nicholas II. Even after her three year relationship (1890-1893) with Nicholas ended, her ties to the Romanovs were not severed. Until his death in the Revolution, one Grand Duke, Sergei, considered her his platonic wife.⁴ In addition, in 1900 she met and began a lifelong relationship with Grand Duke Andrei Vladimirovich, the presumed father of her only child, Vladimir (Vova), born in 1902. Kshesinskaia retreated to a less active dance schedule in 1911, after celebrating her 20th anniversary on the stage. Despite her lower profile within the dance world, though, hers was one of the first and most savagely attacked homes in the February Revolution. She fled the mob, ultimately leaving St. Petersburg July 13, 1917, and leaving Russia altogether in February, 1920.⁵ She died in 1971 at the age of ninety-nine in Paris, running a dance studio which supported herself, her then-husband (Grand Duke Andrei), and their son.

II. Kshesinskaia's celebrity before World War I, in the theater and in the press

As self-evident as it might seem that Kshesinskaia would be considered a Romanov symbol, before the relaxation of censorship and outpouring of criticism in World War I, there was little that was not seen as a Romanov symbol. In spite of the fact that her romantic history was intertwined with that of the Romanovs, Kshesinskaia was not seen originally as a representative of the Romanovs or their regime. She was, instead, viewed as one of the famous artists of the Russian stage, as an individual. Her celebrity was therefore contained, limited to a censored press' lavish praise of her artistry and the less controlled gossip within the ballet world—gossip of her wealth and power in the theater, not in any way political power. Within the ballet world, Kshesinskaia's fame had two facets: the public image she created on stage, a dazzling statement of social position, and common knowledge to those in the theater of her off-stage use of power. In both regards, her celebrity was individualistic and largely apolitical.

Within the theater, the image Kshesinskaia created was one of her personal glory; this is what was impressed on all audience members. As has been mentioned, the imperial theater functioned as a society of informal contest over social rank, decided by physical positioning within the theater (that is, who held the most prestigious seats) and the displays of wealth one could manage to wear to the performances. The director of the imperial theaters, V.A. Teliakovskii (1901-1903), described the Mariinskii: "Here men dressed formally in tails, officers wore luxurious mustaches and were spurred; ladies adorned themselves with diamonds, lace, and heady perfumes."⁶ Nicholas Legat, a dancer who partnered

with Kshesinskaia, recalled the audience “blazed with jewels and uniforms.”⁷ The American dancer Isadora Duncan, a guest at the Mariinskii, recorded her own surprise at the luxury present at the imperial ballet: “I looked down, and saw the most beautiful women in the world . . . covered with jewels, escorted by men in distinguished uniforms.”⁸ The writer Alexandre Benois simply called the Mariinskii audience “awe-inspiring.”⁹

In the Russian imperial society, in a reign in which the royal family did not hold the regular court balls, the ballet became a forum for social competition.¹⁰ Kshesinskaia was famous for her shows of wealth, placing herself in competition with the noble women in the audience. In all of her public appearances, Kshesinskaia is described as being decked out with diamonds. A cartoon by her partner Legat, a caricature of her famous role as the gypsy girl in the ballet *Esmerelda*, shows Kshesinskaia with giant diamond earrings.¹¹ On stage in *The Pharaoh's Daughter*, Kshesinskaia wore a Fabergé diamond and sapphire tiara.¹² She even danced a role as a beggar woman while wearing a diamond necklace.¹³ This aura of wealth surrounded her even off the stage. Meeting her when she was not performing, Isadora Duncan described her as a “most charming little lady, wrapped in sable with diamonds hanging from her ears and her neck encircled with pearls.”¹⁴ Stories in the British press in her 1911 trip to Covent Gardens noted that Kshesinskaia had her jewelry sent with armed guards to London banks for the duration of her trip, in the event a piece would be needed onstage or off.¹⁵

Witnessing Kshesinskaia perform draped in jewels, it would have been difficult for the audience in the theater, or the person on the street, to escape the impression that Kshesinskaia was as visibly wealthy (in attire if not fact) as the leading aristocrats in the Mariinskii hall. Not until the war effort fell apart, however, was the source and validity of her income questioned. Criticism of this aspect of her pre-war fame, her obvious wealth, does not exist, either in memoirs of the period or the press.

The most noted aspect of her pre-war celebrity was her use of power in the theater. This negative image of Kshesinskaia is almost entirely absent within the public prewar media. Critical commentary on Kshesinskaia survives to this day only through the works of memoirists either attending or working in the theaters. Her former director, Teliakovskii, wrote at bitter length of her power: “A ballerina, employed by the company, should serve the repertoire, but in fact the repertoire served her, Kshesinskaia.”¹⁶ Gossip agreed that Kshesinskaia was a person of enormous influence in the dance world, a person above the rules, able, via manipulation and influence, to dictate the staging of shows and the careers of the dances within them. Teliakovskii describes how a coworker explained to him, in his first days at the Mariinskii, that drafts of the company’s ballet schedule were to be submitted to Kshesinskaia for approval: “In any case one can do nothing with Kshesinskaia; it is a rule already established by our predecessors,” Teliakovskii quoted his unnamed colleague at the theater. Teliakovskii himself explained the situation to a friend, “I am a very real director and a Privy Councillor as well. But there are other Directors who are in charge, but being of the feminine gender, they are not listed as such.”¹⁷

Kshesinskaia was above the rules because she possessed acknowledged

power in the theater. She was infamous for her power and influence, drawn from both her skill and her supporters. Kshesinskaia was particularly notorious for her treatment of perceived enemies in the theater. It was tradition in the theater that if an audience especially enjoyed a specific dance, the audience could demand the conductor repeat the music, giving the dancer an impromptu encore and an extra moment in the spotlight. Kshesinskaia reportedly threw tantrums if conductors repeated numbers for other dancers in her productions; if her turn on stage came next, she even charged out of the wings early in order to cut off an opportunity for her rivals to gain an encore.¹⁸ She had claques in the audience, instructed to be silent or hiss disapprovingly, when Carlotta Zambellini came from Paris to guest star.¹⁹ She found other ways to subvert her rivals; in his memoirs, Teliakovskii tells a story in which Kshesinskaia was informally blamed for a props disaster that occurred during her rival's ballet.²⁰ According to fellow dancer Tamara Karsova, Kshesinskaia befriended young dancers in order to give them costumes "fit for the grave, and not a costume for young ballerinas."²¹ It was discovered, after one promising dancer's workload had been mysteriously reduced, almost to her non-existence on the stage, that Kshesinskaia had written a loving note to the management, helpfully suggesting that the dancer was overloaded and near collapse.²² When dancer Anna Pavlova traveled to America on a much heralded American tour, *The Atlanta Journal* ran the story a recent theft from the Imperial treasury was somehow connected to Pavlova; this report came from a "favorite of the Palace," whom a furious Pavlova identified as a jealous Kshesinskaia.²³

Kshesinskaia was known to her audience as a leading, extremely wealthy ballerina. To those with higher access to the theatrical world, she was known as a power player, someone with great influence over the productions and the staging. Very little of this appeared in the tsarist press. Not surprisingly, what appeared in the censored contemporary press was only the most flattering image of Kshesinskaia, as an artist and professional working in a sphere distinct from all social and political concerns.

Kshesinskaia actively participated in the press construction of her image. When her St. Petersburg home was built, she permitted coverage of the building in specialist journals, like the architectural magazine *Zodchii*, and also allowed herself to be photographed at home regularly.²⁴ An article in *Ogonek*, "Performing Artist of the Imperial Theaters, M.F. Kshesinskaia at Home," included both an interview with the dancer and an extensive tour of her luxurious home.²⁵ A piece in the *Petersburgskaia gazeta* after her London trip was as enthusiastic about her home as her "dazzling London triumphs"; the author indicated Kshesinskaia used the marble foyer of her home for dancing exercise and described the entire home as a lively stage for social life.²⁶

More consistently than this very slanted behind-the-scenes view of her life, however, was an ongoing press tribute to Kshesinskaia as an artist, often referring to her as a national treasure. A critic called her debut at Monte Carlo "without one mistake" and said the non-Russian audience was "in ecstasy."²⁷ An early biography of the ballerina referred to her as the "bright star of our ballet, our Russian ballerina...with the force of her talent, immediately drew

the attention of the public.”²⁸ This biography collapsed Kshesinskaia’s rise to prominence with the rise of the Russian school of dance.²⁹ The author, E.E. Kartsova, included quotes from a variety of foreign journals to indicate the breath of Kshesinskaia’s fame. She was “without debate the best Russian ballerina.”³⁰ Success was the constant theme of the prewar press discussion of Kshesinskaia. Kartsova refers frequently to Kshesinskaia’s “dazzling success,” with lines such as “The success of Mathilde Kshesinskaia in this ballet was colossal.”³¹ Describing Kshesinskaia’s 1899 appearance as Esmerelda, Kartsova gushed, “Is it necessary to say that the success of Matilda Felixovna in this role was colossal?”³² The tenor of this biography is evident from the first page, with a woman’s leg and foot depicted *en pointe*, surrounded by a circle of blazing stars; the caption indicates the leg is Kshesinskaia’s.³³ Later publications continued the implication of this image, press adulation of Kshesinskaia’s dance skills. In the *Petersburgskaia gazeta*, her tour of London was covered as a triumph, complete with pictures.³⁴ While *Novoe Bremia* shoved the rising star Nijinsky aside to fawn on how Kshesinskaia gave life to an old ballet, the journal *Ogonek* attempted to describe the beauty of her dancing: “in every movement, there is a sense of an opportunity...of alluring beauty.”³⁵ The yearbook of the imperial theaters, a collection of essays on the prior season, decided “Kshesinskaia had lost nothing of her shining virtuosity” by her twentieth anniversary on stage.³⁶ Kshesinskaia was not dancing in new productions and not, by any description, debuting any new skills or interpretations of her roles, but the media said nothing to criticize her. Even in her biography, while searching for words to describe Kshesinskaia’s less than perfect technique, ballet master Christian Johan said she was “distinctive and original.”³⁷ The worst said of her in the press was a mild rebuke after Kshesinskaia danced as *Pakhita*’s beggar woman while wearing her jewel collection: “Begging for alms, and suddenly in diamonds? Absurd!” the *Peterburskaia gazeta* said.³⁸

The press seemed to adore Kshesinskaia. As noted, they gushed over her performances and cooperated with the ballerina to depict her as a great socialite and a great dancer. With that one exception, a critique based on her inappropriate costume choice, they did not comment on the displays of wealth Kshesinskaia typically wore and received in the ballet. They almost never indicated knowledge of how Kshesinskaia’s influence was feared and courted in the Mariinskii, and they certainly never associated her power in the theater with her most famous benefactor, Nicholas II. Kshesinskaia’s story was depicted instead as a national triumph in a studiously apolitical world of art.

III. Views of Kshesinskaia, World War I-Revolution

This apparent press blindness was in actuality the product of censorship and fear of imperial backlash. As the legitimacy of Nicholas’ government declined during the military debacles of World War I, and tsarist rule was increasingly questioned, the press increasingly escaped government control and crossed lines formerly not dared. Informal gossip went even further, challenging the utility and patriotism of anyone associated with the court, including the

dancer Kshesinskaia. First in this informal, elite gossip, and then in the actual media, Kshesinskaia's celebrity was transformed; rather than being famous as a dancer, her celebrity was based on her role as court favorite. Press imagery depicted her as a selfish, manipulative harridan who had enriched herself to the detriment of the Russian army and the Russian people. What elite gossip grumbled about—government favoritism—would become a recurring symbol of government treason, in the eyes of the popular press.

This idea of government treason was a product of the courtiers' talk, not a part of their original image of Kshesinskaia the favorite. Within elite circles, the initial gossip focused on themes of inappropriate sexuality and questionable personal loyalties: Kshesinskaia's scandalous life, her reputation as a quasi-prostitute, her unseemly domination and ruination of powerful and otherwise well-intended men, and her greed, such that she would be read as a betrayer of the military cause.

It is no surprise that elite circles connected Kshesinskaia initially with the role of a well-paid prostitute; the ballet was known as a hunting-ground for rich men looking for extramarital affairs, an environment which could be easily conceived to be prostitution. There was "heavy sexual trade in ballet dancers," male and female both, according to one writer.³⁹ Dancer Serge Lifar recalled, "People went to the ballet to choose mistresses," calling the ballet a "nursery" for aristocratic mistresses.⁴⁰ An observer referred to the front rows of the *corps de ballet* as a "stock exchange" of dancer/mistresses.⁴¹

Kshesinskaia herself, mistress of the then-Tsarevich and later the partner of two Grand Dukes, was seen as the master of this system—not a child thrown to the wolves, but a spider preying upon the bewildered flies caught in her web. Stories increasingly circulated, stories which depicted Kshesinskaia as a woman who used socially superior men; while it was typical for dancers to form bonds with socially superior men (their protectors), Kshesinskaia's behavior pushed the edge of decency by her ambitious manipulation of the system. A famous anecdote describes her response to an onlookers' comment about having two grand dukes (Andrei and Sergei) at her feet: "What's surprising about that? I have two feet."⁴² An alternate story has the Grand Dukes mockingly referring to her not as Mathilde, but as *Notre-tilde*.⁴³ Dancer Alexandra Danilova recalled that "half of the company had protectors" but Kshesinskaia "flaunted her affairs with grand dukes, because she thought it showed the world how attractive she was. They gave her precious jewels, built her a palace."⁴⁴ Even while acknowledging her success, Kshesinskaia's colleagues censured her for this behavior. The dancer Danilova recalled, "My aunt warned me that under no circumstances should I ever accept an invitation to Kshesinskaia's palace, because it was considered not nice. Girls went there to pick a protector or be in vogue with the men."⁴⁵ A pupil at the Imperial theater school, Ludyia Luboukova, recalled her horror when Kshesinskaia offered students walking homewards in winter a ride in her carriage: "Oh, no, no, we mustn't go with her. She is a wicked woman," she told the other students.⁴⁶

Regardless of what her female guests did, it is clear Kshesinskaia herself had a budding reputation for seeking out influential men; this reputation would be prominent in later wartime reports. In 1901, Prince Chakrabongse of

Siam had regretfully recorded in his diary that he had to end with his friendship with Kshesinskaia, since news of their association had been received by his furious parents in Bangkok.⁴⁷ A male dancer commented obliquely that “in Russia, especially where the management was concerned, partly owing to reasons which are too well-known to be worth mentioning,” Kshesinskaia was “supreme.”⁴⁸ Another dancer observed that “officials fawned and ingratiated themselves before her” because of Kshesinskaia’s powerful male associates.⁴⁹ Such was her reputation that Kshesinskaia was reportedly fearful of her reception on tour outside of Russia, in places where the press was more free to inquire or comment upon her social life. “Society outside Russia might know nothing of the art of ballet, but it knew everything of the art of gossip,” ballet historian Nesta MacDonald observed.⁵⁰

The “art of gossip” within Russian society, however, described Kshesinskaia not just as a woman of scandalous personal relations but, increasingly, a woman who ruined well-intended men, ultimately leading to the ruination of her country. Gossip focused on her two most politically prestigious conquests: Grand Duke Sergei, the Inspector-General of the Artillery in World War I, and Nicholas II. Critics generally ignored her relationship with Grand Duke Andrei, except for an occasional allusion to Kshesinskaia’s multiple grand dukes, because he was too politically insignificant to fit the image the critics created for her: the avaricious, uncontrolled woman bringing down the nation by bringing down the men around her.⁵¹

Of her powerful conquests, gossip especially focused on Sergei and his devotion to Kshesinskaia, as the root cause of Russia’s military’s failures. As Inspector General of the Artillery, Sergei was in charge of lucrative contracts which, word had it, Kshesinskaia sold to the highest bidder. She was alleged to have sent her own emissary to France to negotiate with the arms company Creuzat.⁵² The President of the Duma, Rodzianko, believed she had used Sergei’s position to influence government purchase of materials from her clients. He felt he had “irrefutable proof” she was selling state secrets abroad, and he argued specifically that the selling of contracts led ultimately to Sergei’s quiet demotion in late 1915.⁵³ A commentator writing shortly after the war blamed “highly placed toilers such as Raguzo-Suszczewki, a friend of the tsar’s mistress, Kshesinskaia,” for the “repulsive atmosphere of profiteering,” in wartime St. Petersburg.⁵⁴ At least one courtier felt Sergei’s position allowed this profiteering to run rampant, encouraging citizens to criticize faceless enemies and saboteurs for military problems.

It must be said that the dishonesty and cupidity of the Artillery Department was known to everybody but as Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich was at its head, no one dared say a word. So once again began the usual cry of treason...of German gold and German spies.⁵⁵

Empress Alexandra recorded these tales in her notes to Nicholas. “K. is very mixed up again—she behaved like Madame Sukhominlov [a politician’s wife, said to have taken bribes] it seems with bribes of the Artillery orders—one hears it from many sides.”⁵⁶ In a later letter, she reiterated, “There are very

unclean stories about her and bribes etc. which all speak about, and the artillery is mixed up in it.”⁵⁷ She argued with Nicholas that Sergei’s superior, the War Minister General Vladimir Sukhominlov, should not bear the blame alone: “*Au fond*, to save K and Sergei Mikhailovich, he also sits there and one dares not bring up the subject before law on account of those two—even Andrei Vladimirovich said as much, tho’ he is Kshesinskaia’s lover.”⁵⁸ She urged Nicholas to punish Sergei as much as he punished Sukhominlov: “an account of *her* [Sergei] is just as much at fault.”⁵⁹

As the Empress’ diary entries indicate, by the last two years of the Empire, there was a strong belief that Kshesinskaia was using Sergei’s position to pad her own pockets. According to public rumor, his job gave her insider knowledge, which she employed as leverage in negotiations with arms dealers, as evidence of her standing in power.⁶⁰ Rodzianko remembered a discussion with Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich, then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army. Not only did Nicholas confirm Kshesinskaia was negotiating arms contracts, but that he himself had been fooled by her, handing over privileged information which Kshesinskaia could then sell or use to indicate her access to state information.⁶¹ According to Count Alexei Bobrinsky’s diary, there was even a police raid on her home, in which artillery contracts were found. Kshesinskaia reportedly said—with Sergei’s support—that Sergei was using her home to store his work documents.⁶² This remained simply gossip, however; there is no evidence of the search in the police archives (which were, to be fair, damaged repeatedly in the 20th century), no comment on it in the press, and no other contemporary diarist or later memoirist has referred to this search.⁶³

They did comment, repeatedly, however, on the impression that Kshesinskaia was profiteering from arms contracts, thanks to her association with the Inspector-General of the Artillery. Whether or not she did in fact engage in arms profiteering is a matter for which we currently lack evidence. Greg King has argued that the smoke of rumor amounts to fire, but what we know of both Sergei and Kshesinskaia makes an easy conclusion of profiteering impossible.⁶⁴ Sergei had a long career as Inspector-General of the Artillery, replacing his father in the position after studying under him for years.⁶⁵ At least one general, A.I. Spiridovich, considered Sergei an expert in current military technology.⁶⁶ It is a challenge to believe that an expert in his field, a man in his job for at least a decade before the 1915 rumors of bribery began, could have been regularly duped by Kshesinskaia. She was a dancer with no military background, no interest in making independent business steps if one judges by her non-stop correspondence with her bankers on investments and an off-stage character which friends mimicked in games of charades by reclining on a couch, eating caviar.⁶⁷ Regardless of their likelihood, however, the rumors were undoubtedly prevalent throughout society. Decades after her flight from Russia, Kshesinskaia apparently felt these rumors were still so widespread that she had to address them in her memoirs, laying the blame at the doorstep of her enemies: “Others have claimed and spread the story, both on the eve of the Revolution and after it, that I received bribes, particularly for orders from the artillery.”⁶⁸

Kshesinskaia was viewed as an intriguer and a profiteeress. Her reputa-

tion was so widely damaged by these stories that Sergei's brother Nicholas attempted to force a break between them, for Sergei's sake.⁶⁹ He told Sergei bluntly that Kshesinskaia had used him.⁷⁰ Sergei attempted to defend Kshesinskaia as the victim of ill-founded rumors, but admitted to his brother that, for reasons he did not specify, Kshesinskaia had received promises of "inviolability from the Provisional Government."⁷¹ In the same letter, Sergei himself seemed to imagine Kshesinskaia as a power out for herself: "It is only surprising that the old woman didn't somehow get herself enthroned!"⁷²

Nicholas' belief that his brother had been used by Kshesinskaia for her personal enrichment was not far off from what the same people were saying of her relationship with her first and more powerful patron, Nicholas II. Gossip described their relationship as one in which the scheming dancer had bewitched the tsar when he was a young, weak-willed tsarevich; wags suggested she used her influence on him as tsar first for her material benefit, and second, to meddle with national affairs. In all of these stories, Nicholas II, like Sergei, was presented as a silent, spineless victim of a conniving upstart.

Elite discussion memorialized their love affair as one in which the family of the then-tsarevich urged Nicholas to find a mistress, but regretted this when he showed little interest in swapping a steady relationship with a mistress for one with a wife. As of 1889, a year before they met, there was allegedly word that the court was seeking a starlet, Maria Nicolaevna Labunskaia of the *corps de ballet*, for Nicholas, to be paid the considerable sum of 18,000 rubles per year.⁷³ The project failed, as Nicholas found himself more interested in Kshesinskaia instead. By the December 6, 1892 debut of Tchaikovsky's *Yolanta*, his relationship with Kshesinskaia was infamous enough that the audience giggled and looked at the imperial box at a particular point in *Yolanta*, when the baritone sang the lyric, "Who can compare with my Mathilde?"⁷⁴ It did not reduce public attention to their relationship when she moved from her parents' home to a house on the English Prospekt, a building Nicholas' great-uncle Konstantine Nicholaevich had built for his mistress, the ballerina Kuzentsova.⁷⁵ Lamzdorf, the Foreign Minister, recorded gossip that was to be repeated many times over during the course of the war: that the Tsarevich Nicholas was more interested in his play-home with his ballerina than affairs of state, and that his parents were increasingly uneasy about his bachelorhood, urging him to marry at once.⁷⁶ Nicholas reportedly had asked his parents for a two year reprieve before being forced to marry, in order to be with Kshesinskaia.⁷⁷

Retellings of this period emphasize, however, that as much as Nicholas was to blame in preferring his dancer over politics, it was Kshesinskaia who had honed in on Nicholas, captivated him, and proceeded to use him to the date of his abdication. It was Kshesinskaia who agreed to move from her parents' home to be the tsar's mistress.⁷⁸ She openly bragged about their relationship; Lamzdorf records how an associate was present when Kshesinskaia received a letter from Nicholas, which she showed to all.⁷⁹ St. Petersburg "buzzed" with stories about them.⁸⁰ General Alexander Bogdanovich commented that she "is boasting of her relationship with him to everyone."⁸¹

Kshesinskaia was so proud of her conquest, in fact, that gossip circles ac-

cused her of aspiring to be more than Nicholas' mistress. One of the autocrats at his coronation suggested that Kshesinskaia had pushed Alexandra as a bride, feeling she was so meek that they could continue their affair without problem.⁸² Princess Catherine Radziwill (who wrote also under the name Count Paul Vasili in her memoirs of the period) actually claimed Kshesinskaia had been bought off: "It seems also that Miss Krzesinska [sic] . . . had been won over to the marriage by means about which the less said the better, and had used her influence...to persuade him that the Princess Alix was so meek and mild a temperment that they would be able to continue their relationship."⁸³ Another report claimed she had received 100,000 rubles and a house at the closing of the relationship.⁸⁴ Money did not satisfy her, however; she was said to have written anonymous letters against Nicholas II, in a last-ditch effort to convince Alexandra to reject him.⁸⁵ The Director of the Imperial Theaters Vesevolozesky told State Secretary Polovtsov that Kshesinskaia was actually seen screaming in Grand Duke Vladimir's salon, " 'Well, we shall see who will win, Alix or me! ' "⁸⁶ She supposedly announced that the Mikailovich Grand Dukes, Nicholas' cousins, supported her as Nicholas' partner, rather than Alexandra.⁸⁷

What made Kshesinskaia a powerful symbol of court favoritism by World War I was an extension of this idea, that Kshesinskaia had leverage over Nicholas II. Most commentators agreed that her desire and ability to influence him did not cease with his marriage. Dancer Lydia Khasht claimed that after the imperial marriage, Kshesinskaia was still "known to possess considerable influence and power in imperial quarters."⁸⁸ It was "common report" that "he had funded the building of her mansion [built 1904-1906] on Kronverskii Prospekt."⁸⁹ She "contrived to make herself an excellent position in the world, as well as to earn a considerable fortune."⁹⁰ She could not have afforded her home without the addition of Nicholas' money, commentators argued.⁹¹ During the war, it was said imperial funding maintained her lavish lifestyle. The French ambassador recorded an incident in which he walked past her home and saw four military cars with a soldier's squadron unloading coal at her home, at a time when even the British ambassador, George Buchanan, was unable to get fuel for his embassy.⁹² What she wanted, she received. Catherine Radziwill argued that, "The dancer Kshesinskaia, with whom he had a long and close friendship, kept plying him with constant demands."⁹³ In addition, besides his constant support of her intervention in ballet planning, Kshesinskaia was allowed to break other company rules. She danced while pregnant; most dancers were either dismissed during pregnancy or fired altogether.⁹⁴

According to aristocratic gossip, Kshesinskaia had enriched and empowered herself at the expense of the weak-willed Nicholas. Her biographer, Hall, suggests that perhaps the aristocrats were annoyed by his exclusive devotion to Alexandra; they wanted to believe he was not of one mind with his wife, so that they could continue to blame Alexandra entirely for all court failings and believe that, even if Kshesinskaia was considered obnoxious, she at least represented the possibility of a different outcome for Russia.⁹⁵ Yet, rather than truly contrasting the two women, rumors gave them a similar character, as a political meddler. Kshesinskaia reportedly bullied Nicholas in politics, pushing

an agenda of her own. Her biographer, Hall, concluded, "Witnesses of the period...uniformly state that Nicholas continued to visit Mathilde frequently throughout his life, talking with her and accepting her life on political matters."⁹⁶ By one contemporary account, she "aspired...to become a power in the land, or maitresse de Poi."⁹⁷ Nicholas "continued to consult her on many matters" which he never discussed with Alexandra.⁹⁸ She had a "platonic friendship with [Nicholas], which was prolonged into maturity, as shown by her subsequent interest in Russian national affairs."⁹⁹ Alexei Bobrinsky recorded in his diary that by 1910 Kshesinskaia was "widely believed to be a political power with great influence over the tsar."¹⁰⁰ This rumor was so strong that when Kshesinskaia went to London for a performance, the British press hounded her on the issue. The *Sketch* said, "Her salon is frequented by royalty and diplomats, and she has great political influence."¹⁰¹ The *Daily News* asked her about these stories and recorded her denial: "Isn't that nonsense! I am afraid that I become thoroughly stupid when people begin talking about politics; my art has been my life."¹⁰²

This was all elite gossip, however, and one might question what it meant for Russia, other than elites projecting onto Kshesinskaia their fears about the Russian war effort being sabotaged, passing on to a prominent dancer their critique of leaders who were indecisive, weak-willed, and open to manipulation by favorites. Yet the elites did not live in a bubble, separated off from other classes; word, accordingly, spread beyond the immediate circle of the highest aristocrats. This flow of rumor was assisted by the breakdown of the government control of the press during the war years. What had begun as aristocrats projecting their fears onto an upstart outsider, however, morphed again in the hands of the popular press. In the hands of these writers, the rumors about Kshesinskaia were simplified to emphasize two points: she was a decadent personage, symbolic of the sexual and financial corruption of Nicholas' court, and she was a betrayer of the Russian people, reflecting the treasonous behavior of the Romanov government.

By spring 1917, St. Petersburg was flooded with popular attacks on Kshesinskaia, emphasizing her dissolute lifestyle. An anonymous verse highlighted how she received her fortune: "Like a bird you flew over the stage,/And without sparing your legs,/Danced your way to a palace."¹⁰³ Lewd poems and coarse songs illustrated her sexual excess and connected this quality to the illicit regime that sponsored her. Caricatures of Kshesinskaia, draped in jewels, figured into satirical pornographic cartoons.¹⁰⁴ Films in the spring of 1917 highlighted Kshesinskaia as a symbol of the regime's favoritism and decadence; titles included *The Secrets of the Romanovs*, *The Shame of the House of the Romanovs*, and *The Secret Story of the Ballerina Kshesinskaia*. News headlines suggested her duplicitous dealings: "16 Poods of Silver from the Palace of Kshesinskaia," "Espionage and the Ballerina," "Secrets of M. F. Kshesinskaia."¹⁰⁵

Novellas and pamphlets similarly told of Kshesinskaia, symbol of a corrupt, weak, and unfit government. In 1917, a part of the *Secrets of the House of Romanovs* book series was dedicated to the favorites of Nicholas. In *The Favorites of Nicholas II*, the anonymous author places Kshesinskaia as the

last and most powerful of Nicholas' favorites.¹⁰⁶ Unlike the elite gossips, who did not hesitate to condemn Kshesinskaia for her notorious behavior, the author focuses exclusively on Nicholas' reign and his personal life; there is no reference to Kshesinskaia's history after Nicholas, no mention of her relationships with Sergei and Andrei. We soon see why; the author is preoccupied with Nicholas' character failings, particularly his personal weakness, which this book shows at length. He falls on his knees before Kshesinskaia shortly after meeting her, and "began to cry" when his father ordered him to marry Alexandra.¹⁰⁷ Lest we sympathize with star-crossed lovers, the author shows the obscene wealth lavished upon Kshesinskaia by the doting Nicholas. "How much money was heaped upon her?" the author inquires pointedly within the first paragraphs of his work on her.¹⁰⁸ Her dressing room is depicted as an exotic den of seduction: "amid crystal bottles of champagne, among luxurious vases, and amid the sharp, alluring scent of spices" sat the ballerina in her boudoir.¹⁰⁹ Although Nicholas married Alexandra (against his will), the author suggests he was too ensnared by Kshesinskaia to break off his relationship with her. Signs of his ongoing affection, the author notes, included a lavish mansion appointed in a fashionable district of the city, and "in the banks, heaps of wealth."¹¹⁰ Part of this wealth came from a source other than Nicholas' generosity; the author distorts the elite gossip of Kshesinskaia's contract bribery to suggest she directly sold secrets to the Germans: "The ballerina used all these secrets together with Minister Sukhomlinov for greater wealth, received from the Germans."¹¹¹

Another 1917 publication, *The Love Affair of the Tsarevich: the Great Romance of the Life of Nicholas II*, paints a similar image of a weak tsar, manipulated by a woman with an agenda other than Russian welfare. The author is listed here with a pseudonym; Strel'na historian Oleg Varenik has suggested this is the work of the great poet Maiakovsky, but there is no evidence of this either in the text or Maiakovsky scholarship.¹¹² In this book, a novel, the naïve Nicholas bows to dynastic duty, unable truly to be master of either his society or his heart.¹¹³ He therefore yields to his parents' pleadings that he marry Alexandra, although he knows his heart belongs to his dancer-mistress. He does this not without a great deal of conflict; the piteous Nicholas proposes to his dying father that he, Nicholas, will renounce the throne, travel to India (that is, leave the Russian empire), and marry Kshesinskaia there, if he might have his father's sanction to do so.¹¹⁴ While his love would be touching, author Maria Evgen'eva, like the anonymous author of *The Favorites of Nicholas II* makes it clear that his affections were misplaced. Although Nicholas generously recognized his son by Kshesinskaia, granting him a title and a significantly sized bank account, Kshesinskaia "dreamed of more."¹¹⁵ Although Kshesinskaia was not accused by Evgen'eva of selling secrets to the Germans, the author points out repeatedly that her interests still did not coincide with Russian interests. Kshesinskaia, the granddaughter of a Polish couple, urged Nicholas to consider Polish national affairs as important to his rule as Russian affairs, for "the blood of [Poland] runs in the veins of his natural son."¹¹⁶ Nicholas obediently agrees that he will do all he can for Kshesinskaia's people, and even entertains her argument that they marry. As

Kshesinskaia (through the author) comments several times, Peter the Great married a low-born woman and made a powerful empress of her. The author informs us the tragedy of Nicholas II is that “he was not Peter the Great.”¹¹⁷ The author suggests Nicholas’ inability to stand up for himself was far more damaging to Russian interests than the selection of a suitable wife.

There was good news to report about Kshesinskaia—she had funded and worked at a hospital for ailing soldiers, and gave charity concerts regularly during the war—but what remained in the urban public’s mind were the stories of this Kshesinskaia: the meddler, the profiteer.¹¹⁸ Anecdotal evidence makes it clear just how widely these stories had disseminated. Before she fled St. Petersburg in February 1917, Kshesinskaia was regularly receiving anonymous hate mail; similar thoughts were expressed in letters from the front, according to Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, in which Grand Duchess Maria Pavlova and Kshesinskaia were both named as courtiers selling secrets to the Germans. When she fled St. Petersburg, a Bolshevik soldier asked her if her son was indeed the son of the Tsar. Lenin, in his April return to St. Petersburg, was greeted with the same set of stories; Bolshevik soldiers informed him that they had seized her palace since it was bought with the money of the Russian people.¹¹⁹ The ultimate comment on her reputation, and general esteem, was the February Revolution. Kshesinskaia’s home was mobbed and sacked, not the imperial palaces.

IV. Conclusion

Greg King has suggested that “after years of being witness to her unscrupulous personal life, the public readily believed [the rumors] to be true and acknowledged them as fact.”¹²⁰ It is more accurate to say the public made them acknowledged facts. Kshesinskaia’s prewar celebrity was limited to the dance world—those who read the press on it, or who had contact with the Mariinskii. While the press uniformly praised her as a virtuoso Russian artist, informal knowledge commented on her wealth and power within the wings of the Mariinskii. None of this prewar fame attached Kshesinskaia at all strongly to political matters, but that is precisely what happened in the years surrounding the World War and Revolution. Disgruntled elites transferred critiques of the government onto the shoulders of a disliked interloper, leading government men awry. During the war and the relaxation of government control over the media, these rumors entered the world of print for the first time. Rather than putting blame on the shoulders of outsiders, however, these rumors put the blame squarely on a weak government that was unwilling to fight for Russia’s interests. A matter of limited gossip before the war—a dancer’s power—had become an issue of national debate by 1917. Through the breakdown of the imperial order and the progression of 1917, a retired dancer, a private person, had become, in the hands of a press increasingly out of imperial control, symbolic of the most central political issue in pre-revolutionary Russia, government legitimacy. Rather than distracting the populace from political discussion, her celebrity inflamed them. While our vision of public fame may be shaped by the consumer culture we know today, in the

story of Mathilde Kshesinskaia we can see the political potential within fame, the creation of symbols that can be used by public and press alike to express a critique of the society around them.



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ENDNOTES

1. For an example of this discussion, see the classic work of Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), and its successive literature, including Leo Braudy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), and P. David Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).
2. RGIA f. 497, op. 5, d. 1708.
3. Matil'da Kshesinskaia, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow: ZAO Tsentrpoligraf, 2003), 30. There are three major editions of Kshesinskaia's memoirs: the annotated Russian text (published by Moscow's Artist, Rezhisser, Teatr [ART] in 1992), the abridged English (*Dancing in Petersburg*, translated by Arnold Haskell, and published by London's Gollancz in 1960; this shares the same text with the French *Souvenirs de la Kshesinska, Prima Ballerina du Theatre Imperial de Saint-Petersbourg*, published by Paris' Plon in 1960), and the current Russian ZAO edition, which is the out of print ART text without footnotes.
4. Letter dated 9 March 1917, "Iz perepiski SM i NM Romanov v 1917 gody," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* (Moscow: 1932), v. 53, 141.
5. Kshesinskaia, 273, 317. St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd in 1914, renamed again Leningrad in 1924, and returned to its original name, St. Petersburg, in 1991. For clarity, I will refer consistently to the city as St. Petersburg in this piece.
6. V.A. Teliakovskii, *Vospominaniia* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1965), 152. Here and for all Russian-language quotations, unless otherwise noted, the translations are my own.
7. Nicholas Legat, *Ballet Russe: Memoirs of Nicholas Legat*, translated by Sir Paul Dukas (London: Methuen and Company, 1939), 33.
8. Isadora Duncan, *My Life* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927), 70.
9. Quoted in Murray Frame, *The St. Petersburg Imperial Theaters: Stage and State in Revolutionary Russia, 1900-1920* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2000), 84.
10. See Count Paul Vasili, a literary nom de plume of Princess Catherine Radziwill, who wrote *Behind the Veil at the Russian Court* (New York: John Lane Company, 1913), 385; Vasili describes competition between aristocrats, "a society of house dwelling in luxury." Teliakovskii describes women "elegantly dressed with diamonds, more interested in the men in the audience than a ballet," 417-418. Note also the dismay of the public when the Empress Alexandra left a production prematurely. According to the daughter of the British ambassador, "A little wave of resentment rippled over the theater, women glanced at each other and raised their shoulders expressively, men muttered disparagingly below their breath." Meriel Buchanan, *The Dissolution of an Empire* (London: J. Murray, 1932), 56.
11. Nikolai and Sergei Legat, *Russkii balet v karikaturakh* (Saint Petersburg: Progress, 1902-1906). A folio of these caricatures is held by the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg (ЭАПТК/2-6).
12. This tiara was jointly produced by the jeweler's workshop and the stage designer for the production, since the tiara was a personal gift from Grand Duke Andrei as well as part of Kshesinskaia's ballet costume. See Galina Smorodina's article, "Kshesinskaia's Memories," in *Fabergé: Imperial Jeweler*, edited by Géza von Habsburg and Marina Lopato (New York: Abrams, 1994): 143-167.

13. V. Krasovskaia, *Russkii baletnyi tear: Nachala XX veka* (Leningrad : Iskusstvo, Leningradskii otd-nie, 1972), 47-48. See also *Peterburgskaia gazeta*, quoted in Coryne Hall, *Imperial Dancer: Mathilde Kchessinka and the Romanovs* (London: Sutton Publishing, 2005), 59.
14. Duncan, 163.
15. See articles in *The Standard* (9 November 1911), *Daily Telegraph* (15 November 1911), *Daily Mail* (9 November 1911), *The Times* (17, 20, 29 November 1911/1 December 1911), and *The Lady* (30 November 1911, 7 December 1911).
16. Teliakovskii, 152-153.
17. Ibid, 153.
18. Ibid, 426.
19. Richard Buckle, *Nijinsky* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 24.
20. Teliakovskii, 287-288. The story deserves repeating: The ballet of then-rival Olga Preobrazhenskaia involved a pastoral scene, in which living chickens, in cages, were to be on stage for one part of the performance. The rival dancer disliked the chickens and requested stuffed animals be used instead. Unfortunately for the dancer, on the day of performance, not only were there live chickens in the cages, but the cages were “accidentally” left open—causing the unnerved dancer to have to dance around the lost and wandering chickens. The props master was fined 20 rubles for the accident, but Teliakovskii suspected Kshesinskaia was the real source of the mishap.
21. Tamara Karsovina, *Teatral'naia Ulitsa: Vospominaniia* (Moscow: Tsentraligraf, 2004), 134.
22. Ibid., 155.
23. See Hall, 129, and the 6 April 1911 edition of *The Atlanta Journal*.
24. *Zodchii* (1900), Tabl. 19 and No. 37 (1905), 406; *Stolitsa i usad'ba* 42 (September 1915), 17.
25. “Zasluzhennaia artitstka imperatorskikh teatrov M. F. Kshesinskaia u sebia doma,” *Ogonek* 7 (12 February 1911): 21-22.
26. “Zhivopis'nykh ugol'skov stolitsy,” *Peterburgskaia gazeta* No. 326 (Nov. 28, 199): 14.
27. A.I. Pleshheeva, *Nash Balet [Our Ballet]* (Saint Petersburg: A. Benke, 1896), 6.
28. E.E. Kartsova, *Nashi Artistki, Vypusk' 3: M.F. Kshesinskaia. Kritiko-Biographicheskii Etjud' [Our Artists, Edition 3: A Critical Biographical Study]* (Saint Petersburg: Trud', 1900), 41.
29. Ibid., 5.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 19.
32. Ibid., 20.
33. Ibid., 1.
34. See, for example, the *Peterburgskaia gazeta* No. 321 (Nov. 21, 1911), 5.
35. *Novoe vremia [New Times]* No. 12474 (December 2, 1911), p. 5, and “Vozvrash-

henie gospoda Kshesinskaia domov posle blestiashhikh Londonikh triumfov,” *Ogonek* (February 13, 1911), 42.

36. E.A. Stark, “Balet,” in *Ezhegodnik imperatorskikh teatrov* [*Encyclopedia of Imperial Theaters*] (St. Petersburg: 1911), 139.

37. Kartsova, 24.

38. Quoted in Hall, 159.

39. Vaslav Nijinsky, *The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky*, edited by Joan Acocella (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1995), viii.

40. Serge Lifar, *A History of the Russian Ballet: From Its Origins to the Present Day*, translated by Arnold Haskell (New York: Ray Publishers, 1954), 226.

41. Quoted in Frame, 116. V. Svetlov, *Pis'mo o balete*, 1911.

42. Nijinska, 12.

43. Private conversation between Mary Clare and Sir Frederick Ashton, quoted in Hall, 71.

44. Alexandra Danilova, *Choura: The Memoirs of Alexandra Danilova* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 38.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Quoted in Hall, 73.

47. Eileen Hunter and Narisa Chakrabongse, *Katya and the Prince of Siam* (Bangkok, Thailand: River Books, 1994), 37. In his unpublished diaries, quoted in *Katya*, the prince groused, “It is extraordinary how people think that if one finds a woman charming and attractive, one is necessarily having an affair with her.”

48. Lifar, 159.

49. Fedor Lopukhov, *Shestdeciat let v balete: Vospominaniia i zapiski* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1966), 106.

50. *Diaghilev Observed by Critics in England and the United States, 1911-1929*, edited by Nesta MacDonald (New York: Dance Horizons, 1975), 45.

51. Andrei was a member of the Guards horse artillery and held a career of “no particular distinction,” in the opinion of one biographer. His father, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich, was president of the theatrical society but likewise held no major government positions. See David Chavchavadze, *The Grand Dukes* (New York: Atlantic International Publishers, 1990), 241.

52. *Rossiiskii imperatorskii dom* (Moscow: Perspektiva, 1992), 190-191. See also John Curtis Perry and Constantine Pleshakov, *The Flight of the Romanovs: A Family Saga* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 124.

53. Jamie H. Cockfield, *White Crow: The Life and Times of the Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich Romanov* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 139.

54. A.A. Manikovski, *Boyevoe snabzheniye russkoy armii v mirovyi voyni* (Moscow, 1920), v. I, 55, and v. V, 179. See also Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975), 153.

55. Princess Catherine Radziwill, *Nicholas II: The Last of the Tsars* (London: Cassell and Company, 1931), 230.

56. *The Complete Wartime Correspondence of Tsar Nicholas II and the Empress Alexandra, April 1914-March 1917*, edited by Joseph Furhmann, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 169. Letter 376, June 25, 1915.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 358. Letter 746.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 609. Letter 1461.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 667. Letter 1625.
60. Diary of Andrei Vladimirovich 12 May 1915 and 22 August 1915, GARF f. 650, op. 1, d. 36. See also *Rossiiskii imperatorskii dom*, 190-191. Rodzianko, *The Reign of Rasputin: An Empire's Collapse*, translated by Catherine Zvegintzoff (Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1973), 161.
61. M. V. Rodzianko, *Krushenie Imperiii i Gosudarstvennaya Duma i fevral'skaya 1917 goda revoliutsia* (Valley Cottage, NY: Multilingual Typesetting, 1986), 199. See also Stone, 129. Note, however, that those more likely to comment on Kshesinskaia hoodwinking the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, Nicholas and Alexandra (or Alexandra, at least), never mentioned this story in their discussion of profiteering in the artillery. The Commander-in-Chief was well-regarded by Russian society for his honest speech (which ultimately led to conflict with his cousin, Nicholas II, who did not want to hear the commander's blunt assessment of court problems) and it is difficult to believe he would not have mentioned this incident to Nicholas II.
62. "Iz dnevnika A.A. Bobrinskova za 1910-1911," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* (Moscow: 1928), v. 26, 42. Hall suggests another search took place in February 1911, in which papers and jewels were seized as evidence, 124-125.
63. See also V.D. Bobrov and B.M. Kirikov, *Osobniak Kshesinskoi* (Saint Petersburg: Beloe i Chernoe, 1996), on the history of the police archives, 122.
64. Greg King, " 'Glory and Adornment': Kshessinska, the Romanov Men, and a Mansion," *Atlantis Magazine* 4 (2004, no. 3), 24-52.
65. Cockfield, 20.
66. See, for example, A.A. Spiridovich, *Zapiski zhandarma*, edited by S. Piontkovskii (Moscow: Khudozhlit, 1991) and *Istoriia bol'shevizma v Rossii ot bozniknoveniia do zakhvata vlasti, 1883-1903-1917* (Paris: Franko-Russkaia Pechat', 1922).
67. See the Kshesinskaia fonds in RGALI (f. 2602, op. 1) and GARF (f. 616, op. 1).
68. Kshesinskaia, 97.
69. Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, *Once a Grand Duke* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1932), 150. See as well the letters between Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich and Sergei, held in GARF f. 670, op. 1.
70. One account is in Stone, 136. Nicholas' biographer agrees with his subject's assessment, calling Sergei "an ever-faithful dog" for Kshesinskaia. See Cockfield, 20.
71. Letter of Sergei Mikhailovich to Nicholas Mikhailovich, dated 9 March 1917, GARF f. 670, op. 1, d. 185.
72. *Ibid.* See also letter of Sergei Mikhailovich to Nicholas Mikhailovich, dated 4 May 1917. "Iz perepiski SM i NM Romanov v 1917," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* (Moscow, 1932), v. 4, 53.
73. Perry, 55, and Count V.N. Lamzdorf, *Dnevnik 1894-1896* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1926), 241. After Kshesinskaia's relationship with Nicholas

began, Labunskaiia was abruptly dropped from the company and, in addition, exiled for slander of the Imperial family.

74. Perry, 69. The rarely descriptive Nicholas admitted he was “madly” in love with Kshesinskaia in his diary of April 1892. Andrei Maylunas and Sergei Mironenko, *A Lifelong Passion: Nicholas and Alexandra in Their Own Words*, translated by D. Galy (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 22.

75. Marc Steinberg and Vladimir Khrustalëv, *The Fall of the Romanovs* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1995), 610.

76. Lamzdorf, diary entry of Friday 21 January 1894, 2, and diary entry of 11 April 1894, 57.

77. A.N. Bokhanov, *Romanov* (Moscow: AST-Press, 2000), 217.

78. Kshesinskaia admitted in her memoirs that her parents disapproved strongly. “This was one of the things that just is not done.” See Kshesinskaia, 52-53.

79. Lamzdorf, diary entry of 28 January 1894, 27.

80. Bokhanov, 217.

81. *Ibid.*, 220.

82. Leda Farrant, *The Princess from St. Petersburg: The Life and Times of Princess Catherine Radziwill* (Sussex, England: Book Guild, Ltd. 2000), 182.

83. Radziwill, *Nicholas II: The Last of the Tsars* (London: Cassell and Company, 1931), 8.

84. Lamzdorf, diary entry of 8 April 1894, 57. The claim that Kshesinskaia received a house from her affair with Nicholas is apparently a misunderstanding of how Kshesinskaia came to build her home in St. Petersburg almost ten years after the affair with Nicholas ended; despite the termination of their relationship, popular knowledge had it that the house was a tsarist gift.

85. Bokhanov, 233.

86. “Dnevnik A.A. Polovtsova [Diary of A.A. Polovtsov],” *Krasnyi Arkhiv* (Moscow: 1934), v. 67, 176.

87. *Ibid.*

88. Kyasht, 92.

89. *Ibid.*, 240.

90. Vasili, 80.

91. Iurii Bezelianskii, *Vera, Nadezhda, Ljubov: Zhenskii Portrety* (Moscow: Radvga, 1998), 275.

92. Maurice Paleologue, *An Ambassador's Memoirs: The Last French Ambassador to the Russian Court*, translated by F.A. Holt (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923-1925), 275.

93. Radziwill, *The Intimate Life of the Last Tsarina* (London: Cassell and Company, 1929), vii.

94. Hall, 78.

95. *Ibid.*, 90.

96. Ibid., 216.
97. Count Paul Vasili, *Confessions of the Czarina* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1918), 80.
98. Ibid., 81.
99. Hall, 89, and Erica Beal, *Royal Cavalcade* (London: Stanley Paul, 1939), 168.
100. Bobrinsky, diary entry 19 December 1910, 142.
101. Quoted in MacDonald, 515. Article from the 10 November 1911 edition.
102. MacDonald, 517.
103. Hall, 106. See also the film *Matilda Malya*, Itäproiekt (1995).
104. Bobrov and Kirikov, 123.
105. Krasovskaia, 65. A pood is a Russian unit of weight equivalent to 36.1 pounds or 16.4 kilograms.
106. *Favoritki Nikolai II: Vypusk' 1P* (Petrograd: 1917).
107. Ibid., 4.
108. Ibid., 12.
109. Ibid., 14.
110. Ibid., 16.
111. Ibid.
112. See for example Vladimir Maiakovskii, *Stivotvoreniia i poety* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1979) and Wiktor Woroszyński, *The Life of Mayakovsky*, translated by Boleslaw Taborski (New York: Orion Press, 1970).
113. Maria Evgen'eva, *Roman Tsarevicha: Bol'shoi Roman iz zhizni Nikolaia II* (Saint Petersburg: Interduk, 1990, original publication 1917).
114. Ibid., 104.
115. In both this text, and the anonymously authored book *Favorites of Nicholas II*, Kshesinskaia is said to have sons by Nicholas II—here, ultimately, two sons. This might be a negative comparison with Alexandra, who had Nicholas' son only after several daughters were first born. It is more likely, however, simply a distortion of a fact, that Kshesinskaia had a son. What is not factual is his parentage; he was born well after her relationship with Nicholas ended, and apparently fathered by Grand Duke Andrei.
116. Ibid., 29. 32. Kshesinskaia and her father were both born in Russia and Russian-speakers. They publicly maintained a link to their Polish heritage by specializing in the mazurka; Kshesinskaia's father was considered the world expert in the dance.
117. Ibid., 53.
118. Kshesinskaia, 236–237 for an account of her war hospital (established 1914), and 250–251, for her participation in winter 1916 war benefits.
119. Kshesinskaia, 285, Bobrov and Kirikov, 97, Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 12, 18, GMPiR, “M.K. Evgev: Avtobronemasterskikh,” Otdel fondov, f. 8.
120. King, 46.

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Blood, Sweat and Arrogance and the Myths of Churchill's War

Gordon Corrigan

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006

496 pps

Review by Terence Anthony Fleming

Gordon Corrigan was a professional army officer in the Gurkha Regiment for 30 years. These days, having retired as a serving officer, he is a lecturer at the Staff College (where the three armed forces educate the next generation of generals, admirals and air marshals in the art of command), although he prefers to describe himself as a freelance, military historian. He is not well known in this country, but, like another soldier-turned-historian, Richard Holmes, frequent appearances on television and radio in Britain have made him a recognized name and face to the public. In an earlier book called *Mud, Blood and Poppycock*, Corrigan debunked some of the most cherished myths about the First World War. Drawing on the latest scholarship, as well as using his own research, in this book Corrigan turns his scrutiny on similarly dearly held myths about Churchill. The iconic status of Churchill on both sides of the Atlantic is undeniable, but just how soundly based is his reputation? The question Corrigan sets himself, in other words, is how “Churchillian” was Churchill? As the commander-in-chief, in fact if not in law, of Britain’s armed forces for nearly all of the Second World War, how well did he do? As Corrigan says, “Winston Churchill is firmly embedded in British mythology as the man who won the war.” Did he? Did his favorite general, Montgomery? Was “Monty” really a great commander? Did the British army decline because, between the wars, it was run by backward-looking “Colonel Blimps” and was starved of vital resources by governments that were semi-socialist-pacifist? Is it true that the generals were caught unawares by the blitzkrieg-style of offensive because they were preparing to fight the *last* war? Was Chamberlain a spineless disarmer and appeaser? Was 1940 really Britain’s “finest hour”?

The strength of Corrigan’s book lies in the new and fresh insights he offers

about the failures and the successes of Britain's armed forces in the period between the last few months of fighting in 1918 and the surrender of the Germans in 1945. For example, the British not only invented the tank, they were also the first to use what would later be called blitzkrieg-tactics. The army learned from the horrors of the Somme and Passchendaele and systematically destroyed the Germans in the Hundred Days from August to November 1918. Other scholars have been making this argument for a few years, but Corrigan expresses it better and more clearly than most. He also argues convincingly that the inter-war army was not dominated by rather stupid, "Colonel Blimp" officers who prevented modernization and mechanization; in fact, when the Second World War broke out, of all the combatant nations, only the British had a fully mechanized army (the Germans never, ever did). The British were also the first in the world to establish a permanent, armored formation, 1st Tank Brigade in 1934. He also argues that if the Royal Air Force had adhered to its preferred strategic doctrines, the Battle of Britain would have been lost. The RAF had no real interest in the defense of British airspace, and therefore in fighter planes, but was wedded to the concept of offensive bombing. It was bombers that it wanted, so that if war occurred, it would rain death and destruction on the enemy's cities, eliminating the ability of the target-nation to prosecute the war within days of hostilities beginning. Somehow or other, just enough fighter squadrons were formed in defiance of this idea, and proved to be more useful than any number of bombers. Corrigan also brings the Royal Navy into sharper focus in the events of 1940 than most treatments do. There was more to rescuing the army than the evacuation from the beaches at Dunkirk, he contends. About 500,000 people, in all, were lifted off approximately 1,200 miles of French coastline in three weeks in May and June 1940 of whom all but 30,000 were evacuated by the navy. This puts into much-needed perspective the stories of the private yachts and pleasure-steamers—the "little ships"—the British continue to believe did most of the work.

But the crux of the book is about Winston Churchill himself. Beginning at the beginning, as it were, Corrigan completely and definitively demolishes Churchill's credentials as an experienced soldier (who therefore knew what he was doing when leading Britain in the Second World War). Corrigan takes us carefully through Churchill's five-year career as a regular officer in the 1890s. It becomes clear that, as a young man, Churchill was, as they used to say, "as keen as mustard" to get into the thick of any action. He wangled transfers to the Sudan, to India and to South Africa to get involved in combat, but Corrigan casts a beady eye over these heroics. He shows that Churchill never did any of the hard work of actually commanding men in battle. Whenever and wherever he went, he went alone and was attached, temporarily, to units but never given responsibility for them. He learned what real gunfire sounded like, but never in those five years learned how to lead and direct forces in battle. Corrigan concludes that Churchill knew what he was doing, and used the army to provide him with a CV that would be useful in political life. Corrigan is also dismissive of Churchill's experience in the trenches of the Western Front during 1916. He had been the Cabinet minister, First Lord of the Admiralty, in

charge of the navy until his brainchild, the Dardanelles campaign, collapsed in failure and scandal at the end of 1915. Churchill was compelled to resign and announced his intention to return to his “first love,” soldiering. He did not sit out his stint in the army in some safe staff headquarters; Churchill was definitely in the trenches. Corrigan points out, however, that he told stories, such as he was so popular that he was missed when he left and so highly regarded that he often stood in for his Commanding Officer, that are not backed up by the war diaries of the units he served with. In fact, Corrigan can find only two references to Churchill: the first notes that on such-and-such a date, Churchill arrived, and the second that he left. That is all. Corrigan has combed those war diaries to see what was going on during the months Churchill was at the Western Front, and discovered that he was stationed in sectors where hardly anything was happening. In sum, Corrigan provides the evidence that allows him to say that Churchill used the army “as a stage on which to posture” and that “by 1939 his actual military experience was . . . woefully out of date and none of it bestowed any qualification whatsoever on matters of military strategy.”

Corrigan is also fairly—and rightly—damning about Churchill’s record as a member of the government in the 1920s. He backed battleships when the navy wanted aircraft-carriers; he opposed the building of a base at Singapore and he helped to devise the notorious Ten-Year Rule. This, in particular, did harm to the army, because it excluded any and all contingency planning, training and procurement for another war in Europe as long as the army’s chief of staff reported that such a war was unlikely to happen over the coming ten years. The Ten-Year Rule meant that the army received funding for “immediate needs” only (which meant its role in maintaining security in the empire). Corrigan could have made a much stronger case here than he does by putting Churchill and cuts in defense budgets in the context of the “Geddes Axe,” the return to the gold standard and the generally cheese-paring and penny-pinching attitudes of the Conservatives to all forms of public expenditure during the 1920s (when they were in office most of the time). Instead, he repeats the old chestnut about “guns and butter,” the British people preferring money to be spent on social programs than on the armed forces. Ramsay MacDonald and Labour made a few decisions along those lines, but they were not in power long enough to make a difference to how much was spent on defense in the 1920s as a whole.

Corrigan provides a stout defense of Neville Chamberlain (who was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1931 to 1937 and then prime minister from 1937 to 1940). He does not, however, offer anything that has not been said a thousand times before by apologists for Chamberlain. He argues that from the early 1930s on, Chamberlain “pushed hardest in Cabinet for rearmament.” He “was not the lackey of the dictators, nor incapable of seeing the threat Fascism posed,” but “after 1936 appeasement was the only possible course,” and even by 1938 “the facts were that Britain was quite incapable of going to war”. It is easy to get carried along, and away, by this kind of logic and come to the conclusion that Chamberlain has been unfairly dealt with by historians. However, Ernest May, for example, has shown beyond a shadow

of doubt that Chamberlain and his government knew that the German army was just as incapable of full-scale war in 1938: Anglo-French backing for Czechoslovakia would probably have called Hitler's bluff. Regardless of what other scholars have argued, it is also clear to me that Corrigan cites evidence that undermines his case for Chamberlain: he forced cuts on the forces, as well as providing limited increases; he continued to forbid the creation of an expeditionary force for deployment in France until the very last moment, and put men in charge of the War Office, like Leslie Hoare-Belisha and Sir Thomas Inskip, who devoted more energy to what even Corrigan has to agree was "a sustained attack" on the integrity of the army's chief generals than on preparations for war. Chamberlain's record is a sorry one that Corrigan has not rehabilitated, I think.

But what of Churchill's record? Corrigan does not dissent from the view that, on the whole, Churchill was a brilliant and inspiring, wartime leader of the British. He shows, though, that on those occasions when he took direct and detailed control over the execution of military operations, or insisted on his own ideas about strategy in the teeth of opposition from the professionals, he was often incompetent and just plain wrong. In a sense, he occasionally "out-Churchillianed" himself. Corrigan examines his role in the ill-starred Norway campaign, the first serious encounter the British army had with the German army in 1940, and in the Greek and Crete disasters that followed. Other historians have gone over this, and like them, Corrigan shows that Churchill was destructively meddlesome at times.

Where Corrigan is better than other scholars is in the attention he pays to Churchill's relationship with those professionals. He was not patient with cautious military advice: he wanted action and dash and *élan*. If he did not get these things, he badgered and interfered until he had had enough. Then Churchill moved generals to non-jobs or sacked them completely. Corrigan makes a strong, though not original, case for Churchill unnecessarily scapegoating Gort, Ironside and Dill for the defeat in France in 1940, and he summarizes why Churchill was completely wrong to get rid of Wavell and Auchinleck in the Middle East (which is line with most recent scholarship). He also shows that it was outrageous that the one and only British general who became a household name, Bernard Law Montgomery, who took command of British forces in North Africa and defeated Rommel at El Alamein, denigrated his predecessors and stole the credit for work that both Wavell and Auchinleck had begun. Corrigan demolishes the myth of "Monty" completely, and argues that in hand-picking Montgomery, and then investing such faith in him, Churchill revealed that he was rather a poor judge of generals and military professionalism.

In a rather effective conclusion to the book, Corrigan pulls these ideas together and offers an insightful reappraisal of Churchill. His selection of Montgomery is put in the context of too often believing that he knew better than his commanders; of looking for quicker and more dramatic results by seeking out "soft underbellies" and other forms of indirect warfare; of failing to understand the lessons the army had actually learned in the First World War; in what he calls "flights of fancy coupled with an unwillingness to trust

professionals.” Churchill, he contends, would not hoist in the fundamental meaning of 20th-century military history: “Somebody has to take on the main enemy in the main theatre and defeat him,” He did, though, keep Britain in the war until, eventually, American resources and the Soviet Army beat the *Wehrmacht*. For all the myths that the British have developed about the war and about Churchill—myths that a great many Americans seem to share, Corrigan underscores the point that “it must never be forgotten that Britain did the decent thing” in going to war and not standing on the sidelines while the Nazis carved up Europe. But as the book as a whole shows, the British could have done a lot better.



Terence Anthony Fleming holds degrees in History from British and American universities. He has taught at Alma College, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. Currently, he is a lecturer in history at Northern Kentucky University and teaches classes in world history, British history and the history of terrorism.

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Jeffrey C. Williams

Perspectives

Perspectives

is pleased to draw attention to these other fine historical periodicals published in the Northern Kentucky Region.

Heritage

A publication of Northern Kentucky African American Heritage Task Force (NKAHATF) *Heritage* publishes articles, book reviews, and editorials on the history, impact, and legacy of African Americans in the thirteen counties of northern Kentucky. To have your work considered for this publication, submit an abstract (of no more than fifty words – e-mail or “regular” mail) to: Northern Kentucky University, Dr. Eric R. Jackson, Department of History and Geography; Nunn Drive; Highland Heights, KY 41099.

Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine

The *Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine* publishes articles, book reviews, and editors on the preservation, research, and dissemination of the history of Northern Kentucky, especially the counties of Boone and Kenton. To have your work considered for this publication, submit an abstract to Karl J. Lietzenmayer, Editor, *Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine*; The Kenton County Historical Society; PO Box 641; Covington, KY 41012 or via e-mail at nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com.